

THE FRONT END OPERATION OF A  
SUPER MARKET

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1954

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THE FRONT END OPERATION OF A SUPER MARKET

By

Lewis Steinberg

A THESIS

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose of the Study

During the last thirty years, the retail food store has grown from the small "mama and papa" store to the present day modern super market. These years have seen customers enjoying the advantages of shopping in increasingly modern stores. Super market operators have made shopping a convenience for the housewife through improved methods of merchandising. The present day super market is more efficient and more convenient than the food store of ten or twenty years ago, but there is still room for improvement.

The purpose of this study is to examine one part of a super market operation, namely, the front end, which includes the check-out and related functions. In this study the writer will present the different parts which make up this important part of a super market. It is hoped that the information herewith presented will be used as a guide to better operations for the whole industry.

#### Need for the Study

With the advent of complete self-service, the front end of a super market has become one of the most important

parts of the entire retail food store operation, since this is the only area where employees enjoy daily contact with the lifeblood of the business - the customer.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the front end operation is service to the customer. This involves operating and maintaining the check-outs in such a fashion as to give rapid, efficient, and courteous service to the customer, since store sales are directly affected at this point.<sup>2</sup>

Check-out and other procedures of the front end have long been neglected. The increasing inadequacy of present day front end operations in general use is becoming more obvious as the super markets grow larger. One has only to watch any large super market on a busy Friday or Saturday to see the truth in this statement. Customers do not like to wait in line to be checked out. A customer who is not satisfied with the present service may tend to shop elsewhere. Much has been and is being done in the way of bright new stores, self-service meats and produce, and many other devices intended to enable the customer to do her shopping more conveniently. But what good is all this if she has to wait an equal amount of time to get out of the store?

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<sup>1</sup>Anderson, Harry. Training People for the New Store. Super Market Merchandising. 18 (June 1953), p. 212.

<sup>2</sup>In a letter to the writer from Mr. John J. Harrington, Assistant Sales Manager, First National Stores, East Hartford, Connecticut, dated June 22, 1954.

This part of a super market operation cannot be over-emphasized because the long check-out line is presently "store enemy number one."<sup>3</sup> The front end of the store is the first and last contact with the customer. Therefore, the super market operator should organize a strong team, give it expert coaching and then should act to eliminate the causes of the front end problem.

Besides being of service to the customer, the front end must be operated efficiently. The super market operates on a very small profit which leaves little room for inefficiency. In the front end operation of most super markets there are a number of procedures which could be made more efficient. Because of the need for more information on this subject, this study has been undertaken.

#### Scope of the Study

This study will cover the efficient operation of the front end of a modern super market. The responsibilities of the personnel who make up this part of the store are presented, their training and the different types of equipment being used by super markets in the operation of the front end. In general, this report will present as complete a picture as possible of

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<sup>3</sup> Schapker, Ben L. Pointers on Licking Store Enemy Number 1 - That Long Checkout Line. Progressive Grocer. 27 (September 1948), p. 65.

the important parts of this operation according to the way it is being done by certain companies in the industry.

### Definition of Terms

The meaning of the term "front section head", as used in this study, will refer to a super market employee who supervises the work done by the baggers, unloaders and parcel pick-up boys.

The meaning of the word "bagger", as used in this study, will refer to the super market employee who bags customers' orders. He is sometimes referred to as the sacker, packer and wrapper in some super market operations.

The meaning of the word "unloader", as used in this study, refers to the super market employee who unloads the customers' shopping carriages at the check-out during rush periods. He is sometimes referred to as a booster.

The "head cashier", as used in this study, refers to the super market employee who supervises the work done by the cashiers.

The meaning of the term "cashier", as used in this study, refers to the super market employee who operates the cash register. She is sometimes referred to as a checker.

The "bookkeeper", as used in this study, refers to the super market employee who does the administrative and book-keeping work related to the operation of the super market.

The meaning of the term "front end", as used in this study, refers to the front end of the super market. This includes the operation of the check-outs and other related functions which are carried out in the front part of the super market for the convenience of the customers.

#### Procedure for Obtaining Material

The material for this study was obtained from a number of sources. The writer visited with twelve super market operators. Other information was obtained through personal observation of their operations.

The second major source of information for this study was from a number of training manuals related to different parts of the front end operation. Additional information was secured from periodical magazines relating to the operation of retail food stores.

#### Organization of a Front End

In a super market the two most important factors of management are good organization and good personnel. An organization has been defined as a "division of labor among people to achieve a given objective."<sup>4</sup> Similarly the organization of a front end operation is set up to achieve a given objective, that of being of service to the customer.

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<sup>4</sup>Moscip, Ezra W. Organizing for Effective Store Employee Performance. Super Market Merchandising. 18 (June 1953), p. 214.

All super markets have front end operations. Although they are not set up exactly the same way, they do have the same objectives and the same duties and responsibilities are assigned, but not necessarily to the same person in each company. From research conducted for this study, it was found that there are basically two different organizational set-ups for the front end operation in a super market.

The first set-up is found when there is a store manager or grocery manager in charge of the front end operation in the super market. In other words, it is considered a part of the grocery department. He is directly responsible for the operation of this section. In this type of a situation, there is no front section head, but there is a head cashier. This person, besides being responsible for the front section, is also responsible for the other normal functions of running a grocery department or the whole super market.

In the second case, the front end operation is operated as a separate section or department. In this instance, there is a front section head and head cashier. Both of these people are responsible to the store manager and this part of the super market is not considered part of the grocery department, but rather as a service department.



## CHAPTER II

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PERSONNEL IN THE FRONT END OF A SUPER MARKET

In the operation of the front end of a super market it is very necessary that the employees be aware of their individual responsibilities. This chapter will present the responsibilities of all the personnel that make up the staff in this section of a food store. It should be noted that these functions are carried out in all super markets, but the actual person having a particular responsibility may be different in different companies.

#### Front Section Head

The front section head is usually responsible for the operations of the baggers, parcel pick-up boys and unloaders, the cleanliness in the front end of the store and for service to the customer. In some companies the front section head and the head cashier are one and the same person and the responsibilities of these two jobs are assigned to one person. In this study these particular jobs will be kept separate. In those operations where there is a front section head and a head cashier, the front section head is responsible for:

1. The appearance of the baggers, parcel pick-up boys and unloaders.

2. The assignments of the personnel under him.  
He must assign these people in the morning.  
When there is a slack period in the front end of the store the front section head must assign the extra personnel to other jobs near the front end so that they can be quickly recalled when needed.
3. The job performance of the baggers.. He should check them to make sure that they are courteous to the customers, that they are using the correct supplies and that they are following company policy regarding the wrapping of the customers' orders. This should be done as often as possible during the day.
4. Allocating time to the personnel under him for lunch, supper, days off and rest periods. This should be planned in advance, but it should be flexible enough so that customers still receive the service necessary.
5. The package checking operation in those super markets that offer this service to their customers. The checking service provides the customers with a place to check their shopping bags and other parcels when entering the super market.

6. The cleanliness of the complete front section of the store. This applies to the check-outs, the floor, the shopping carriages, the carton storage area, the package checking booth and all equipment in the front end of a food store. This includes assigning certain employees to the job of keeping the section clean as well as supplying each bagger with a cloth so that they may keep their individual work areas clean.
7. The operation and cleanliness of the service booth. This sometimes involves clearing out all empty returned bottles and maintaining a full supply of empty cases.
8. The proper packaging of delivery orders in those super markets that offer this service. He must make sure that the baggers bag these delivery orders so that these orders are not damaged during transit.
9. Having the correct amount of wrapping supplies in the front end of the store. This should be done in the morning during the week and the night before on weekends.
10. Seeing that there are enough shopping carriages available for immediate use by the customers.

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11. The training of new employees under him as well as the retraining of the more experienced help. Special help must be given these new employees whether they be part-time or regular employees.
12. The behavior of the baggers. He should especially check the following important procedures:
  - A. That the baggers receive permission before leaving their check-out stations.
  - B. That the baggers are handing the customer her order and at the same time thanking her for shopping at the store.
  - C. That the baggers are stepping out of the check-out to unload the shopping carriage for the customer when there is no unloader.
  - D. That the baggers are cooperating with the cashiers.
13. Holding weekly meetings with his staff regarding the mistakes made during the week as well as discussing the courtesy, cleanliness, service to the customer, use of supplies and proper wrapping procedures.

14. The laundry used by his staff. He must make sure that the employees under him change their laundry as required by company policy.
15. The shopping carriages inventory as well as any other equipment used by his employees in the operations of their jobs.
16. Controlling the wage expenses of the personnel under him. He must remain as close as possible to the figure set down by management.
17. Controlling supplies. He must make sure that the supplies are being used efficiently. He should try to cut his supply costs as much as possible and still give customers proper service as required for an efficient operation.

#### Head Cashier

The head cashier is usually responsible for the operations of the cashiers and for service to the customer. In some organizations her duties and responsibilities will also include those of a bookkeeper. In this study these jobs will be kept separate. In those companies where there is a head cashier and bookkeeper, the head cashier is responsible for:

1. The appearance of the cashiers under her. She should make sure that each cashier is properly dressed before she enters the check-out.
2. The correct amount of cashiers being at the check-out. If it is not busy she must re-assign the extra cashiers to other jobs near the check-out so that they may be recalled when they are needed at the check-out.
3. Allocating lunch, supper, days off and rest periods for the personnel under her. This should be planned ahead of time, but it should still be flexible enough to change so that the customers still get the necessary service.
4. Special supervision of the cashier at the beginning and end of the day, when the cashier starts her work and when the cashier closes the check-out at the end of the day.
5. Checking the procedure of registering customers' orders with each cashier and she must make sure the company policy is being carried out.
6. Checking the accuracy of all cashiers at different times during the day, as well as checking the cashiers on courtesy, handling of money and merchandise. This should be done as often as possible during the day.

7. Being of service to the customers. This includes making refunds, in companies where she is authorized, looking after customers' requests and calling the store manager when help is needed for situations she is not capable of handling.
8. Checking with the produce manager each morning so as to obtain price changes of those produce items which are not priced in the produce department. She is then responsible for notifying each cashier of these changes and also for recording these changes on the cashiers' price lists.
9. Holding weekly meetings with her cashiers to discuss the importance of their jobs in the super market operation. Other subjects which should be discussed at these meetings include courtesy, cleanliness, friendliness, customer service and the correct way they should go about achieving goodwill and satisfaction on the part of the customers.
10. The cashiers having sufficient supplies for the cash register, such as register rolls.
11. Checking with the cashiers to make sure that they have enough change. She must also make cash withdrawals from the cashiers a few times a day.



12. The training of new cashiers in the store as well as retraining of the more experienced cashiers.
13. Controlling the wage expenses of the personnel under her. She must remain as close as possible to the figure set down by management.
14. The approval of all voids and refunds paid out by the cashiers.
15. Taking readings on all registers at the close of the day's business.

#### Bookkeeper

The bookkeeper is usually responsible for part of the administrative office work that goes on in a super market. It should be noted that this job and the job of the head cashier are sometimes combined. In those stores having a bookkeeper and a head cashier, the bookkeeper is responsible for:

1. Checking the cashiers' daily balance sheets or reports. This involves summarizing sales from the daily receipts to the daily summary of sales.
2. Balancing the entire store cash using the daily summary of sales against the actual monies received in the store.
3. Preparing a weekly summary of sales and cash taken in.

4. Making up deposits and for ordering proper amounts of change.
5. Making cash withdrawals from the registers, checking the amount of cash against the totals on the withdrawal envelopes.
6. Preparing the payroll, in those companies where the payroll is not prepared at the head office. When doing this, she must list the wages on the payroll sheet and must record the total deductions. All this is usually prepared on a special form with a copy being sent to the head office.
7. Preparing time sheets. These time sheets must be properly prepared with headings, social security number, number of hours worked, rate of pay, extension and proper explanation of all deductions.
8. Preparing the receiving sheets. Under the proper headings, she should list retails and entries of cost, if available.
9. Preparing office control forms. This includes recording the amount of state tax, bottle returns, and other information requested by the head office.

10. The proper handling of coupons. This includes vouchers, welfare orders and merchandise coupons, all of which must be handled as though it were cash and kept in the safe.
11. Checking voids and refunds. This includes all bottle refunds and merchandise returned by customers.
12. Check cashing. In some companies she will have to maintain a set of cards which will have records and identifications of those customers who may cash checks at the store. These are sometimes called courtesy or file cards. She must, in some stores, check the identification of the person cashing the check.
13. Preparing the change given to the cashiers at the beginning of the working day. This would involve giving rolls of change as well as singles to the cashiers and charging same properly. This would be deducted from the cash received from the cashier when making withdrawals.

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### Cashier

Probably the most important person working in the front end of a super market is the cashier. She is responsible for courteous and efficient service to all customers in checking and receiving payment for merchandise. The cashier is responsible for:

1. Greeting and assisting customers whenever possible.
2. The accurate registering of merchandise in the proper departments.
3. Cash control at the register. This involves making change properly, the correct handling of over rings and under rings, the correct handling of voids and refunds, coupons, vouchers, welfare orders and payments for empty bottles.
4. Her own personal appearance while at the check-out. Her dress should follow company policy.
5. The cleanliness of the check-out where she is working.
6. The cash register. This involves the condition of the register, maintaining a sufficient supply of register rolls and a sufficient supply of change so as not to interrupt the operation at peak periods.

7. The work performed by the bagger. She should make sure that he performs his work according to company policy.
8. Having sufficient and proper bagging supplies on hand at all times.
9. Being courteous to all customers, according to her training of being a good cashier.
10. Thanking the customer for shopping in the store and for asking her to return in the future.

### Bagger

The bagger is the person who must work very closely with the cashier if the check-out operation is to run as a team. Like the cashier, the bagger is responsible for courteous and efficient service to all customers. The bagger is responsible for:

1. Greeting and assisting customers whenever possible.
2. Bagging the customers' orders properly, as per company policy, assuring the customers of a pleasant trip home.
3. Placing the customers orders in shopping carriages so that the bags will not topple on the trip to the parcel pick-up station or to the customers' cars.



4. His own personal appearance while at the check-out. His dress should conform to company policy.
5. Having sufficient and proper bags on hand at all times.
6. The cleanliness of the check-out where he is working.
7. Being courteous to all customers, in accordance with his training.
8. Thanking the customers and for assisting the parcel pick-up boys when necessary.

#### Parcel Pick-up Boy

The parcel pick-up boy is the employee who is responsible for the customers' orders after they leave the check-out stand till the time he puts these orders into the customers' cars. The parcel pick-up boy is responsible for:

1. Greeting and assisting customers whenever possible.
2. Giving the customer a receipt for her order. After giving the customer a receipt, he should place the shopping carriage with the order in the pick-up station.
3. Putting the customer's order in her car when she presents the receipt to him at the parcel pick-up station. He must then remove the



parcels carefully from the shopping carriage and place it in the customer's car in a manner that will prevent the order from toppling over and breaking.

4. His own personal appearance while at the pick-up station. His dress will be governed by company policy.
5. The cleanliness of the parcel pick-up station. This includes both the inside and outside of the station.
6. Being courteous to all customers, in accordance with his training.
7. Thanking the customer after putting her order in the car.

#### Unloader

During busy periods in a super market, an unloader is used by a number of super market companies. His main job is to be of service to the customer and the cashier. The unloader is responsible for:

1. Greeting and assisting the customer whenever possible.
2. Unloading the customer's shopping carriage at the check-out stand during peak periods.
3. Lining up the customer's order in the proper sequence which will enable the cashier to do

a more efficient and rapid job of registering the order. This involves, in a number of companies, putting the taxable items first, then grocery, meat and produce. It also involves placing all items with the price mark up.

4. Moving the shopping carriages to the storage area.

#### Store Manager

The complete responsibility of the front end of the super market falls on the store manager or grocery manager as the case may be in a particular company. It is his responsibility to see that the various jobs delegated are performed in accordance with his instructions. The store manager must continually check the front end operation to see that it is being operated and maintained efficiently, assuring the customer rapid, efficient, and courteous service. In the front end operation, the manager is responsible for:

1. Teaching the employees of the front end what they need to know.
2. Making periodic audits at the registers and in the office to discourage discrepancies.
3. The follow-through of all instructions, whether issued by him or the head office, to see that they are retained and maintained.

4. Delegating and assigning workers to different jobs in the front end of the store so that these employees will be of service to the customers.
5. The equipment used in the front end operation.
6. Being present at the front end during peak periods, greeting customers and answering questions.
7. Controlling the wage expenses of all personnel in the store, including the front end. He must operate as closely as possible within the amount budgeted by management.
8. Controlling the use of supplies. He must make sure that the supplies are being used efficiently. He should try to cut his supply costs as much as possible and still give customers the proper service as required for an efficient operation.
9. The appearance, training, and courtesy of all the employees under him.
10. The cleanliness and efficiency of the front end of a super market.

### Supervisor

Another super market employee who is part of the front end operation is the supervisor. Part of his visit to the store should be devoted to the front end operation. He should check the operation on each visit to the super market. The supervisor should also correct or explain to the manager any faults he may find and it is up to the supervisor to suggest ways for improvement.

The supervisor's responsibilities in the front end operation fall into six categories, as follows:

1. Financial
2. Operational
3. Housekeeping
4. Personnel
5. Management
6. Administration

The financial aspects of the front end operation which the supervisor is responsible for are the facts and figures related to operational controls which are indispensable to a true analysis of this section's activities. They must be checked, interpreted and controlled. These financial facts are the wage standards and controllable expenses.

Under the operational part of the supervisor's responsibilities, he must make sure that the operational procedures of this section of the super market are consistently maintained

according to the instructions of management. Usually these policies and procedures have been established over the years and they are recognized as essential ingredients of the overall sectional activity. Therefore, the supervisor is responsible for the complete fulfillment and consistent application of all operational practices.

Another major responsibility of the supervisor is proper housekeeping. Cleanliness and good housekeeping cover the following areas, which the supervisor is responsible for and which he must check:

1. The cleanliness of all maintenance and supply equipment used in the section.
2. The cleanliness of storage areas.
3. The application of cleanliness policies on specific days, following the termination of business.

The supervisor is responsible for all the personnel working in the front end of the store. This involves his ability to deal with all personnel classifications, to recognize their needs and requirements and to establish a program of personal supervision which will enhance the dignity of the individual employee. This is sometimes called personnel relations and would include training of employees, rating and upgrading, handling of employee grievances, labor turnover and human relations.

The supervisor is responsible for management. This means leadership, direction and coordination of all the front end's activities. The primary thought of management must continually be emphasized by the supervisor in order to create a background of management work which is truthfully reflected in the standards of operations maintained in the front section of the super market itself.

The supervisor must recognize that he represents the administration of the company. He represents the thoughts and actions of the administrative body, and his contacts with his key people must be maintained at that level. Progressive planning, thinking, and practical application of all company policies must represent his contribution to the field of supervision.

### CHAPTER III

#### TRAINING OF PERSONNEL IN THE FRONT END OF A SUPER MARKET

The importance of training employees of a super market cannot be overemphasized because the performance of these employees may be improved considerably by proper instruction methods. In a controlled experiment conducted among super market cashiers, the training method, which gave cashiers an opportunity to participate in a group training conference and to help develop new procedures, resulted in superior performance.<sup>5</sup> Better performance was shown by more willing acceptance of new check-out procedures, closer adherence to established company policies, more courtesy to customers, better utilization of time and more employee satisfaction with the instruction received.

There is a great amount of value received from the well-trained employee. A well-trained employee gives the company opportunity for increased production without capital expenditure for more equipment. It also saves manpower and improves morale. When a department head receives a well-trained

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<sup>5</sup>Kriesberg, Martin. Improving the Performance of Retail Food Store Cashiers Through Better Training Methods. United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, Marketing Research Report No. 48, June 1953, p. 111.

person for his department it makes the department head's job easier as well as increasing production and the quality of the work done. Another important fact is that training gets the new employee off to a good start.

Training the employees of a front end section of a super market will enable these people to acquire more and greater skills, thus increasing their versatility for transfers and their qualifications for promotion. If these employees are properly trained, accidents, mistakes and damage to machines and equipment will be greatly reduced. Training enables employees to adjust themselves to new methods and processes that are introduced from time to time. Another very important reason for training employees is that good training reduces dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and personnel turnover because it helps both the new and experienced employees to use fully their individual capacities.

In this chapter, the writer will discuss some of the methods being used to train the employees who make up the front end of a super market. Also included in this chapter will be a discussion of the important features which must be stressed at the place of training and on the job.

#### Front Section Head

The front section head in a super market operation is usually trained on the job by one of three persons; the store manager, the supervisor or another experienced front section



head. There is no formal training program for this position and a great part of this job is learned by the new front section head through working on the job. Most employees who are given the position of front section head have worked in a super market before at some other job.

The new front section head should go through some form of training when taking on his new job. This is very important because, if he does not understand and know what he is supposed to do, the employees under him will never know what they are supposed to do.

Before actually starting in the store at his new job, the front section head should be given information regarding his new duties, responsibilities and job objectives. At this time he should also be told about proper leadership techniques and training methods. Next, he should spend some time on the job under the direction of a more experienced front section head. After the necessary period of time he should be given an operation to supervise on his own. After a few months on the job he should be given a refresher course with special emphasis on his weak points.

#### Head Cashier

The head cashier in a super market operation is usually trained on the job by another head cashier or by the person who trains the new cashiers. There is no formal training program for this position. A great part of her knowledge

is learned by working on the job. Most employees who are given the position of head cashier have worked their way up to this position. Almost always they have started in a super market as a cashier, then have become an assistant head cashier and then a head cashier.

The head cashier, like the front section head, should take some form of training before taking on the complete responsibility of her job. The head cashier should be told what her duties and responsibilities are and she should also be given a course in leadership. Such a course would stress human relations, how to get along with people and how to get the most out of people. After this she should be given the responsibility of being in charge of the cashiers in a store with another head cashier there to help out when needed. If the new head cashier proves to be capable then she should be given the position of head cashier in a store.

#### Cashier Training

The importance of the cashier in a super market cannot be overemphasized. The cashier must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of proper check-out operations as this is essential to the successful operation of the store and to the success of the cashier. Every transaction is made with the purpose of satisfying the customer. The store is there for the customer, not the customer for the store.

Central training is preferred by most companies where store locations permit. In a survey of sixty reporting companies, forty reported that they trained their cashiers at a central location while the other twenty companies reported that they trained their cashiers on the job.<sup>6</sup> Three-day training is the general practice, although some are two days and a few for a longer period of time. Usually three or four trainees are assigned to one trainer in the central training program.

There are certain qualifications required for cashiers. The four major requirements are as follows:<sup>7</sup>

1. The cashier must have a pleasant personality.  
She must be courteous, friendly and have an easy smile.
2. She must be accurate in arithmetic, fractions and in making change.
3. She should have a good knowledge of store operations. Some companies suggest that a new cashier be trained in the store for one week to two months prior to being trained for the cashier's job.

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<sup>6</sup>National Association of Food Chains. Checkout Clinic. Chicago: February 1950, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

4. She should have good customer approach.

This includes a background knowledge of the company and its policies, appreciation of her job and good customer attitude.

The training program for new cashiers usually starts with the indoctrination of company policy, courtesy and customer treatment. This would also include certain other information about the company, such as, hospitalization, insurance, vacation, pay and promotion program. After this brief indoctrination, the cashier is usually trained in the mechanics of her job. This involves learning about assembling orders, operating the register, making change, bagging merchandise, making reports and correcting errors. During this phase of the training program, the different company policies are again explained to the new employee so that she may better understand her job.

The cashier training program should be conducted under the best training procedures. First, the trainer should prepare the worker. Second, he should present the operation, explaining key points one at a time. Third, the trainee should do the operation and fourth, the follow-up. If these basic principles are followed, there is a good chance that the training program will be a success. It is very important to remember that if the learner hasn't learned, the teacher hasn't taught.

A great many people think that cashier training is only the teaching of how to operate a cash register. This is not true as the cashier must learn much more than just operating a cash register. In any cashier training program, information regarding all parts of the cashier's job should be told to the new cashier, such as how to greet the customer, how to arrange the order, her responsibility for cash control and the part courtesy plays in the operation of being a cashier.

It was found, after conducting research for this study, that many of the companies are not stressing the importance of the cashier's position in a super market operation. Many of the little details about the cashier's job are very often overlooked during the training program. The following is a very important part of the cashier's work at the check-out and it should be included in her training program. It is included in this study because it is so often overlooked in cashier training programs.

Greeting the customer: The cashier should greet every customer that comes to her check-out stand. She should make the customer feel welcome in the store by greeting her in a friendly manner. It is good to use the salutation, "Good Morning, Mrs. Jones", etc., whenever the name is known. When the cashier does this, the customer will feel that this particular super market is her super market.

Arranging the order: The merchandise should be arranged on the checking counter so as to facilitate speed and accurate check-outs. The items should be arranged in the same order as the department keys appear on the cash register, except when the cash register has motorized department keys. Most of the time the keys on the register are arranged in a manner that will punch the heavier items first, like groceries. Also, when the cashier is punching the order, she should place the merchandise with the price mark up so that the customer will be able to check the order while it is being registered.

There are certain important points which the cashier must remember when registering the order. These are as follows:

1. Greet the customer with a friendly smile.
2. Arrange the merchandise in proper order.
  - a. Check the bottom racks of the carriages for merchandise.
  - b. Check small children for items they may be carrying.
3. To maintain proper inventory control, the cashier must register the merchandise in the correct department. Every manager depends on the cashier for properly crediting his department for the merchandise purchased from his department.
4. Charge the correct price.

5. As the cashier registers the item price with her right hand, she should move the item with her left hand at least six inches from the order.
6. If a customer is in doubt about the price of an article, the cashier should show her the price marking on the merchandise. If there is no price mark on the article the cashier should call the head cashier over so that she may obtain the correct price of the item from the price list.
7. The cashier must charge the proper fractional cent on all items.
8. She must check and see that the bagger places the cash register receipt in the bag with the customer's order.
9. The cashier should make sure that the order is bundled properly.
10. The customer must be thanked for shopping in the super market and invited to come in again.
11. The cashier must be courteous at all times.

It was mentioned above that the cashier must charge the customer with the proper fractional cent amount at all times. Most companies provide their cashiers with a fractional cent card which they should refer to so that the correct price will be charged to the customer.

Procedure for making change: The cashier handles many thousands of dollars each week. Since she is accountable for the cash balance in the cash register, the cashier is expected to be extremely careful whenever change is made. The following procedure is sometimes followed by most super markets.

Step one starts when the customer's order has been totaled and the customer has the money, and the cash register's drawer is opened. The cashier should restate the amount of the order and the denomination of the bill or bills tendered by the customer. An example is, "\$3.64 from \$10.00". Both the customer and cashier are then aware of the amount to be taken out.

Step two consists of placing the bill on the left side of the cash slab. The cashier then builds the change from the cash drawer from the amount of the order to the amount of the bill tendered. Step three is the counting of the change piece by piece into the customer's hand. Using the example given above, this would consist of, "\$3.64, (1¢), \$3.65, (10¢), \$3.75, (25¢), \$4.00, (\$1.00), \$5.00, and (\$5.00), is \$10.00. Thank you, come again." Step four consists of the customer being satisfied that she has the proper change. After this the cashier places the bill received from the customer into the register and closes the drawer.

Procedure for cashing checks: In most of the super markets, checks are cashed at the check-out stand by the cashier



after being approved by some one responsible in the store, like the store manager. The following is the procedure usually used in this case.

1. All checks must be approved first by employee designated by the head office before cashing.
2. A customer must endorse the check in ink or indelible pencil in the presence of the employee who approves it even though it has been previously endorsed by her.
3. The employee who approves the check must stamp and initial the check.
4. When the cashier cashes the check the following procedure is usually, and should be, followed:
  - a. Give the customer the full amount of the check.
  - b. After this has been done, the cashier should request the customer to pay for the merchandise in the usual manner.

Redeeming empty bottles: There are two procedures which are used in most super markets to redeem empty bottles. One system is used where the bottles are redeemed at the check-out stand by the cashier and the other system is where the bottles are redeemed at the bottle stations. In those stores where the bottles are redeemed at the check-out stand the following procedure is used:

1. The cashier accepts the bottles from the customer and gives the customer the equivalent in cash.
2. At certain intervals during the day, an employee designated by the manager or department head will count the bottles and issue a signed receipt to the cashier. The cashier will also count the bottles to insure accurate credit, as she is responsible for a proper accounting at the end of the day.
3. The signed receipt is placed, by the cashier, underneath the cash drawer and the amount of the receipt will be included in the cashier's daily cash report.

In those stores having a special place where bottles are redeemed the following is the procedure generally used:

1. The customer will receive from the person at the bottle station a receipt for an amount equal to the bottles returned.
2. The customer, on arriving at the check-out stand, will give this receipt to the cashier for which she will be given cash.
3. This receipt is placed, by the cashier, underneath the cash drawer and the amount of the receipt is included in the cashier's daily cash report.

Responsibility for cash: One of the cashier's most important responsibilities in the operation of the check-out stand is her responsibility for the cash in her register. The cashier must be made aware of the fact that she is personally responsible for the cash balance assigned to her, and therefore she must be extremely careful when handling cash and making change. In helping the cashier do a better job, she should observe the following important points regarding the handling of cash:

1. The cashier should recount her change fund every morning. She should report any discrepancy to the store manager or head cashier immediately.
2. Whenever it is necessary to leave the register, the cashier should ask the head cashier to lock the drawer in the register.
3. When mistakes are made when registering an order, the cashier should call over the head cashier or store manager who will approve all these voids in the proper manner.
4. The cashier should request someone in authority to make a cash pick-up whenever an excessive amount of cash has accumulated in the register.

5. She should not give extra change merely on the customer's say-so. She should call for the head cashier or store manager to handle this situation.
6. Only one cash transaction should be handled at a time. She should also be alert for "quick-change artists".
7. The cashier should never turn her back on an open cash register drawer. She should never leave money on the cash slab after making change.
8. Refunds should not be given without first having a signed receipt from an authorized person.

Another phase of this cash handling procedure is the correct method for handling errors made while registering a customer's order.

When an item is registered in the incorrect department the following should be done:

1. The cashier should complete the order and then make note of the mistake on the daily cash report or some other form, so that it will be able to be corrected at the end of the day.
2. The cashier should ask the head cashier to approve of the correction on the form where the mistake is noted.

When an item is undercharged, the cashier should register the amount of the undercharge as soon as it is noticed. As an example, if an item sells for 10¢ and is registered as 8¢, then the cashier should punch the 2¢ key next and then bracket these items on the register receipt so that the customer may be able to identify the error.

Item undercharged

\$	0.17GrA
\$	0.79GrA
\$	0.34GrA
\$	0.08GrA
\$	0.02GrA
\$	1.46MtA
\$	0.97MtA

Item overcharged

\$	0.45GrA
\$	0.67GrA
\$	0.39GrA
\$	0.96MtA
*\$	6.98T1A
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FIGURE 1. Sample Register Receipt

In the case of an overcharge, the cashier should complete the order and then should subtract the amount of the overcharge from the total and circle the item on the register receipt. An example can be seen on the sample register receipt shown, Figure 1. A 29¢ item was incorrectly registered

as 39¢. The amount of the mistake must be noted and subtracted at the end of the day from the total sales of the particular department. The cashier should never subtract the amount over-charged from the next item.

It is very important that all corrections be brought to the attention of the customer and that proper notations be made on the register receipt given to the customer.

Courtesy: Although courtesy is every employee's job in a super market, it is perhaps more so in the case of the cashier. She must assist the customer in placing her order on the check-out stand and she must never keep the customer waiting while she finishes a conversation with another employee. If a customer should have several small bundles, the cashier should offer to place them in one bag or she should suggest the purchase of a shopping bag.

If a customer's order is large, the cashier should request her bagger to carry the order to the customer's car. The cashier must always treat the customer as a guest of the store and she should hand the customer her order after it has been bagged, when she is alone. It must always be remembered by all the employees, as well as by the cashier, that courtesy is a powerful pull to keep customers coming back to the super market. Just before the customer leaves the check-out stand the cashier must thank the customer for shopping in the store and she should ask her to come back again.

Pilferage by customers: Pilferage in the super markets cannot be overemphasized. Shoplifting can be controlled but it requires steady cooperation of every employee in the store. Alert cashiers who are aware that shoplifting exists can be of great assistance in controlling shoplifting. Whenever the cashier suspects anyone of pilfering in the store, she should call the manager's attention to the person suspected. The cashier must never let the person out of sight even for a few seconds as this would give the suspect plenty of time to dispose of the article.

Shopping bags, when carried through a super market, should be inspected by the cashier when the customer comes to the check-out stand. As the cashier starts to place the merchandise in a bag, a friendly comment such as, "Would you like this in your shopping bag, M'am?", will give the cashier ample opportunity to inspect the shopping bag. If the customer does not permit the cashier to put the merchandise in the shopping bag, the cashier should notify the manager so that he may watch this customer the next time she comes into the store.

The store manager or his assistant are the only people usually authorized to apprehend a shoplifter since they are better qualified to know the procedure to follow. The cashier should never accuse anyone of pilfering.

Bagging the customer's order: It very often happens that the cashier will be at the check-out stand by herself. It is, therefore, very important that she know how to bag a customer's order. This is very important because no sale is actually complete until the merchandise is safely deposited in the customer's home. Super market companies spend thousands of dollars each year in an effort to create and hold customer goodwill. All the merchandising effort, the low prices and the displays, are all made with a view to maintaining customer good-will.

The cashier is usually the last person to come into contact with a customer so it is well for the cashier to remember to make the customer's visit a pleasant one by bagging her orders properly. The following are some procedures which the cashier should be aware of when bagging a customer's order:

1. Bags are expensive so the selection of the proper size utilization of an empty box by the cashier or bagger will prove economical.
2. The bag should be opened gently, never snapped open. A solid foundation should be made on the bottom of the bag with the heavier, non-breakable items. Cans must be placed in an upright position. When packed snugly the bag will stand in an open position, allowing the cashier to use two hands in bagging the remainder of the order.



3. After the solid items have been placed on the bottom, the cashier should place glass items, meat, eggs and certain packaged foods in the bag. For topping, the cashier should use the highly perishable items from the produce department. The cashier must be careful of sharp corners and glass items which may tear the bag. These items should be placed in the middle of the bag. Also, the cashier should look in the small bags before placing them in larger bags as they may contain fruit or some crushable item.
4. Bakery items should be nested at the top of the bag or bagged separately, whichever will insure safe delivery to the customer's home.
5. Butter, yeast, and cream cheese, should be placed in a small bag before putting them in the larger bag since they are very susceptible to odors of soap, onions, garlic and fish.
6. When the cashier bags a large order she should equalize the load by placing half the heavy items in one bag and the other half in another bag and distribute the lighter merchandise on the top of each bag.
7. Bleach, ammonia and liquid starch should be placed in a separate bag. Extra precaution is

very necessary with these items since they can cause a great amount of damage if accidentally broken. Sometimes a friendly comment, such as "I've placed your bleach in a separate bag, M'am," will prove to the customer the cashier is interested in her welfare. Before putting bleach or ammonia bottles in a bag, the cashier must tighten all caps.

8. Bags should not be placed over brooms, mops, and buckets, unless the customer requests it. The cashier should try to remember to register these items first as they can be very easily overlooked if not checked at the beginning.
9. When boxes are available, the cashier should suggest them to the customers having larger orders. In most instances this is a convenience for the customer and the cashier asking the customer will be appreciated.
10. Ice cream and sherbet should be placed in insulated bags. These bags should not be used for any other items.
11. When a customer purchases frozen foods, the cashier should bag them separately before placing these items with the other items in the larger bag. If these frozen items are placed in the bag without separate wrapping they will soak through and break the side or bottom of the large bag.

12. A large bag of potatoes and cartons of tonic are just as easy to carry unwrapped if they won't fit into the bag with the other groceries.
13. When the bagging has been completed, the cashier should place the bag in the customer's arm and she must be sure that the customer has it securely. If the order is too large, the cashier should have a bagger or some other persons take the order out to the customer's car. The cashier should thank the customer for visiting the store and should ask her to return very shortly. This final courteous word will make the customer tell her friends about the courtesy extended to her and they will all realize that this super market is a good place to shop.

### Bagger Training

The bagger is another member of the very important team in the front end operation of a super market. Although very few companies have formal training programs for new baggers, some training is done on-the-job by either the store manager, head cashier, grocery manager or front section head. It is very important for the bagger to do a good job at his work and for the bagger to do an efficient job he must be aware of his

duties and responsibilities. A few of the super market chains are now putting their new baggers through a training program which will teach them how to do a good job in a super market.

It is very important that baggers be given training in job fundamentals to insure both uniformity and quality in the performance of their job assignments, especially when so many of the baggers are usually on a part-time basis. Attitudes as well as specific skills are equally important to the bagger who is to do an acceptable job. This section of the study on the front end operation will discuss the important parts of the bagger's training program to which the new bagger must be exposed. This is not the only information which should be passed on to the new bagger, but the material contained in this section is a typical example of the training material used by a few food chains that conduct training programs for their new baggers. The reason for this detailed material being inserted at this time is because of the lack of bagger training in the industry.

The bagger training program is usually divided into four parts:

1. Orientation to the job of bagger.
2. Steps in the bagging operation.
3. General policies.
4. Courtesy and service.

Orientation to the job of bagger: The bagger's first experience with the super market is a very important one as the first impression will give the bagger either a feeling that he wants to work for the store or it may leave him with a desire to look for another job. This is one reason why super market operators desire to have the new bagger report directly to the store manager on his first day at work. After being greeted by the manager, the bagger is given a time card with a few basic instructions on its proper use. The manager should demonstrate the procedures of checking in and checking out the time card so that the bagger will be familiar with this practice. The store manager should avoid both complicated and detailed instructions bearing upon the nature and extent of the bagger's job at this time. At this point, emphasis should be placed upon establishing an atmosphere of interest in the new employee's welfare.

After the little discussion with the store manager, the new bagger should be introduced to his department head, the cashier and the bagger with whom he will work until greater experience and facility in operations permit his transfer to other check-out stations. It is sometimes better to avoid hasty and generalized introductions to large numbers of employees. Although it is not the best policy to introduce the new bagger to every employee in the store, it is good, however, to introduce him to the other baggers who are more experienced

and whose stations are adjacent to the one assigned to the new bagger. The purpose of these introductions at this stage in the new bagger's orientation to an unfamiliar work situation is one of assuring him of sources of help, counsel and guidance when confused or uncertain of the things expected in job performance. Every effort, at this time, should be made to place the new employee in a job environment that meets the highest standards. It is also important to always bear in mind that a person learns from both good and bad habits and practices by observation.

The next step in the new bagger's orientation to his new job is the assigning of a sponsor to him. It is a good idea to plan the selection of all sponsors and the length of such sponsorship. The store manager should inform the sponsor what is expected of him in his relationship with the new employee. For example;

1. location of rest rooms,
2. procedure for punching time card at the beginning and the end of relief periods,
3. introduction to other employees on the check stand operation, and
4. general counsel and advice.

The sponsor should assume the major responsibility for obtaining adequate orientation of the new employee to his work environment. He must realize that the new employee will be some-

what fearful and apprehensive about many things that are expected of him during his first few days on a strange job. Important attitudes are made or broken during the initial stages of the new bagger's experiences.

One of the sponsor's first duties will be to escort the new bagger around the store. This should not be made with too much detail, but rather as help to the new employee so that the bagger may know where the major departments are in the store. The trip through the store, like the rest of the training program, should be pre-planned so that both the major departments, as well as interesting points of the super market operation, can be impressed upon the mind of the new bagger.

During the course of the tour, the store manager or the sponsor, should explain the differences between this store's operation and those of competition. After the tour is over the sponsor should cite interesting high-lights in the super market's growth and the growth of the food industry. The sponsor should try to build a sense of pride in membership in the super market's family and a sense of pride in the largest business in the world—the food business.

Steps in the bagging operation: After the orientation to the job of bagger, the new employee should be shown the steps in the bagging operation. Just before the different steps are explained to the new bagger he must be given a quick run-down of how his particular job fits into the whole check-out operation.

He should be told that the customer brings her order to the check-out stand where the cashier records the amount of the order. As soon as the cashier has started recording the customer's order, the bagger takes over and bags the order for the customer. After the order is bagged, the carry-out boy will bring the order to the customer's car.

After this very brief run-down of how the bagger's job fits into the whole check-out operation, the bagger should be placed in position at the end of the check-out stand. Again the general functions and purpose of his job as a bagger are explained to him, with special emphasis being placed on the following three points;

- a. to bag all merchandise as it reaches his work area,
- b. to carry loaded bags to bundle platform or conveyor belt for the carry-out boy, and
- c. to be generally helpful to the customer insofar as service is concerned.

The bagger should be told when he may leave his assigned station. The only reasons for leaving are when he is in service to the customer or for personal reasons, and then only when approved by his department head, so that his department head may put a replacement in at his position at the check-out stand.



The bagger must also be taught about the housekeeping phase of his new job which includes certain housekeeping responsibilities within the limits of his work area. This would involve telling him of the following:

1. The necessity and reasons for security and protection of paper supplies.
2. The disposal of odd scraps of paper on the check-out stand and in the work areas. The bagger should develop an interest and concern for neatness and cleanliness in all areas that he will ever work in a super market. It is also very important to mention the accident hazards presented by the lack of good housekeeping.
3. The disposal of produce scraps either on the check-out stand or on the floor around his check-out stand. The new bagger should be told how important this is, regarding the produce scraps, as this particular aspect of general housekeeping, when not done properly, involves the bulk of all accidents by customers. Customers slip on produce scraps very easily when the check-out stand is not kept clean.
4. Procedures in handling unusual accidents to merchandise at bagging areas. For example, breakage of glass, packaged merchandise and leakage.

Next, in the bagger training is the explanation of how he should maintain a good supply of bagging supplies. The bagger should be told when the bag racks in his check-out stand should be filled. These racks are usually filled at the start of the day's operation, at the close of the day's operation and in an emergency. He should also be told the location, in the check-out stand, of each type and each size of bag. Then the new bagger should be told where he can get refills for his check-out stand.

When the new bagger is told of the location of the bags, the sponsor should tell him of the importance of using the correct size and type of bag for the customers' orders. The different things that should be mentioned are as follows:

1. Cost --- the sponsor should explain very carefully the significance of cost of supplies. That is, the cost of one bag multiplied by the anticipated number of such bags to be used in one day's operation.
2. Customer dissatisfaction when the wrong size or type of bag is used in the bagging operation.
3. The alertness of the bagger to pick the proper size of the bag or bags required through the quick inspection of the size and character of the order being rung through the register.

Along with telling the bagger of the correct use of bags, he should be told of the correct use of cartons. The

new employee must be told when the cartons are available, that the cartons are to be used only upon specific request of the customer for small orders and that he should encourage the interest of the customer in the use of a carton, or cartons, for large or heavy orders.

Now that the employee has been told about the location of bags and the use of cartons, he should be told about some of the policies regarding the use of specific bag types. Some common policies being used by different food chains are as follows:

1. Small bags to be issued to the bagger by the cashier.
2. No bags of any type to be left on the top of the check-out stand.
3. Small bags are to be used for perishable vegetables not pre-wrapped. For example, native lettuce.
4. Berries are always to be placed in a small bag, even though pre-wrapped.
5. Butter, similarly, if wrapped only in parchment paper.
6. All cupped meats, fish, and delicatessen items are to be put in small bags.
7. Fish, other than self-service items, are to be put in small bags.

8. Ice cream bags are to be used only for the protection of ice cream.
9. The customer should be encouraged, by the bagger, to put yeast cakes in her purse, rather than use a small bag. The bagger should identify the safety and security factor in this practice.

Up to this point the new bagger has been told a great number of different things regarding his new job. The next step in this training program is the actual bagging operation. During this next phase of the operation the sponsor should remind the bagger of the different points covered up to then, while the bagger is bagging his first order. The following are the steps the new bagger would be instructed to do to bag his first order:

1. Put the bag in the proper position at the bagging station. The bagging station is usually at the end of the check-out stand. Then the bagger would place himself at the rear of the check-out stand. The sponsor should explain to the bagger the purpose of the bag well, its origin and its use. Another point which should be mentioned is the fact that there is greater productivity and easier work when the bag well is used.

2. The bag is then opened, with the sponsor demonstrating the special skill or knack involved. It should be emphasized



that two hands should be used in squaring the base of the bag to prevent tipping.

3. The bagger is now ready to bag the merchandise. The bagger should be shown that it is best to reach for the accumulated merchandise with both hands, selecting and picking the heavier items first. This latter operations should be accomplished by ready inspection of available merchandise in the customer's order. The reason why two hands are used should also be explained to the new bagger. The reasons are that it assures a faster operation and that the United States Department of Agriculture has proven that the use of two hands is less fatiguing.

4. The smaller, or fragile, perishable items should be put to one side for later use in "topping" the bag. The bagger should fill the bag only half full of the more solid items thus reserving the balance of the bag for the lighter, more perishable or fragile items. The bagger should be told of the importance to the customer in having her load properly balanced.

5. If a particular order includes a large number of produce items, these items should be bagged separately. When there are cans in the order these should be placed upright at the bottom of the bag. Also placed at the bottom of the bag are large bottled merchandise, but not glass jars. For example, bleach water. There is a special thing which the bagger must do in regard to bleach water. He must test the tightness and



security of the metal cap on all bleach water bottles before placing them in the bag.

6. Any fish, leaking meat items, or wet produce items are put in separate, smaller bags first and then place this merchandise in larger bags with the rest of the order. At the same time the bagger must remember not to put soap products near meat, produce or dairy items.

7. The bagger must place, not drop or throw, merchandise into the bag. He must put himself in the position of the customer. He must think of the merchandise he is handling as his own and therefore must not mis-handle or carelessly handle any of the merchandise.

8. After the order has been registered, the bagger must put the register receipt in the loaded bag so that it will not be easily lost.

9. The bagger should readily offer, or should call a carry-out boy, to carry all large orders to either the customer's car or to the bundle check room. Personal judgment of the bagger is of prime importance at this point. It should not be necessary for the customer to have to ask for this special service. The department head should explain to the new employee the reasonable distance to which an order should be carried in answer to a long distance carrying request. The manner in which the bagger should handle such a request should be shown to the bagger, without upsetting the customer. An example would be, "May I ask my department head for permission to be away from my work?"



10. If the customer wishes to carry her own bundles, the bagger must lift and hand them to her. The bagger should also anticipate the customer's acceptance of their weight by retaining tentative possession of the bag or bags until the bagger is sure that the customer has them securely in hand. When the bagger lifts a loaded bag, he should be careful to give it support at the bottom. In addition, he should be shown how to lift heavy objects from a semi-crouched position so that the physical strain is placed on the strong, flexible muscles of his legs and thighs rather than upon the less substantial structure of the back.

11. If the bagger carries out a customer's order to her car, he should take care in placing these bundles in her car. These bundles should be placed in such a manner that no extra hazard is caused the customer in the operation of her automobile. For example, the bagger should not place the order against the car door.

This would end another part of the new employee's training. The bagging operations would have to be done over and over again under the supervision of the sponsor. The sponsor would help the new bagger by showing and telling him of the correct procedure in bagging an order.

General policies: Sometime during the morning training session, the sponsor would discuss with the new bagger a number of general policies relating to the new job or to the store.

as a whole. The first of the general policies might concern the personal appearance of the new employee. This discussion would involve talking about the company policies regarding being clean shaven, necktie tied properly, hair trimmed and combed, shoes shined and care of his uniform.

The second of the general policies which should be discussed with the new employee deals with personal habits. Some of these might include being alert, and looking alert on the job; not lounging on the check-out stand; not chewing gum while on duty; not smoking while in the store; and avoiding undue conversation with either the customer or fellow employees. This is particularly important insofar as any disturbance of the cashier is concerned.

The third of the general policies might deal with customer tipping. Most food chains instruct their employees not to accept tips from customers.

Another general policy which should be discussed with the new employee relates to special services. This would include telling the new bagger the following;

- a. to be alert so that when the opportunity presents itself he may be helpful to a fellow employee,
- b. to give exceptional service to the aged, crippled shoppers, and pregnant women, and
- c. to work with the clean-up detail at the close of the working day.

The fifth general policy which the new bagger should be aware of concerns dependability. He should be told what to do in case of an emergency or illness prevents him from reporting for duty. This would involve telling him to notify the store manager or his department head promptly so that either one of them can make the necessary arrangements to cover his station. Also, if an emergency or illness requires the bagger to leave work early, that he should make every effort to provide his department head with sufficient notice to enable him to secure a replacement.

The last general policy that should be discussed with the new employee should concern employee purchases. This would involve telling him when he could make his purchases, and how they are to be handled.

Courtesy and service: The bagger, during his first day at work, should be told about the important role courtesy and service plays in the super market operation. This would involve telling him about the super market business being built upon and distinguished from other super market operations by the quality of service given to the customers. It should be explained that courtesy and service are the super market's most important assets and that they make his job a reality.

The bagger should consider the customer as a guest and she should be treated as such. There is never an excuse, whatever the provocation, for treating her otherwise.

He should never argue with a customer. If differences cannot be easily adjusted, then the department head should be called for help.

The bagger should learn how to smile because a smile is reflected in the voice as well as on the face. Also, being courteous is the least expensive thing a person can do and pleasantness breeds further pleasantness. No matter how unreasonable a customer may appear, the bagger must learn to never lose his sense of perspective.

The new employee must remember when dealing with people that little words such as "Please", and "Thank You", pay big dividends in cooperation.

#### Parcel Pick-up Boys and Unloaders Training

Very few companies have special training programs for the parcel pick-up boys and unloaders. Usually these employees go through the bagger's training program as these employees rotate between the jobs of bagger, unloader and parcel pick-up. It is very important, therefore, that these employees go through the bagger training program as well as learning about the jobs of unloader and parcel pick-up. Everything that was stressed for the bagger should be taught to the parcel pick-up boys and unloaders, as well as their special responsibilities of being courteous and of service to the customer.

Most of the super market companies have the store manager, head clerk, head cashier or front section head explain

the responsibilities and duties to the new unloaders and parcel pick-up boys. None of these explanations are very long and these employees usually learn their jobs very quickly. They must be checked very often by their superior as these employees seem to be very lax when it comes to being courteous to customers.

## CHAPTER IV

### EQUIPMENT IN THE FRONT END OF A SUPER MARKET

#### Check-outs

Super market operators are presently using in their stores a great variety of check-outs. The type of check-out used in a particular super market operation must be the most efficient available for the store. It must be remembered, though, that the check-out is only as good as the cashier using it.

In choosing a check-out for a super market operation there are a number of important factors which must be taken into consideration. The first of these is that the check-out must be able to be operated efficiently. Profit margins are too small to allow for inaccuracies in the customer's favor and customers are too important to allow for any inaccuracies in the super market's favor. The check-out must bring all error causing factors to a minimum. It is generally known that errors are caused by fatigue, distraction, pressure and confusion. Therefore, the check-out chosen for a super market should eliminate as many of these factors as possible.

The next important factor which must be taken into consideration is labor cost. The check-out should have the

greatest capacity possible. This means the greatest possible volume per check-out at the least expenditure of labor. Today's super market depends on fast turnover of both customers and merchandise. This speed can be gained in two different ways; first, by rushing customers through the check-out and, second, by streamlining the entire front end operation. If the check-out is streamlined in an efficient manner, the maximum speed will automatically follow.

The check-out must be so designed that it gives cashier and customer satisfaction. The cashier must be able to feel that the check-out she is using is designed for her and that it is a help and not a hindrance. The customer must also be satisfied with the check-out. It makes her shopping trip more pleasant. She should not have to go away from the store saying that the check-out caused her a great amount of aggravation.

The major types of check-outs being used by the super markets at the present time are as follows:

1. The Conventional Check-out.
2. The Push-pull Type Check-out.
3. The Split Counter Type Check-out.
4. The Simplex Check-out.
5. The Belt Type Check-out.
6. The Disc Type Check-out.
7. The Redi-chek Check-out.
8. The "No Wait" Check-out.

### The Conventional Check-out

The conventional check-out is frequently called the "L-shaped" check-out or the "straight-line" check-out. This check-out represents the basic pattern of all check-outs. It includes the register platform and a longer unobstructed surface where the check-out operation may be preformed.

### The Push-pull Type Check-out

The push-pull type check-out is also called the Weingarten, the draw bar, shuttle arm, or the merchandise rake device. This check-out is very similar to the conventional type check-out. This is a customer loading system in which the customer places packages on an extension of the check-out and the cashier pulls the merchandise forward with a "U - shaped" device which slides back and forth on the check-out.

### The Split Counter Type Check-out

The split counter type check-out is also called the Delchamps split-stand check-out as this check-out was developed for the Delchamps stores. This check-out is based on the conventional type check-out. It differs in that a slot is placed diagonally at right angle of the "L" that forms the check-out. This slot is wide enough for a shopping carriage to be pulled through, from the customer to the other side of the working platform. The customer is then separated from her order. The checking operation is performed by the cashier as



she removes the merchandise from the shopping carriage. The cashier unloads the shopping carriage with one hand while simultaneously registering the items with the other hand. This combines into one step, two of the basic operations of the conventional check-out.

### The Simplex Check-out

In contrast to the conventional check-out, where the equipment is designed for customers to unload their own merchandise from the shopping carriage, the Simplex check-out provides for the shopping carriage to be emptied by the cashier. This check-out is very similar to the split counter check-out in that the customer is separated from her shopping carriage by the working platform. The shopping carriage is placed directly to the cashier's left. The cashier registers each item directly from the shopping carriage and then places this item into the bag, held open by a suction device which applies a vacuum through two rubber cups built into the walls of the holding well. With this check-out operation, sorting of the merchandise is eliminated and the registering and bagging elements are combined into a simultaneous operation.

### The Belt Type Check-out

The belt type check-out is also called the conveyor belt check-out, the continuous belt conveyor check-out, the "Dayton Speedline" check-out, the "Rapistan" check-out and the "Quick-Chek" check-out. This type of check-out is being

manufactured by many manufacturing concerns with slight differences in each model.

This check-out is very similar to the conventional type check-out except that the entire counter surface, or most of it, is covered by a continuous belt conveyor. This belt is controlled by a foot pedal or hip switch, which is operated by the cashier. The customer, in this operation, unloads her order from the shopping carriage to the moving belt. The items are registered by the cashier as they pass by on the moving belt. At the end of the counter surface the merchandise is bagged by the cashier or the bagger.

#### The Disc Type Check-out

The disc type check-out is also called the rotary type check-out, the "Spee-Dee" check-out, and the "Turn-ez" check-out. The design of the disc type check-out substitutes a revolving disc for the "U-shaped" device that is used on the push-pull check-out. The customer puts her merchandise on the disc from the shopping carriage. This disc is either mechanically operated, by either a hip or foot switch, or manually rotated by the cashier.

The operation of the disc type check-out is very similar to that of the conventional type check-out, except that the customer unloads her shopping carriage, thus eliminating this function for the cashier. The cashier starts registering the order while the customer is unloading her shopping carriage.

This type of check-out can be operated by one, two or three persons very easily.

#### The Redi-check Check-out

The Redi-check check-out is very similar to the belt type check-out, with the exception of two important details. The first is that a cashier's bagging well has been built into the stand. The second important difference is that there are adequate facilities provided for one or two baggers during rush periods.

As in the belt type check-out, a belt is used to convey the merchandise from the beginning of the counter, after being put there by the customer or unloader, to the cashier. Directly to the cashier's left is a bagging well. When the cashier is bagging by herself, she is able to simultaneously register and bag the items. During rush periods, when one or two baggers are added, the bagging well, next to the cashier, is covered over by a hinged aluminum cover. When this cover is in position, the check-out operates in a manner similar to the belt type check-out.

#### The "No Wait" Check-out

This check-out is designed to handle heavy traffic flow during volume periods. During rush periods, the manufacturers of this check-out recommend that four or five employees work at this check-out. They suggest having one employee

as an unloader, another as a checker to register the order, another as a cashier to collect for the order, and two to do the bagging. In the operation of this check-out a telephone system is used to connect the unloader with the checker. The unloader calls the department the merchandise is from and the price to the checker. The checker then registers the item on the register. The checker registers all the items and then passes the receipt to the cashier who collects the money from the customer. All of this is being done while the merchandise moves along the conveyor belt to the baggers who bag the order for the customer.

This "No Wait" check-out can be operated by one to five employees, depending upon the amount of traffic. When one, two or three employees operate this check-out, it is operated similar to the conveyor belt check-out. At the present time there are very few of the "No Wait" check-outs being operated with the telephone system because it was found by many operators that it can become very expensive.

The eight types of check-outs mentioned are not the only ones in use today. There are a great number of variations but all these variations are only slightly different to one of the types mentioned in this study. Most of these differences were made to suit a particular operation because of some different policy in the operation of the front end.



### Cash Registers

There are two common types of cash registers presently being used in the super markets. Both of these registers are manufactured by The National Cash Register Company. Both these registers are very similar, with the exception that the newest model has motorized departmental keys.

A number of companies have reported that they have increased the speed of registering a customer's order with this new machine. This register is designed to maintain fast performance on conveyor type check-outs and the problem of taxable and multiple-price items can also be handled with this system. It is recommended that a "set aside" space, where an unloader would assemble such items as he unloaded the customers' shopping carriages, be used.

Some companies are using different types of registers in their front end operations for the purpose of bottle returns and refunds. These registers are of the adding machine type with a till built inside for the cash. The reason for this is that the cost of a larger register is not warranted in the case of bottle returns and refunds and that these less expensive registers do the job required.

### Shopping Carriages

Most of the super markets presently have the nesting type shopping carriages in their stores. There is a little difference in the models being produced by the different

manufacturers and these minor differences are usually in size and design. The main thing regarding the types of carriages used in the stores is the size. If the isles are small then the carriages should not be too large because the customers will be bumping each other which will result in customer inconvenience. Special care should also be made to see that the front is covered with some soft rubber or similar material which will not mark up the counters and which will protect the customers if they are hit on the legs by some other customer. Also, the moveability of these carriages must be taken into consideration.

#### Other Equipment in the Front End

A number of super market companies have other types of equipment in their front end operation. This extra equipment is used to provide extra service for the customer. The piece of equipment which is coming into more and more use is the bottle return machine. This machine, which is designed and works like a dumb-waiter, transports the empty bottles from the bottle return depot in the store to the storage room in the basement.

Some super market companies use special rollers or conveyors to transport the customers' orders to parcel pick-up stations. This eliminates the need for the parcel pick-up boys to take the customers' orders from the check-out to the pick-up station. Other companies use special carriages, which





are used by the parcel pick-up boys to transport the orders from the check-outs to the customers' cars.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

During the past decade, with the advent of self-service, super markets have become larger and consequently less personalized. The only major part of a super market where employees are continually coming into contact with the customers is in the front end of the store. Because of this the front end operation has become one of the most important parts of a super market.

The procedures used in this operation have long been neglected and the inadequacy of the present day front end operation in general use is becoming increasingly obvious. Many super market operators are, therefore, re-examining this important part of a super market because this operation must be of service to the customers and must be operated efficiently.

The organizational structures of the different front end operations fall into two categories: those front end operations which are operated as part of the grocery departments and those which are operated as a separate section or service department. It should be noted that one way is not necessarily better than another as both organizational set-ups are being used by successful super market companies. What matters is that the organizational structure used must be practical and efficient for the job to be done.

In any successful operation, responsibilities must be assigned so that the different jobs may be done. It does not matter whether this is the store manager, grocery manager, front section head or head cashier. When an employee is assigned to his respective job he must be told of his responsibilities and how these responsibilities help in achieving the objectives of the front end operation and those of a super market.

The person who is responsible for this operation is responsible for the employees under him, for the efficient operation of the front end, for being of service to customers and for the cleanliness in the front end of the store. Certain super market companies divide these responsibilities into two parts under the store manager. This results in (1) a front section head being responsible for the baggers, parcel pick-up boys and unloaders as well as (2) a head cashier being responsible for the cashiers and bookkeeper.

The supervisor for a super market is the contact between the store and the head office. He is responsible to the administration for the complete operation of the front end. In performing his job he must check all parts of the front end operation which includes financial, operational, housekeeping, personnel, management and administrative aspects.

The importance of training employees in the front end of a super market cannot be overemphasized. Experience has shown that better performance is achieved, closer adherence to established company policies, more courtesy to customers,

better utilization of time and more employee satisfaction when training is given to employees. Therefore, all the personnel in the front end should go through some training before they start, or as they start, to work.

Training employees for the front end not only produces better operating results, but increases the versatility of these employees for transfers and their qualifications for promotion. Training also enables employees to adjust themselves to new methods, reduces dissatisfaction, absenteeism and turnover.

Training of the front section head, head cashier, bookkeeper, baggers, unloaders and parcel pick-up boys is usually done on the job. There is usually no formal training program for these employees and their training is limited to the knowledge of the more experienced help. In the case of the cashiers, they are given a certain amount of formal training both on and off the job.

In all cases, training should be given new employees with special emphasis being placed on the training of cashiers and baggers. The cashier should go through a training program which will acquaint her with all aspects of her job, not just the operation of registering customers' orders. She should also be told about greeting customers, arranging the orders, making change, courtesy, cleanliness, cash control, company policies and bagging orders.

The bagger should also go through a training program. He should be acquainted with all aspects of his job which includes the steps in bagging a customer's order, courtesy, cleanliness, service to the customers and knowledge of company policies.

Although the personnel of the front end of a super market are very important, some consideration must also be given to the equipment used in this operation. Equipment used in this section of a super market are check-outs, cash registers, bottle return machines, shopping carriages, rollers and conveyors.

In selecting equipment for the front end operation there are certain requirements which should be taken into consideration; namely, that the piece of equipment can be operated or used efficiently, that the labor costs involved are the lowest possible, and that the equipment is so designed as to give customer and cashier satisfaction.

At the present time there are a great variety of check-outs being used in super markets, but, of all these, there are only eight major variations. These are as follows:

1. The Conventional Check-out.
2. The Push-pull Type Check-out.
3. The Split Counter Type Check-out.
4. The Simplex Check-out.
5. The Belt Type Check-out.

6. The Disc Type Check-out.
7. The Redi-check Check-out.
8. The "No Wait" Check-out.

All these factors then - proper organization, proper division of responsibilities, proper training and proper equipment - make up an efficient and successful front end operation. It is the smooth functioning of this department, its contribution to operational control and the effect which it has in creating and maintaining customer goodwill which can mean the difference between success and failure of a super market establishment.

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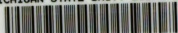
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