

## SHOP THE BAD MANNERED RETAIL WORKERS UNDER CUSTOMER ATTACK

UK retail workers are being bullied, reduced to tears, and even physically abused by cruel consumers, according to new research from Retailchoice.com, one of the UK's leading recruitment websites.

**Ninety five per cent** of retail staff encounter rude customers on a regular basis, with **43 per cent** having to put up with bad manners between one and six times a day. Alarming, **fifty nine per cent** of staff complain of customers shouting and swearing at them, whilst an irate consumer has reduced **one in five** shop workers to tears. Women are most likely to weep at poor manners, with **28 per cent** admitting to crying over a callous customer.

When asked to name their worst customer experience, countless respondents report incidents of being spat at, with one respondent claiming: "A customer told me they would 'get me the sack' and 'smash my face in' because I'd told them the changing rooms were closed. After work I had to get security to escort me to the back of the building as they were in fact waiting for me outside the shopping centre."

It appears that females are the rudest shoppers, with **44 per cent** of workers finding women more aggressive as they shop.

And it's not teenagers and the elderly that are a sufferance to serve. "Retail rage" is most rife amongst middle-aged Britons, with **38 per cent** of retail employees finding these customers the most bereft of basic manners. Busy professionals are next in line, with **26 per cent** of shop workers stating that these are the rudest customers.

Not returning items to the right place and messing up the shop by dropping things and leaving them on the floor top the list of most frequently encountered inconsiderate behaviour, according to the survey. **Sixty-two per cent** of staff bemoan customers trying to return goods they have damaged, with out of control children ruining shop displays another pet hate. **Fifty four per cent** of shop workers despair at customers who try on the entire shop and leave empty handed.

Despite the testing treatment from many consumers, the vast majority of retail workers take it in their stride. **Eighty six per cent** resist temptation and have never enacted an act of revenge on a customer. Of those that have succumbed to settling a score, acts of vengeance include leaving security tags on goods and banning customers from the shop.

It appears that consumers in the South West are the most aggressive shoppers, with **76 per cent** of shop assistants complaining of customers shouting and swearing at them. Retail staff in the North East and Northern Ireland enjoy slightly more mild mannered customers, with **51 per cent** resorting to verbal abuse.

John Salt, website director of Retailchoice commented:

"Clearly, there are times when the customer is not always right. In an increasingly consumer driven society, we naturally think that retail workers should behave exactly as we want them to in order to part with our hard earned cash.

Yet it is clear that many customers are taking this beyond the limit of decent, reasonable behaviour. Working in retail requires people to be calm under pressure, have attention to detail, excellent customer service skills and the ability to multitask.

It seems that the professional attributes of Britain's shop workers are being overlooked, and I urge consumers to think about their behaviour if they're looking to receive service with a smile."