Reflection Essay

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During my five months of working at Walgreens as a customer service associate, I have learned to handle difficult situations, work under stress, and to give great customer service. Not only that, I have also gained knowledge of how a company operates.

Our store usually has four workers during the 4 - 10 P.M. night shift. Sometimes, when a coworker is unable to come to work the shift, he/she must contact another coworker to cover the shift. However, if it is an emergency situation and no one is available to cover the shift, the three other workers will need to split the work that belongs to the fourth person and finish it. This has happened several times during my time at Walgreens and we were able to finish the extra work. For example, when our beauty advisor is not here, there is only one cashier. When the line gets long, the photo specialist and manager need to work as back up cashiers to help the customers who are waiting in line. When the store closes, each worker has to make sure the aisles they are responsible look nice and put misplaced products back to their spots. When the beauty advisor is not here, the cashier will help the beauty advisor with her aisles and also clean the bathrooms. I learned that work is not like school. In school, we can make up an absence and finish the work later but we cannot do that at work.

I have also become skilled at customer service and human interaction. Our store has a policy that cashiers must say "Welcome to Walgreens" to every customer who walks into the store. The saying can get redundant after awhile but customers will feel important and welcomed when they hear it. I also noticed that a lot of customers are afraid to ask for help. I always ask customers if they need help finding anything. To my surprise, many of them actually need help finding something but feel they will bother the workers for asking. It is important to respect the customers because they will not come back to a store if the workers are not friendly.

The last thing I learned from working at Walgreens is that it is a lot of work to run a store. It needs many people in management. For instance, our store has one general manager, one assistant manager, and three shift leaders. The managers also have to be clever. One guy tried to steal lighter and batteries from our store once while I was ringing him up for other products. Luckily, my assistant manager noticed and caught him before he could take them out of the store. Another time, when I was working as a beauty advisor, a guy grabbed a stack of twenty dollar bills out of my coworker's drawer and ran out the store. I was still shocked from trying to figure out what happened but my manager was already dialing 911 to get help. It is important to remain calm as a worker because emergency situations happen all the time.

This was my first job and I must say that I gained a lot of experience from this job during these short five months.