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**ABC STORES, INC.**  
**SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT &**  
**GENERAL MERCHANDISE MANAGER (GMM)**

**Qualifications and Position Description**

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**The Company**

ABC Stores is a regional apparel and soft-goods family-oriented retailer offering high quality, name brand men's, women's, and children's apparel and family footwear at competitive prices. Selected aspirational home accessories and furnishing lines were recently added to the merchandise mix. The Company has been in business for over 70 years and enjoys a popular reputation for great values, service and contemporary style. Headquartered in Emerson City, NJ, the Company operates 50 stores located primarily in better strip malls, power centers, and downtown shopping corridors.

The Company has recently been purchased by a private equity firm that is looking to strengthen the management team and position the Company for rapid store expansion.

**GENERAL POSITION DESCRIPTION**

The General Merchandise Manager (GMM) is an executive officer of the Company and a member of the Executive Committee. The GMM is responsible for promoting and communicating the Company's merchandising vision and concept through insightful vendor and product selection. The GMM strengthens the market position and brand recognition of the Company through the skillful selection of innovative merchandise, both basic and fashion oriented, that appeal to the Company's targeted customers. The GMM prepares merchandising and seasonal event plans and presents these plans to the Chief Executive Officer. The merchandise plans include both key performance goals and qualitative measures which include such considerations as vendor mix; assortments; styles, colors, patterns, and textures, "must-have" items, and price points. The GMM is accountable for the achievement of the merchandise plan, including in-store content and visuals, timeliness, seasonal transition, and the key performance measures.

As a Company executive, the GMM represents a key leadership position in the Company. In addition to overseeing the merchandising functions, the GMM also participates with the other executives in recommending and establishing Company-wide policies and practices. Accordingly, the GMM must actively contribute an executive level perspective to the business as well as contribute necessary merchandising and buying skills and abilities. The GMM participates in the Company's Executive Incentive Plan.

The GMM frequently visits the stores and the competition to assess visual merchandising, display, and selling techniques. The GMM works closely with the SVP of Stores in evaluating the in-store merchandise mix and presentation.

## REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The GMM reports to the Chief Executive Officer. The following positions and functions report to the GMM:

- Divisional merchandise managers (DMM's).
- Vice-President (Director) of Merchandise Planning and Control
- Vice-President (Director) of Allocation.
- Field and presentation merchandisers.

## POSITION EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal GMM candidate:

- Has five to eight years experience in increasingly responsible management level retailing and buying responsibilities.
- Is currently a GMM or has significant GMM duties in a smaller company or is a divisional merchandise manager in a larger company.
- Has a leadership or dominant role in either merchandise or retail concept branding, luxury or aspirational goods selection, home goods selection, or in the promotion of highly correlated personal use merchandise.
- Has had merchandise performance and planning responsibility.
- Must demonstrate past skill and ability to actively work as an Executive Committee member to strengthen the overall management structure and effectiveness of the Company.
- Will have a reputation of leadership and a record of implementing performance and process standards.
- Will demonstrate a professional attitude working with the owners, co-executives, store managers, and other staff.
- Seeks to overcome obstacles with a collaboratively problem solving style.
- Communicates maturely and professionally throughout the organization, has a clear and forceful point of view regarding merchandise standards and store presentation.
- While expecting high levels of performance throughout the business, is free from dysfunctional personality characteristics.
- Exhibits high levels of professional temperament.

## JOB RESPONSIBILITIES AND KEY DUTIES

The following activities represent the primary position responsibilities:

**Business and Merchandising Concept.** The GMM is responsible to the Chief Executive Officer and the President to define and clarify the overall merchandising concept and stylistic direction of the Company. In addition, the GMM assists in defining the Company's targeted customers and selecting merchandise that appeals to its key customers. Based on in-store competitor visits and discussions with vendors, the GMM advises the CEO on competitor trends and market and vendor developments which have bearing on the appeal of the Company's merchandise to its customers.

**Vendor Selection and Merchandise Mix** The GMM maintains favorable relationships with current and future vendors. Vendor performance is evaluated periodically in terms of sales, margin, other terms, ability to enforce ABC Stores merchandise concept, and overall customer acceptance. The number

of vendors and overall number of SKU's is periodically challenged to prevent dilution of product dominance.

**Category Performance and Assortments.** The GMM regularly measures and assesses category performance and implements changes in item mix, style, assortment, pricing, or vendors to prevent erosion of category market share. The GMM quickly evaluates and recommends alternative merchandising plans to reverse negative sales trends in certain key, signature categories.

**In-Store Visual Merchandising.** The GMM is responsible for all in-store visual merchandising: display, positioning, signage, and adjacencies. The Director of Visual Merchandising reports to the GMM and assists the GMM in these duties. Responsibility to implement visual merchandising designs and styles is that of the Director of Stores; however, the GMM is responsible for setting the visual and artistic merchandising policies, styles, designs, and themes, including window themes. After approval from the CEO, the GMM and Director of Visual Merchandising prepare and distribute in-store merchandising calendars and update the Company's written visual presentation guide lines.

**Store Merchandise Assortments.** While the stores are expected to present a consistent ABC Stores merchandise image, there are market differences among the stores. Based on input from the SVP Stores and Store Managers, the GMM defines how the merchandise mix reflects the individual store needs.

**Non-Store Merchandise Coordination.** The GMM oversees e-commerce and catalog merchandise selection to achieve a consistent and complimentary merchandising image. Even though the Director of Non-Store Sales does not directly report to the GMM, the GMM works with the Director of Non-Store Sales to prepare written merchandising plans covering both basic, fashion, and seasonal merchandise and themes for e-commerce and catalog operations.

**Merchandise Planning, Control, and Allocation.** The GMM determines that merchandise arrives on time and is ordered in economic quantities to avoid both under- and over-stock situations. The GMM is assisted in these duties by the Director of Inventory Planning and Control. Through the Director of Inventory Planning and Control, the GMM oversees the replenishment and allocation systems and determines that the overall investment in inventory remains in-line with the financial plan requirements. Corrective actions are taken to adjust stock levels to necessary requirements. The GMM is responsible to achieve the Company's sales and gross margin performance goals.

**Private Label Business Development.** Private label products represent promising opportunities to expand gross margins and to extend the ABC Stores' brand. Accordingly, the GMM plays a key role in identifying products and styles and locating suitable sources and vendors to design and manufacture private label merchandise.

**Store Visits and Operations.** The GMM visits stores monthly to assess the effectiveness of store merchandising and to discuss merchandise plans with store managers. The GMM coordinates store visits with the SVP of Stores.

**Seasonal and Event Plans.** The GMM is responsible to plan, order, and promote seasonal and Holiday merchandise.

**Merchandise System Operation.** Even though the GMM is not responsible for the operation of the merchandising systems, the GMM is to become fully conversant with the Company's primary merchandising system and to recommend enhancements to the system to provide pertinent information to improve merchandise performance.