

SECTION: 4: Investigating Design Principles and Art Elements to Communicate Store Image and Build Profitable Retail Sales

Part 3: Summary of Merchandise Presentation and Display for Communicating Store Image and Building Profitable Sales

In summary of *“Establishing the Retail Environment/Store Image: Visual Merchandising and Display”*, a review of “The Six Basic Principles of a Retail Merchandise Presentation or Display” is presented below:

THE SIX BASIC PRINCIPLES OF A RETAIL MERCHANDISE PRESENTATION OR DISPLAY

- **Plan Your Merchandise Presentation and Displays**
 - Know what, where, when, and why about the theme, special event, and merchandise itself.
 - Develop a plan including a timetable, organizational chart of activities, and sketch to scale for all major displays.
 - Coordinate interior store displays with window displays and/or “windows-on-the-aisle displays”.
 - Be aware of what is happening in your local community, country, and world.
 - Make plans in advance based on the previous year’s sales, promotions, and special events.
 - Keep a special events calendar with types of activities, displays, etc.
 - Coordinate displays with advertising, special events, and promotions.

- **Select Merchandise Thoughtfully**
 - Keep abreast of the latest fashion trends, new market developments, and new merchandise classifications and accessory trends.
 - Be sure there is enough backup stock to support the display.
 - Make sure theme, sizes, styles, fabrications, and colors are compatible.
 - Prepare the merchandise for display in advance – remove tickets, steam wrinkled fabrications, brush surfaces, etc.

- **Select Color First and Then Define Lines**
 - Select a background color and props that enhance the merchandise.
 - Remember, color is the first component that attracts the viewer’s attention.
 - There is a psychology to color that sets the mood and becomes symbolic for seasons and events.
 - Avoid the use of too many horizontal or perpendicular lines in a display.
 - Plan the focal point and use repetition to create rhythm.
 - Use texture to enhance the merchandise.
 - Use neutral backgrounds with brightly colored merchandise and props.
 - Use pastel backgrounds with drab merchandise and neutral props.
 - Avoid using a material for backgrounds that calls attention to the background rather than the merchandise.

- **Maintain Good Composition**
 - Check proportions of props and merchandise in relation to space and boundaries of the display.
 - Decide upon formal or informal balance based on merchandise type.
 - Plan a dominant point, usually the merchandise itself, in the display.
 - Assure there is rhythm or flow throughout the display.
 - Check for the effectiveness of repetition in the display.
 - Review, critique, and revise your work as you create the display.

- **Plan Lighting Techniques**
 - Avoid the use of fluorescent lights for window displays.
 - Use lighting to create motion and rhythm in the display, if appropriate for theme and merchandise classifications being featured.
 - Use different light sources on the same selling floor; highlight and accent fluorescent primary lighting with LED secondary lighting.
 - Remember, fluorescent lights are available in colors of “white”, from cool blue to warm white with peach tones.
 - Replace fluorescent lights with HID lights when both shadows and highlights are desired on the selling floor.

- **Evaluate the Overall Effectiveness of the Presentation**
 - Was the theme easily comprehended?
 - Did the display sell merchandise and create multiple sales?
 - Did the display inform, teach, and motivate the target consumer to take action?
 - Did the display reflect the store and fashion image?
 - Did the display assist with customer self-selection?
 - Did the display sell merchandise not included in the display?