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# THIS IS RETAIL

• CAREERS •

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## Gary Cammack, Owner Cammack Ranch Supply, Union Center, SD

### Describe your business.

We are a farm and ranch supply store that specializes in meeting ranchers's needs over an 8-state area. We've been able to grow our business from a general store to a farm and ranch supply store that has almost 3/4 of a mile of frontage along a state highway

### How did you originally get started in retailing?

My first retail job was selling peanuts at a stock show when I was 9 years old. My wife Amy and I started in business at a general store at Stoneville, South Dakota in 1973.

### What message would you have for people thinking about a career in retail?

You've got to have a passion for the customers that you serve and the segment of the business that you're trying to serve. If you go into business and your only motivation is to make money, chances are that you're going to fail. But if you go into business with a passion for the customers that you serve and the products you sell, you will go far.

### What is the most common misconception about retail?

Some people think that the main focus of a retail business is profit and that's far from the truth. Your main focus can't be profit. Your main focus has to be your customer and the products that you offer that customer. The other misconception is that people think that folks in retail are dealing with huge margins. Most retail businesses, at the end of the day if you end up with 2 to 3% you're a world champion. The margins are fairly thin when it's all said and done.

### Why is retail important to a community?

When the local baseball team needs a donation to keep ball fields maintained, when the local fair needs someone to help provide some food for a BBQ for the community, when a young person is looking for some job opportunities



*"I've been in retail for over 40 years and boredom has never been a problem, ever. If you want a job that constantly keeps you interested and mentally stimulated, retail is as good as it gets."*  
Gary Cammack

and doesn't want to leave the community, retail does a good job of keeping the fabric of the community knitted together.

### What is your philosophy of business?

You're a steward of the assets that you've been entrusted with, so you're not only responsible for the business but you're responsible for the employees that you've hired and you're responsible for the future of the employees' families and you're responsible for the success of the local community. You do have your name on the title and on the bottom line, but in the end you're a caretaker for a lot of things.

### In the big picture, what do people need to keep in mind when it comes to a career in retail?

I truly believe that as far as opportunity goes, there's never been a better time to look at opportunities in retail business, no matter where you reside. If you reside in a city or if you reside in a very rural area, the ability to reach out to customers that are a long ways away from you is at your fingertips whether you're in rural South Dakota or downtown Sioux Falls.

For more information about This is Retail - South Dakota:  
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