

Classroom Activity Instructor Guide: 20 Questions with Burlington Stores

RISE Up Program

RISE Up is the NRF Foundation training and credentialing program that provides foundational employability skills to help young people acquire the skills they need to land jobs in retail and advance into promising careers.

The supplemental classroom activities for the RISE Up program will provide students with the opportunity to gain unique perspectives from retail leaders and insights into current issues impacting businesses

Activity Objective

The **20 Questions with Burlington Stores** is a 37-minute informative video with Jonathan Savoy, Vice President - Merchandise Planning at Burlington Stores, Inc. Mr. Savoy addresses 20 questions about growing trends in the retail industry and how students can launch careers in retail. It's important for your students to know that retail is an industry that's so much more than sales. Retail has careers for a variety of interests: merchandisers, marketers, buyers, accountants, software engineers, lawyers, writers, information technologists and more.

Benefits of RISE Up Classroom Activities

❖ **Employability Skills**

Help your students learn the high-demand skills needed to land jobs and get promoted in retail.

❖ **Flexible Delivery Options**

Classroom, Online or Blended

❖ **Scenario-Based Learning**

Realistic scenarios support active learning to keep your students engaged while developing their problem-solving and decision-making skills, enabling them to transfer the newly learned skills to the job.

❖ **Hands-On Activities**

Hands-on activities are effective for skill development, allowing your students to apply and master key skills needed for the job and providing them a safe environment to practice, identify and correct performance errors.

Training Partner Resources

- [Instructor Guide](#)
- [Train the Trainer video](#)
- [PowerPoint Presentation](#)
- [Textbook](#)

“20 Questions” with Burlington Stores’ Jonathan Savoy

Background

Jonathan Savoy joined Burlington Stores in September 2020 as Vice President of Merchandise Planning. He has 30 years of experience in merchandise planning, allocation, replenishment, buying, marketing research and sales management. He has broad knowledge with leadership experience in many retail formats, including department store, specialty, discount and off-price.

Burlington, formerly known as Burlington Coat Factory, is an American national off-price department store retailer, and a division of Burlington Coat Factory Warehouse Corporation, with 740 stores in 40 states and Puerto Rico, with its corporate headquarters located in Burlington Township, New Jersey.



Video Format

37 minute video that covers:

- ❖ Trends and social media influences.
- ❖ Impact of artificial intelligence and data analytics on retail.
- ❖ Tips for success in the retail industry.
- ❖ Entry-level positions available for students.
- ❖ How COVID-19 pandemic has affected retail.

RISE Up and Get Noticed

If you enjoy a supportive, results-driven, diverse, and fun place to work, learn and grow, you’re the perfect fit for Burlington Stores.

Completing a RISE Up training from the NRF Foundation can provide you the skills to help you get a job with Burlington.

[Apply Here](#)

Activity

Watch the 20 Questions video:

<https://nrffoundation.org/blog/20-questions-burlington-vp-merchandise-planning>

Then answer the following questions.

- 1. At the beginning of the video, Jonathan Savoy described what a day in the life as the vice president of merchandise planning looks like. Which task did he mention?**
 - A. Product reviewing
 - B. Participating in planning discussions about meeting metrics and flow of inventory
 - C. Reviewing data and analytics
 - D. All of the above
- 2. What is Savoy's favorite part of his job?**
 - A. Working for the best retail company in the world
 - B. To be actively engaged and a participant in the growth and development of other people
 - C. Being in charge of merchandise planning and leading others on his team
 - D. Receiving a discount and free merchandise from Burlington
- 3. In the video, Savoy touches on Burlington Stores being an off-price retailer. What is the definition of an off-price retailer and what other stores are considered off-price retailers?**
- 4. Explain why customer value is so important in retail.**
- 5. How does customer value relate to having loyal customers?**

6. What are the top three things that Savoy recommended for exceling in retail?

7. Why is understanding the customer so important in retail?

8. What type of shopper do you think shops at Burlington Stores?

- A. Comparison shopper
- B. Recreational shopper
- C. Both

Explain your answer:

9. What do you think the future of retail looks like?

10. What industry trends should you be aware of as professionals entering the retail industry?

11. Now that you've heard about Savoy's role and accomplishments, what excites you about working in retail? What are the skills you think you could improve?

Glossary

- ❖ **Comparison shopper:** A shopper who spends a lot of time checking out products and prices through online sites, visiting different stores, comparing retailer ads and/or getting the opinions of others either personally or through social media.
- ❖ **Customer value:** The perception of what a product or service is worth to a customer against the possible alternatives.
- ❖ **Loyal customer:** A shopper who repeatedly chooses to shop at the same retailer over others, usually because of positive customer experiences with the retailer and their products and/or services.
- ❖ **Recreational shopper:** A customer who views shopping as a fun occasion, rather than looking for specific merchandise or services. This customer's mindset focuses on adventure and leisure.



Answer Key

1. D (1:36)
2. B (3:08)
3. An off-price retailer is a retailer that provides high-quality goods at a lower price. They usually sell second-hand goods, off-the-season items, etc. The off-price model is 100 percent dedicated to delivering customer value. Other off-price retailers include Ross and TJX Companies such as TJ Maxx, Marshalls, Home Goods. (4:14)
4. Customer value is so important in retail because it can increase customer satisfaction and the customer experience. (4:51)
5. Customer loyalty is a result of customer satisfaction, positive customer experiences and overall value of the goods received. If the customer feels valued every time they come into a store, they will become a loyal customer.
6. Spend time in retail stores, read articles online and observe industry trends. (18:08)
7. Understanding the customer in retail is so important for ensuring customer satisfaction and loyalty. If you are aware of the customers' needs, your business will be successful and generate sales.
8. C. Both comparison shoppers and recreational shoppers can shop at Burlington. Customers shop at off-price retailers for good deals and leisure.
9. The future of retail will continue to grow in the e-commerce space, and the customer will be continued to be valued. (23:35)
10. Data; understand how to gather information and organize it. Spend time understanding the root causes of results and what action plans you want to put in place to maximize results based on what you know. (23:38)
11. After hearing about Jonathan Savoy's role and accomplishments, I am very excited about working in retail and learning more about the different opportunities the industry has to offer. Answers about skills will vary.