Abstract

My writing is based on my experience working at one of the biggest retail stores across the nation. I wrote about Smiley’s (a made-up name for this particular store) to educate people on how the inner dealings of the "store" and not the company, is like. I wanted to disprove some assumptions of what people believe Smiley’s does to their workers. Also, I wanted to show the relationships which go on between different workers.

I structured my writing in a way to make it easier for my readers to take in the information by giving headings which summarize what that section will be about. As for the names of certain companies and people, they have been altered to protect their and my personal life. Thank you and I hope you enjoy the read.
In the Blood

I am the youngest of seven children and Smiley’s is in our blood. At first, it was McDonalds, but when Smiley’s came to Mililani, Hawaii, the company seemed to draw my family in. I guess you could say that my Dad started it all. He left WacDugals for a position as a Greeter, but then moved through the ranks to be a Garden Associate. I was somewhat sad because I would not see another bag of Chicken WacNuggets on the table when he came home from work anymore, but, like a child, I was easily distracted by the new blue store, and forgot about those yummy, tender morsels. Now that my Dad was with the “in” Smiley’s crowd, the opportunity opened up to two of my sisters and two brothers.

My Mom joined Smiley’s

One sister, Aquarius, was working at the WacDugals inside the Smiley’s store for a few years before she decided to move into the Smiley’s family just like my dad. She became many things while she was employed there. The most significant was her position as a Pets Associate. She then moved up the ranks and became a Department Manager in Pets. Before she left Smiley’s, she was a Customer Service Manager in the front end.

The other sister, Scorpio, became a Smiley’s associate after leaving Boxed Clown. She became an associate in Domestics. Domestics are basically the beddings, pillows, etc. Then, she moved on to be a Department Manager in Housewares (the department with utensils that are not plastic: silverware, kitchen appliances, etc.). However, like Aquarius, Scorpio didn’t stay at Smiley’s either.

My oldest brother, Jan, became an associate at Smiley’s. He became an associate in Electronics. He stayed in that position until he moved into the Inventory Control Stocking (ICS) area of the store (or the back of the store where the merchandise is categorized and stocked). He is currently working for Smiley’s, but instead of working in ICS, he is now working in warehouse. All I know about the warehouse is that it is separated from the stores. I assume that in the warehouse the associates organize and hold the merchandise that goes to the stores, however as I am
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told the warehouse is not a “distribution center.” So that means this island will never have a supercenter until then; just to let the public know...

My older brother, Aries, started working at Smiley’s after I graduated high school. He used to work at Russ. For the few years since he was working, he refused to work at Smiley’s, but he eventually caved in. He suggested to me to never work at Russ because, “The work you do there, is not worth the money they pay you.” He said that over four years ago. I wonder if it is still true today? When he started at Smiley’s, he was employed as a cart boy. Then, he became an associate in pets like Aquarius. When I joined the Smiley’s ranks, he moved to overnight for more money, and to leave the Pets Department.

As for my other sisters, they never really joined the Smiley’s family. Lastly, there’s me; the youngest of seven. I started out at a library through work study at CU. Then, upon my return home for summer vacation, I landed a job at Office High Waikele through a job fair. Then, when I came home for good, I was hired at Price Breakers, but turned down the position due to an interview at Smiley’s. I, like my brother, didn’t want to follow the Smiley’s chain, but since Smiley’s was going to pay me $9.40 starting out versus $8.00 at Price Breakers and $8.60 at Office High, I figured it was better to go with Smiley’s. Also, Smiley’s was offering medical benefits while Price Breakers was different…I think. I never really stayed long enough in Price Breakers to find out about benefits. No matter what anyone says, I think working at Smiley’s, now, is actually a good paying job in today’s economy. Most importantly, I finally know the inside dealings of one of the biggest retail companies in the nation.

Random Memory

“Yea,” I replied.
“Why not try Smiley’s?” He pressed further.
“Humph, I no like,” I answered.
“Why? ‘Cuz you no like follow everyone?” He said smiling. It was more of an inside joke than a question.
“Yea, I like work at other places NOT Smiley’s,” I said.
“Well, up to you then,” he said

Weeks Later

“Manong?” I asked. (Ilokano word of respect usually for an older male)
“Wats up?” He asked.
“Is Smiley’s still hiring? I really need a job before school starts and no one’s
hiring.” I said.

“Yea, they still hiring,” he said.
“They have medical and dental benefits?”
“Yea.”
“Wat’s the starting pay?”
He shrugged his shoulders.
“Are they hiring Cashiers?”
“Yea.”
“Wat I gotta do?”
“Go apply at the store.”
“And then wat?”
“Then wait for ‘em to call you.”
“And then?”
“Then theys tell you wat you gon do.”
“I havetta to put your name on the referral line?”
“Yea. Mine or Aries’. Up to you.”
“Kay,” and we went on to talk about other things. Three days later I was called in
for an interview and was hired.

Day One

I thought I was going to be fired my first day there for being late. My brother,
Aries, was texting me on my cell phone, but then he eventually called me. It is state law
that we can’t talk on cell phones while driving, so I ignored picking it up. I already knew
I was going to be late, and I just didn’t want to hear, “Where are you? You know you’re
late.” However, I was so annoyed that finally I picked up my cell phone; a cell phone fine was the last thing on my mind. Like I predicted, he played the twenty questions thing and rubbed in the “I’m late” part. He made it seem like it was the end of the world. I was five minutes late, but thankfully orientation didn’t even start yet. The same went for everyone whose first day it was. So, it really didn’t matter if I was late at least ten minutes more. I later found out that you could be considered on time as long as you clock-in between fifteen minutes from your original clock-in time. We listened to the morning meeting, and then filed into the back for our first day of orientation: videos, explanation of rules, regulations, description of the company, silly games, etc. We spent the whole day in personnel: the back room where all personal thing go on like paychecks, CBLs (computer-based learning or computer training power points), or dealings with benefits.

The second day was a continuation from the first except that this time they told us to go out to the floor and ask customers if we could help them with anything. In my mind I was thinking, “Why the heck do I need to do this? I’m a Cashier, and I’ll be stuck on register not on the floor.” In some ways, looking back at this, I think it would have been a better activity if, instead of bothering customers, we would be looking for items in the store. This activity would give us a way to familiarize ourselves with directing customers, and finding departments and certain merchandise.

Orientation lasted for a week. It took me a while to get on register because it was a company rule that all CBLs must be completed before actually working. The next three days after orientation was filled with CBLs. I never thought I could hate a computer that much before in my life, but looking back at it I think the older CBLs are less annoying than the ones now; the company disabled the skip button. After three days of endless CBLs, I finally was able to run the registers and it amazed me how many mistakes you could get away with when telling the customer that you’re new. I think I used that “I’m sorry, I’m new” excuse for more than three months after orientation.

Random Memory
Have a Nice Day

At the interview, I remember the General Manager of the store told me that I would be hired as a Garden Cashier so I wondered what would become of me. I believe that the Garden Center at Mililani Smiley’s needs some improvements. One reason is because, the Cashier area is practically in a tent, and has no air conditioning, unlike Kunia Smiley’s. Mililani’s Smiley’s has fans which make it hard to hear the customer so if it seemed like a Cashier is shouting at a customer; it was not meant to. In the summer it gets really muggy in there, but other than the heat, it is a great place to go when you don’t want to deal with a bunch of customers. It was the “cruise” place of the front end. Unfortunately, my General Manager was wrong in assigning my position in the store; instead of a garden Cashier I was a front end Cashier.

Daily Routine

Usually, Smiley’s has about three daily meetings; one in the morning, mid afternoon, and night. In these meetings, the Assistant Managers give daily updates on products, performances, and advice or concerns which need to be addressed. Also, in these meetings, the people who attend would sometimes do the Smiley’s cheer. This cheer is usually done during orientation of new workers, but as for regular days, people just do a group “Break” at the end and go back to work. Luckily for me, I don’t have to attend these meetings because I’m a Cashier and can’t leave my register to go to a meeting. It’s just kind of awkward when you are on break and have to go through the meeting circle to get to the back. I don’t like the spotlight on me and I sometimes think it’s rude to just walk past an Assistant Manager when they’re talking.

Since my employment, I’ve been a Cashier in Photo, Garden, Front End, and Smoke Shop. I believe that a customer will just think that a Cashier is a Cashier and that a difference doesn’t exist. Anyone who thinks this belief is right is actually wrong. Each Cashier is different, and it is made clear for many Garden Cashiers, considering their schedules are posted under the garden department. Also, even though floor associates are not Cashiers, but is Cashier trained, they could be called down to be a Cashier trained associate when the front is short on actual Cashiers.
Another difference is that in Photo, Cashiers help the photo-specialists with the search and distribution to customers who are picking up pictures. They help customers how to work the self-printing machines so they can print out their pictures. Also, they occasionally help customers pay out with security sealed items on the shelf. Lastly, photo Cashiers help customers in retrieving certain items on the shelf which need a security device to release it from the rack, and like other Cashiers they answer customer questions as best as they can.

As a Garden Cashier, one must know at least some gardening information. Some customers think that working in the garden today means that you know everything and anything about gardening and the plants the company is selling. Furthermore, Garden Cashiers have the soils and bricks barcodes binder at the registers, but the other registers do not and it takes a lot of time to check-out in the front for a customer than it would be at Garden. The barcode binder is a binder with barcodes of bulky items such as two cubic feet soil or heavy cement bricks. For this reason, it is better for customers to pay for those bulky items at Garden to get in and get out, so that we Cashiers don’t have to lift those items to scan. Also, we can monitor the customer. When I mean monitor, I mean watch the customer, because in Mililani Smiley’s, the big soils are placed outside in an area in the parking lot. The Smiley’s policy is that we must trust the customer to take only what they bought. Occasionally, a customer will take more than just one bag of soil which they paid for and then try to take another which they have not paid for.

Front End cashiering are the basics; as long as you know how to handle the register you’re fine. However, the routine at the Front End is to zone (fix up) the front by making sure empty gum boxes on the shelf are cleared from the shelves, clearing out returns or unwanted merchandise left behind by customers who were in line checking-out, and placing the items on the shelves of the eighty twos or items located along the registers. Then, as Cashiers at Smiley’s call it: red lining. Red lining is basically standing at the front of your register saying “hello” to customers and asking if they are ready to check out. On occasion, customers will ask questions and sometimes Cashiers would have to shut their light and line, and take them to the requested area of interest. Refilling bags and wiping down the belt are other tasks given to Cashiers at
Have a Nice Day

the front. Usually, I do these tasks before red lining so I can avoid standing there and doing nothing. As for Electronics and Jewelry Cashiers, they are similar to Garden Cashiers because one would need to know a little more about the department they are in.

An Annoying Day at Smiley’s

Hi! Did you find everything you were looking for today? Doot Oh really? I’m sorry about that, did you want me to ask a supervisor to find that for you Doot or Doot see if another store has it? Doot Oh okay...your total comes to $XXX.XX Ching! Thank you, have a nice night. (Hmm...7:46pm wow it’s only been an hour...I’m hungry...hungry...hungry...need something to do...don’t want to red line...fricken red line...invisible line...not even a line...oh well...OH! That’s right I should wipe the belt...doo dee doo dee...Hello! Doot, Doot, Doot Your total comes to $X.XX Ching! Thank you have a nice night. Hello! Doot, Doot, Dingggggg! Oh I sorry ma’am but I can’t sell you this item because it has a recall on it. Yes, I understand that more items are on the shelf, but sometimes we don’t take off the recalls from the floor until a Cashier is prompted that the particular item cannot be sold. Sheesh lady it’s not the end of the world. Yes, ma’am after I let my supervisor know they will take it off from the shelf. Doot, Doot, Doot your total comes to $XX.XX thank you have a nice night. And I hope your bag breaks! Hello! And did you find everything you needed today? Doot, Doot Oh Okay Doot, Doot, Dinggggg! May I see your ID please? Yes, I really need to see your ID. No, sir, a school ID is not a valid ID. Yes a state ID is accepted...sorry sir, but your ID expired two months ago...do you have another ID? Well, I’m sorry sir I can’t sell you the beer. Yes, sir you maybe over 21, but I have to check everyone under 40. Yes, sir it is our company’s policy. If you would like to talk with a manager I could get one for you...okay, again I’m sorry about that, but I don’t want to get in trouble. Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot Your total comes to $XXX.XX Thank you have a nice night. Two more hours...two more hours...two more hours....
Have a Nice Day

The Disappearing Associates 2010

It was a regular slow night at Smiley’s. Customers go through my line in small bursts like all the other nights at Smiley’s. Suddenly my co-worker turns around and asks, “Would you know how Ace is doing?” I wondered what she was talking about, since I haven’t seen Ace since that Saturday. Two things crossed my mind: one she was either working in the morning and so I never see her as often as I should, and two she possibly got in trouble and got fired. Lately, people have been getting the “slip” these days and it feels like these invisible eyes are on you. I said, “No, why? What happened?” She said, “She had a stroke and was rushed to the hospital on Sunday.” I guess I was shocked, but actually I was more worried than shocked.

Just two months before, another co-worker, Richard, had a stroke while working. I knew Richard since I was a kid. My sisters at the time, two out of four, were working at Smiley’s and that’s how I met him. Who would have known that he was going to be co-workers with me. I was off that day and when I came in the next day for a Cashier meeting…he died that morning. My eyes were puffy all night I was working. Even to this day I deny his passing; the man in the coffin wasn’t him. A cloud passed over Smiley’s and the store became more quiet than usual. That cloud has still not passed over. So, I thought history was repeating itself and this time with Ace. I interrogated my co-worker, “what? You’re joking…I just saw Ace a few days ago, she was fine a few days ago, and I thought she was just here…did she have it while working?”

Thankfully, she didn’t have it here at Smiley’s. She had it after a party, sometime in the night after everyone had turned in for the evening. Her son found her, or so I was told, and was rushed to the hospital. She didn’t die, but her body was half paralyzed. I’m hoping that she will come back as soon as she gets better and I’m hoping her paralysis isn’t permanent. My co-worker, however, didn’t think she would come back to work, but I say she is wrong.

Disappearing Associates 2010 continued: the cases of D-day and Taboo Words
During the course of the year, the cases revolving around D-Day and taboo words are still unsolved. D-Day was given for all those whose job was on the line because of attendance. Basically, a format exists for tardies and absences. If you are tardy or receive an “incomplete” for the day you get one tardy. Three of those tardies gives you an absence. Then, three of those absences give you a verbal warning. Another set of three absences with verbal warning gives you a written warning, and another set of three with verbal and written gives you D-Day. If you get another one while on D-Day you will be let go. As for sick days, three consecutive sick days gives you one absence from work, and still with all these chances people still say watch your attendance.

The first to go, was a long time friend of my brother’s, Momo. She had taken too many call-in absences due to being sick, that the company decided to let her go. Everyone mourned her loss, but it seemed like we were programmed to not notice the loss. Then, one after the other more and more people were lost due to small mishaps.

One, and upon new information which surfaced, and more associates in the back room were let go because of their failure to pass a drug test after getting into an accident involving stocking boxes. Someone got fired because they didn’t have their caution vest on while working with certain equipment for just that one day.

Then, a Cashier was let go because she allowed a family member to use her discount card and that family member used a credit or debit card to pay for the items; such an act was traceable. I felt it was unfair; she was almost a ten-year associate. Other people would think badly of her, or say she should have known better, but to lose your job because of it…I think it was the economy; during better times, this incident may have been over looked.

Then, there was a greeter who was turned in by a Cashier in the break room for hitting the vending machine for not giving up the paid-for item. I would have overlooked it, or actually helped him get it. Then, one Customer Service Manager (CSM) was let go for saying a form of an “N” word in a description conversation about what people would call her since she has become so tanned since she came to Hawaii. I heard another CSM turned her in too. Then another, CSM, from what I was told, quit.
This investigation is still unsolved. I talk less and always try to watch my back now; I could be next.

**Random Memory**

I remember that Smiley’s Electronics was in the middle of the store and they were surrounded by an enclosed wall with only one entrance and with security detectors. I remember that all electronics were to be bought at electronics and only electronics. Now it’s not enclosed and one can purchase electronics at any register. I often wondered if this change was a good idea.

For one thing, shoplifters have started to get sneakier. This time, these people just slice the cover and take the disc; easy and done with. One time an overnight associate found Microsoft program software stolen, but the thieves left the casing which had the product key on the case. The thieves stole the papers and guides, but forgot to take the one thing that is needed to actually use the product. Sometimes I wonder if these shoplifters know what they are doing.

More and more I see little kids take things that were not paid for. Some of these kids were told by their parents to do it. Lately, I have had more parents say no to their four year old child and yet the child tries to sneak it into their pocket or try to walk out with it without their parent’s or an associate’s notice of it. One time I was manning the front entrance and a family came through the door and the mother and son came up to me. The mother was scolding the child about stealing things saying, “In this family we don’t steal, you don’t take things that don’t belong to you.” This child was maybe seven or older and he was tearing up. She said to the child, “Now give it back to her (to me) and apologize! Say you’re sorry!” The boy did say sorry very quietly and handed me the juicy drop still unwrapped, but a bit warm from the child’s hand. The mother explained that the boy took it the last time they were shopping here without their (the parents) knowledge and wanted to teach him a lesson about stealing by bringing it back that day. I feel sorry for the kid, because in my family I don’t think the item would be returned like that. Oh well…
Have a Nice Day

A Boring Day at Smiley’s

........................................................................................................................................wow, it’s really dead today...........................................................................................................I feel like I’m in a survival horror flick..........................................................................Hello! Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot Oh yeah this year “they” changed the policy; we are now open on New Year’s Day.  Doot, Doot, Doot before we were closed like all the fricken stores I think they are trying something new or it’s the economy.  Your total comes to $XX.XX thank you have a nice day ............................................................................................................................................... ..............................................................................................................................................It’s SO BORING!

Self Checked

Self Checkout is a horrible idea for any retail store, or so, that’s what I believe. For one thing, I think the most shoplifters go through there when it’s busy and ring up the item, but not pay for it. They wait until the monitor of Self Checkout is helping another customer and grabs the bag of stuff and leaves. The monitor then doesn’t know where they went and now must abort the whole transaction. What annoys me more than shoplifters are the honest customers who are so impatient at Self Checkout. They usually give you the stare down or the evil eye look as if the monitor was the one who rang-up and bagged everything. The screen does say and shows that the item was not bagged and that whatever they rang-up was rung-up wrong. The most annoying customers at Self Checkout are the people who think that they can lift and scan a 46” television. I know we all would like to be a superhuman, but I think peoples’ brains need some evolving first.

Sometimes, I wonder if people notice how they look when they are using Self Checkout. Sometimes you will have people who give you funny looks, and I don’t mean clown funny, I mean “Hello this machine is acting funny fix it for me” looks or what I like to call the impatient stare-down. Occasionally, I’ll get the tapping foot or the stand on one leg with swayed hip to side and hand on hip with stare down motion. Once, I got
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the “stare down with their glasses on the tip of their nose” look. Then, there’s the flag-me-down with their hand which is unnecessary when a help button is located on the screen in front of them which signals me that they need help. Also, people have yelled across one end of self check out to the other saying, “Excuse me!”

Another annoying part of self-checkout are the kids which run amuck. Frequently, you’ll have a family, sometimes a single mom or a couple with four or more or less kids to come through Self Checkout. Sometimes, the parents are “persuaded” by their kids to use Self Checkout, even though they don’t know how to use it. Other times parents go there thinking they know how to use it. It is when these parents focus on the task of ringing up their products that they forget they are parents. Parents lose sight of their kids and their kids take this opportunity to play around the self-checkout like a playground.

Kids think that the terminals are a mock cash registers. They play with the buttons which, most of the time, are to change the language from English to Spanish, and the next customer goes to that terminal they think something is wrong with the machine. This situation doesn’t prompt the Cashier monitoring the self check out so, the customers think that it is your fault the terminal is supposedly broken. Other times kids sit on the weighted area making it difficult for parents to bag their items and move on to the next because of that miscalculated weight. This situation is signified by the terminal saying, “Please remove item from the bagging area.” There hasn’t been a time where I haven’t scolded a child to stop playing with the self-checkout. Twice did children make it seem like they didn’t hear me, rolled their eyes, and went on with what they were doing and if I got them off from one terminal they’ll be on the other messing up the system. Fricken kids!

Random Memory

One day...

Excuse me please get off the floor. Um excuse me little boy don’t lay on the floor people might step on you. The boy stays flat on the floor. I know he heard me, but he rolls his eyes and goes back to looking for change underneath the
terminals of self-checkout. If this child was my kid he would get multiple spankings for acting like that in public. Really, kids nowadays and some parents don’t know what respect is. This kid didn’t get much discipline or wasn’t taught how to behave in public because by looking at his mother and, I assume, his aunt, it is true. There they are ringing away their items, focusing more on the screen than on the boy right in the middle of the floor. **Excuse me please get up.** I can’t do anything. I can’t touch the boy or else I can get in trouble all I can do is watch this fricken kid try to get me fired. I could just see it now: “Customer Sues Smiley’s for Broken Hip Due to Boy on Floor Looking for Change. Associate In-question does Nothing.” I try to look for a CSM, but no one is around and it’s pretty busy today. What’s worse is his sister trying to do hand stands as if the store is a gym or something. **Excuse me please don’t do that.** She acts like she didn’t hear me and keeps going. Finally, one of the ladies turns around and scolds her, but not the boy. They’re finally done and leaving the store. Fricken kids!

Another day…

**Excuse me, please don’t do that to Self Checkout.** Another fricken kid who doesn’t hear me. Don’t you roll your eyes at me! **Please step away from the Self Checkout.** Oh great, walk to the next one and start pushing buttons…fricken kid! I swear another kid does that I’m gonna smack them no matter what the consequence. Thankfully there wasn’t another kid like that, that day…

And yet another day…

**Please don’t play with Self Checkout!** I didn’t really yell more like said it out loud. At least these kids shrink in fear. Now I need to give a fake big smile. **Smile!** Now to give them that warning stare. He he he, fricken kids.

I Spy Spotters

I’ve never really liked having someone spy on me. Who would? Spotters are the worst, especially when and if they are a manager from what managers in the store call “home office,” or basically, spotters are managers in higher positions above the general manager in the store and are usually in a located in a separate office away from the
Have a Nice Day

store and its employees. Usually, this type of manager rarely comes to the store to observe daily relationships between employees and customers. Also, these managers frequently “observe” employees and impose nonsensical rules. The definition of a spotter, according to the Free Online Dictionary gives two close definitions to what I’m talking about: “A person hired to detect dishonest acts by employees, as in a bank” and “an employee assigned to spy on his colleagues in order to check on their honesty.”

Anyway, I have great animosity toward a manager spotter, even though I have never even met one. The reason for my great dislike is because I feel that they don’t know how to do their job. This particular spotter, Misty, came to the store (thank you higher power for giving me a day off) and observed the Front End employees. I don’t know if she needed some kind of personal time with someone for a night, but according to my co-workers, they said she was displeased and imposed rules which, to me, made no sense. As I criticized, some of the rules imposed went against some store policies. The new changes were:

1. Cashiers are no longer to wear the provided apron which holds items during work. However, Cashier could still use a small clear bag to hold items; bag is not provided by the company.
   
   Reason she imposed it: She saw too many aprons placed on the side of the cash register.
   
   Reason she gave: to minimize theft
   
   Why I think it is BS: 1) the apron was provided by Smiley’s so Cashiers didn’t need to buy (use their own hard earned money) a clear bag

2) The items put into the apron or clear bag are the Cashier’s items not the company’s. Unless the company is going to provide scissors, tape, rubber bands, etc. at every register then Cashier wouldn’t need an apron or clear bag.

3) The excuse of theft is ridiculous because most Cashiers, if said item (scissors, pen, etc.) is lost, then they either get a new one or cry a little and then move on…company doesn’t lose money, but makes more. This treatment just shows how much trust and care upper management outside the store has for their workers.
Have a Nice Day

My suggestion: Just tell the truth; she didn’t want aprons being left unattended or not worn at the registers making the “clean” look of the registers messy; even though customer don’t even pay attention to that. Also, instead of banning the apron without warning, let the Cashiers know not to leave it on the registers.

2. Jackets are to be worn. If jackets are not worn, Cashier must put it back into their locker. Jackets are not to be placed on register area or tied around waist.

Reason she imposed it: like the apron, she saw that there were too many jackets on the counters of the register areas.
Reason she gave: made Cashier area look unprofessional and created clutter
Why I think it is BS: 1) for one thing Cashiers or any employee cannot go back to their lockers during work unless it is an emergency, or they are on break; going to a locker and getting caught calls for a warning, write up, even termination depending on the individual’s standing.

2) The temperature in the store changes, especially around the registers. If it is busy, the area becomes hot, and sometimes the area is under an AC vent and so it gets cold. So depending on the area, a jacket maybe needed, especially when switching from one register to the next. So, placing a jacket on the counter is understandable, but tying a jacket around the waist is ridiculous to ban since, for one thing, the jacket is not in anyone’s way and it is more convenient to take on or off when needed to better prevent the spread if sickness from the cold. As for the unprofessional look, maybe it does and maybe it doesn’t, but at the cash register, the customers don’t even look at the bottom half of the body because the register is blocking it.

3) Leaving the register in the middle of the transaction for a price check
Reason she imposed it: Cashiers left register vulnerable to theft by customer, co-worker, etc.
Have a Nice Day

Reason she gave: to prevent customers or other greedy people from opening the register by pressing “(the button which shall not be named for security purposes“ button.

Why I think it is BS: for one thing we are short-handed with associates on the floor to handle their customers, my customer, and CSMs (Customer Service Managers). Also, by doing the price check ourselves Cashiers are able to complete transaction as quickly as possible and the store “score card” is in good shape. The “score card” determines the store’s bonus. Also, just to show how much the company cares for the customer.

4) Lastly, we are not to use the Smiley’s plastic bags for personal use.

Reason she imposed it: cost of bags went up and the company is trying to minimize expenses

Reason she gave: minimize expenses

Why I think it is BS: what if a Cashier bought an item? The bag is now their property and they have the right to use it to their liking.

Although these were minor changes I really don’t like them. For one thing we have to provide our own stuff which does NOT allow us to “Save Money. Live better” at Smiley’s. I for one would like to complain, but I know they won’t do anything about it and even if I let the district manager (her boss) know about this situation he'll refer me to go through the hierarchy process which really doesn’t do anything. In all honesty, the open door policy doesn’t work. It is just another device to spy on their workers; what a joke!

It is now November 15 and a Cashier meeting takes place tomorrow. The new changes will probably, or most likely, be the main topic of the meeting. I want to know what is really going on. I feel like applying for another job now.

A Great Day at Smiley’s

Hello!  Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot Your total comes to $XX.XX thank you have a nice day.  Hello! Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot And your total comes to $XXX.XX thank you have a nice
Have a Nice Day

Hello! Doot Doot, LOL, Doot, Doot, LOL this guy is funny Doot, Doot Your total comes to $XX.XX have a nice night and have a nice trip. Hello! Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot, Doot,…

Random Memory

“Hey, you know what would be funny?” he asked.

“No, what?” I questioned.

“If I dressed as a poodle in a tu tu for Halloween,” he said laughing, “don’t you think? A poodle in a tu tu!” He was still laughing. Over and over he said that to me and other co-workers while laughing.

I often wondered whether he was high on something. Oh well, back to work.

Off Work Punishment

Headline: Smiley’s Worker Fired for Giving the Bird to the Camera on Day Off.

This headline is what I would put on a newspaper headline as a warning to other associates: DO NOT stick the bird up to a camera where you work on your day off. Just recently a co-worker got fired for doing that. What happened was that he came into the store on his day off and, according to him, it was his personality or character to be stupid and show the birdie to the camera. He was called into the office in the back of the store and was given a talk to about his situation.

According to him, he said he already knew that certain people were out to get him fired and that someone was watching him. He said that when he got into the office, the manager (he had a feeling that the manager was one of those people) told him that because of a customer complained about the obscene act on his day off. The proof however, was not shown to him and he was fired then and there. To be rehired at Smiley’s, one must wait after sixty days before one can apply there again and get rehired. He was escorted out by another manager after saying goodbye to some Cashiers who have been on his side and as he was escorted out a man gave his business card to him. He said the man was a lawyer and according to Smiley’s policy if an employee is to be fired, proof must be shown to the said subject for termination.
Have a Nice Day

Even now he doesn’t know what he will do and said, “I’ll wait until Monday to decide what to do about my position.”

I don’t know how to feel about this situation or about this co-worker because I know the people who are out to get him. I was usually a neutral, but sometimes when he got on my nerves I somewhat wanted him to get punished for leaving his register and talking with his friends during work. I don’t have anything against him and I hope he gets a better job. Supposedly, he has an interview with another company. Oh well, it just shows that if I have a day off from work I shouldn’t go to work.

Hell after Thanksgiving

I find it funny how people say “you have a Happy Thanksgiving” and the next day you have the same people ripping up end caps (the shelves at the end of the aisles) for two dollar towels. It took about ten seconds before the end cap was empty and all contents were piled into carts already full of a TVs, laptops, pajama sets, toys, etc. The funny thing was that half of these people didn’t have the money or credit to purchase what they had in their carts. Many unaffordable or unwanted items ended up out of place on top of empty shelves. Then again, this Black Friday was during the first time Smiley’s remained open 24 hours. Previous years consisted of the store closing and third shift associates could set up the sale items. Last year, Smiley’s was open and all hell broke loose by 2 am. Most of the sale items could not be sold until 5 am, but people didn’t understand that. Furthermore, the map which showed people and employees were not passed out until midnight.

This year it seemed organized, but it was still crazy. Items which were not watched by some associates or by police officers were opened before the sale started and once something was opened everyone rushed to get at least one item if not more. At the end of the day, some of the same people who bought Black Friday items ended up returning them. So what was the point in waiting in line to buy them?

Blood Loss
Have a Nice Day

“Where do you see yourself as a future associate of Smiley’s?” asked the person from Personnel. Personnel is an associate of Smiley’s who deals with orientations and is like a medium between other associates and personal paper work, i.e. W-2 forms, medical and dental benefits, stocks, etc.

They went around the room and asked each person in my orientation this question. Many people aimed high, and I think that I aimed a little low. I said, “A CSM.”

I am still debating about this position. Even after two years of experience being a Cashier and with ample opportunities to achieve this position, I am hesitating to take it. I’ve seen many CSMs come and go, and I have often wondered why. I could only guess why some people would move in and out of the job position. For me, anyway, I have observed the trials and tribulations which CSMs have to go through. One of them being, handling disgruntled customers and two of them being, having to handle the whole Front End for a full shift which usually is four, six or even eight hours. Also, as I have observed, being a CSM is very stressful. I think to be a CSM, a person has be really ready for the stress of everyday problems and peoples' problems as well; associate and customer alike.

Right now, I juggle my time with school, work, family, and individual time which, put together, is proving to be difficult to deal with. I do want to stay in Smiley’s because of the convenience and discount, considering I am studying to be an English teacher, so I thought that for food and supplies the discount would make a difference in the future. Still, do I really want to enter a stressful job right now? Being a student is stress enough and what more if I become a teacher? Is the job worth a few cents more on my paycheck?