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Retail Hell #4: Hamster Mode

I'm the only one here who has a real reason to scream

By Kat Avila | Web Published 7.29.2005

I am truly a hamster running on a big exercise wheel, working two retail jobs to pay off the modest credit card debt I accumulated from when I was flying around like an eagle in a borderless sky. In case you don't know what a hamster is, it is basically a cute-looking rodent. Don't scream and jump on a chair. I'm the only one here who has a real reason to scream.

I have to deal with arrogant, truly ugly men and women that a "Customer always comes first" money-driven culture has engendered. Generally you can gauge how much self-esteem a person has by how much they love to play out the master-slave relationship in public, like an abusive husband humiliating his wife in front of everyone.

The second group are the conniving wheelers-dealers: the shoplifters, the people who think yelling at you will get them a reduced price, and the people who try to get a refund on obviously used goods.

The third group on my blacklist are the people who let their kids run wild in the store for hours while they enjoy books and magazines they won't buy while



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sitting in the cafe.

And, last but not least, toxic coworkers. The other day one of them sidled up to me to help restock. She didn't say anything but started moaning and sighing as is her habit. Now the lady has some health issues, but as another person said you don't want to advertise that you can't do the job.

Another woman is so rigid, there can only be one way of doing things - her way. This is probably due to her advanced age or the sense of entitlement she gets from having survived so long. She enjoys cackling at her own cruel jokes. Sometimes I get caught between the moaner and Mt. Rushmore, then I look around for the hidden camera thinking someone must be filming this for "Candid Camera."

Ah, the sky looks so beautiful today.

L.A. hamster Kat is currently reading Mark Evans's "Hamster: A Practical Guide to Caring for Your Hamster."

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