

# Mystery Shopper

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Business owners find it surprisingly difficult to get constructive criticism and feedback from their customers. Both satisfied and dissatisfied customers alike are often too busy to complement or complain about the level of service they receive. Enter the mystery shopper this individual is hired by a business owner to pose as a customer and give feedback on a range of issues. With an annual income ceiling of \$20,000 (USD) this job isn't going to make you rich. If however you are looking for an addition to your existing income or just a job with flexible hours this is the work at home job for you.

## Before The Start-Up, Let's Not Get Ahead Of Ourselves

As a mystery shopper business owner will be depending on you to evaluate the entire customer experience from service to facilities. You'll need to be a convincing actor to blend in with the crowd. You won't be able to carry a notepad so an excellent memory and an eye for the smallest of details are required.

Mystery shoppers are employed in numerous different fields, before starting up you'll need a good knowledge of the field you plan on specializing in.

## The Start-Up

To start-up you'll need a reliable vehicle and a cell phone to communicate while on the go. [Business stationary](#) such as business cards and an invoice and quote template are also necessary. You might need to carry a handwritten invoice book for those unexpected jobs. After completing a job you'll need to send an evaluation form back to your employers, a computer, internet connection, scanner and fax machine are essential. If you don't have any of these start off using a local fax service and buy your own equipment once you can afford it.

If working as an independent contractor doesn't appeal to you, consider taking a job with the many mystery shopping companies that exist. Assignments arranged through a firm can be as small as monitoring the service at your local McDonalds to taking an all expenses paid trip to the Hilton in New York. Once placed with a firm, always complete assignments on time and provide the best feedback possible, firms are always looking to put their best shoppers first - your hard work won't go unnoticed.

## Making It Work

Finding employment with a mystery shopping company will provide the most reliable form of income. Do your homework on the different firms available in your area. Search mystery shopper forums on the internet and look for both positive and negative reviews on the company you are considering. Becoming an active member of online mystery shopper communities can also be a great way to get tips and meet other shoppers.

## Marketing

If you decide on the independent option market your services in the Yellow Page and local newspaper classifieds. However it's likely that cold calling and networking will provide the best return on investment. Spend time visiting stores and getting to know local managers.

## **Don't Forget**

Transportation will cut into your bottom line, try to get as many local jobs as possible. If you take a job with a mystery shopper firm make sure they never charge you for a job, some firms try to take advantage of new shoppers in this way.