

Career Paths

In this section, you will become aware of the many career choices available to you, learn how to choose a career area, and learn how to map out a plan in order to make successful career moves. If there was ever a time to do the work that you really love, to do the kind of work that you are really attracted to, it's now. Your career training enables you to choose a variety of traditional career paths. It also opens doors to many of the new and exciting career paths emerging in the workplace.

Take some time to think about any and every career direction that exists for you. When you do this, you will feel more confident about the decisions you make because you will know that you have considered all your options. In this age of change, it will be necessary for you to consider new options periodically. Learning to be flexible now will be helpful as your world of work changes.

You have already made your first step in choosing a career area by deciding on your major or program. Unfortunately, many times students do not have access to all the information they need to decide how to best apply their professional training in the workplace. Focusing on your career means selecting an area within your field that interests you the most.

For example, if you are a retailing major, you may choose to become involved in management, buying, distribution, visual merchandising, or sales within the retail field. As a business administration/management student, you may put your professional training to work in banking, insurance, finance, human resources, retailing, advertising, production, or distribution. Your first step, then, is to look at career areas directly related to your major or program.

Don't stop there. Your talents can go to work in many other areas as well. For example, if you are pursuing professional training in accounting, you may first look into private and public accounting firms, but you should also consider accounting work in a retail firm or a hotel as possibilities. If you are pursuing a degree in information sciences, you may consider this type of work in any type of business or industry that is of interest to you. You may also want to explore jobs that allow you upward mobility into management or sales.

Most important to choosing your career area is really understanding the jobs in each area. Without a clear understanding of what a job involves, you cannot really know if it's what you want, nor can you convince a potential employer that you are right for that job. Job titles don't tell us what we need to know. They are only a start. Every day, people perform in the jobs that we think we want someday. What the job really consists of or how we would spend our time every day on the job is often something we're not familiar with. Then how can we be sure this is what we really want to do? One way to find out is to become familiar with job descriptions. Once employed in the workplace, you'll then be likely to say, "There's more to this job than you think there is."

The next section presents you with over 1,000 job titles representing 16 different career areas. The actual job descriptions for each job title can be found in the "Index of Job Descriptions," Section C. Follow the steps below (illustrated in the accompanying table) to make the most effective use of this section:

1. Consider the different career areas available in the field as presented in the overview.
2. Review the entry, mid-management/specialists, and management positions and their related salary ranges.

How to Use “Career Paths”

Fashion and Retail Management—Career Overview					
← ❶ Career Areas ❷ →					
❸ Level	Management	Buying	❹	Distribution	Sales
↓ Entry (\$\$\$\$)	Job titles	Job titles	↓	Job titles	Job titles
Mid-management/specialists (\$\$\$\$)	Job titles	Job titles		Job titles	Job titles
Management (\$\$\$\$)	Job titles	Job titles		Job titles	Job titles

3. Focus on the area(s) in which you have the most interest.
4. Look down that column of job titles and ask yourself what each one represents. You may wish to ask yourself, What does a merchandise analyst do every day?
5. Review the corresponding job description in the “Index of Job Descriptions” if you are unclear about the responsibilities of a particular job title. This index also opens up a whole variety of jobs available to you about which you may have had no previous knowledge.

After each career overview, the following information is presented (see details in the accompanying box).

- salaries
- experience needed
- qualifications
- where the jobs are
- trade publications
- professional associations

“Career Paths” is your beginning to understanding your own career options. *Don’t stop there!* After you have obtained your first job, you will need to refer to this information periodically to decide on your next move. By understanding the jobs in the mid-management/specialists and management segments of your career, you can create a clear vision of where you are going and how long it might take to get there.

Important Points to Remember about Career Paths

- The salaries listed represent only an average range for the country as a whole in 2009. In general, *salaries vary according to geographic location, types of industries and employers, the overall state of the economy, and your own experience level.* You should always weigh a salary that is offered to you as to how it compares with these variables.
- Under “Qualifications” you will find the most common and necessary traits you need to be successful in tomorrow’s jobs. Those common qualifications often include
 - positive attitude
 - enthusiasm
 - effective written and oral skills
 - well-groomed appearance
 - ability to work on a team
 - high energy level
- flexibility
- ability to learn
- technical skills
- In “Where the Jobs Are,” the most common industries where jobs exist in each career area are outlined. The industries listed are those in which entry-level jobs are most available. There may be many more types of employers depending on your level of experience and future trends in business.
- Because a successful career includes keeping up-to-date on current trends in your field and adapting to those trends, it is important to be aware of the basic trade publications and professional associations appropriate for your career.
- It should become obvious by studying the career paths outlined here that each career area is made up of a *planned sequence of related jobs.*

Accounting

Level	Public Accounting	Private/Management Accounting	Government
1. Entry (\$36,000–\$45,000)	Junior Staff Accountant	Junior Accountant	Revenue Officer
2. Mid-management/specialists (\$45,000–\$65,000)	Staff Accountant Senior Staff Accountant	Accountant Senior Accountant General Accountant Chief Internal Auditor Department Manager Tax Accountant Cost Accountant	Accountant Internal Auditor
3. Management (\$65,000–\$102,000)	Manager Senior Manager Partner	Vice President Treasurer Controller Chief Financial Officer	Chief Internal Auditor Chief Accountant

Public Accounting

Level	Job Title	Experience Needed
Entry	Junior Staff Accountant	Professional training
2	Staff Accountant	1–3 years
2	Senior Staff Accountant	3–4 years
3	Manager	5–7 years
3	Senior Manager	7–10 years
3	Partner	10+ years

Salaries in Public Accounting

Entry	\$36,000 to \$40,000	Medium-sized firm
Entry	\$40,000 to \$45,000	Large firm
2	\$45,000 to \$50,000	Medium-sized firm
2	\$50,000 to \$55,000	Medium-sized firm
2	\$55,000 to \$65,000	Large firm
3	\$65,000 to \$80,000	Medium-sized firm
3	\$70,000 to \$100,000	Large firm
3	\$150,000 to \$200,000	Large firm

Salaries vary with the size of the firm.

Qualifications

Personal Good communication and concentration skills. Accuracy and attention to detail. Flexibility. Objectivity. Ability to judge and make decisions. Reliability.

Professional Writing and communication skills. Exceptional mathematical ability. Commitment to professional standards. Ability to work independently.

Where the Jobs Are

CPA firms

Public accounting is divided into tiers: the top accounting firms, and other national, regional, and local practices.

Top Accounting Firms

KPMG Peat Marwick, New York, NY

Ernst & Young, New York, NY

DeLoitte & Touche, New York, NY

Arthur Andersen, Chicago, IL

Pricewaterhouse Coopers, New York, NY

These companies have branches throughout the country.

Private/Management Accounting

Level	Job Title	Experience Needed
Entry	Junior Accountant	Professional training
2	Accountant	1–3 years
2	Senior Accountant	3–4 years
2	General Accountant	4–8 years
2	Department Manager	4–8 years
2	Chief Internal Auditor	4–8 years
2	Tax Accountant	4–8 years
2	Cost Accountant	4–8 years
3	Vice President	15+ years
3	Treasurer	15+ years
3	Controller	15+ years
3	Chief Financial Officer	15+ years

Salaries in Private/Management Accounting

Entry	\$36,000 to \$40,000	Medium-sized firm
Entry	\$40,000 to \$45,000	Large firm
2	\$45,000 to \$50,000	Medium-sized firm
2	\$50,000 to \$55,000	Medium-sized to large firm
2	\$55,000 to \$65,000	Large firm
3	\$65,000 to \$80,000	Medium-sized firm
3	\$80,000 to \$100,000+	Large firm

Salaries vary with the size of the firm and are higher for accountants whose jobs require extensive travel.

Qualifications

Personal Reliability. Ability to work independently. Flexibility. Discipline.

Professional Understanding of business and the marketplace. Willingness to increase knowledge of practical accounting techniques.

Where the Jobs Are

Private corporations

Consulting