

# Employment Guide

# Look

## Careers in **Professional & Business Services**



Careers in professional and business services are as exciting as they are diverse. These industries offer job seekers the opportunity to work as full-time employees for private and public employers or to serve as independent consultants. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, professional and related occupations account for 59% of all jobs in the United States.



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## ABOUT THE PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES

The *Encarta World English Dictionary* defines a “professional” as someone who shows a “high degree of skill or competence” and is “engaged in an occupation as a paid job rather than as a hobby.” This is certainly true of careers found in Professional and Business Services. This guidebook will focus on the trends in three areas: Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services; Computer Systems Design and Related Services; and Advertising and Public Relations Services. Job seekers interested in careers in these fields should arm themselves with college degrees and top-notch skills that will distinguish them from others competing for these highly competitive and top salaried jobs.





## THE MANAGEMENT, SCIENTIFIC, & TECHNICAL CONSULTING SERVICES

Considered one of the fastest growing and highest paying industries, those seeking to enter and excel in the Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services industry should understand that education and experience are critical to getting and maintaining employment. As consultants, the product they offer clients is expertise on management issues, such as marketing finance, corporate strategies, technical, workplace safety, and health regulations, to name a few. Their clients range from local, federal, and foreign governments to hospitals, academic institutions, and other forms of business.

Professionals in this arena often work behind-the-scenes resources and have tremendous influence on how government and businesses, for example, make decisions and serve their clients/ constituents. Approximately 74 percent of consultants in this industry have a bachelor's degree. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 60 percent of consulting opportunities are in business and finance management and about 21 percent of all consultants are self-employed. Individuals with advanced degrees and targeted work experience are considered strong candidates for excellent paying jobs in this industry.

### Consulting Opportunities

There are countless opportunities available to consultants with expertise in business operations and industry-specific services. Large companies are more likely to hire a consulting firm, while small companies are more likely to hire independent consultants. The Bureau of Labor Statistics notes, however, that midsize to large firms are beginning to recognize the cost effectiveness and value of hiring independent consultants, instead of large firms, to serve them. This means that job seekers, hoping to establish themselves as consultants in any given discipline or industry, should consider applying at small to medium-sized firms or presenting themselves as independent consultants. The most important factor, in all cases, is the caliber of knowledge and skills and the ability to get the job done.



## Business Operations

Operating a successful business is tough work, especially when competition is keen and resources are limited. Businesses need professionals with a breadth of experience, intellectual energy and creativity. They seek consultants who can quickly ascertain the organization's needs and priorities and design and implement effective plan of actions to help meet and exceed their goals. While there are many areas for consultant work, the most popular ones focus on business operations (internal) and its relationship to the public (external). Within these areas lie various work opportunities for today's job seekers.

**Administrative Management and General Management.** Consultants in this area offer advice on the day-to-day operations of a company. They focus on budget; financial planning; strategic planning; marketing; business start-up strategies; ways to increase productivity and resolve tax issues; and other critical concerns.

**Human Resources.** Consultants in this area assist companies with workforce needs, including employee recruitment and training, employee benefit planning [i.e. employer/employee contributions to healthcare and retirement plans, etc.]. Some consultants specialize in executive recruitment by identifying qualified candidates who complement the culture of the company and help it reach and exceed its strategic goals. These consultants usually have strong executive and administrative backgrounds and understand fully the needs of businesses, whether they are start-ups or seasoned businesses gearing up to go to the next level.

**Marketing.** Consultants in this area provide expert advice on how to present or position their products and services in a way that yield the desired responses from clients or consumers. They may develop and implement marketing plans, determine pricing, set up business franchises, and help to improve customer relations. Logistics, processing and distribution is a specialty service of this area. These consultants help to enhance business productivity – from the production stage through the distribution of goods.

## Industry Specific

Professionals with years of experience in a particular area or industry often branch off into consultancy work, by virtue of the fact that they have such vast knowledge of the issue. For example, many ex-military personnel tend to start their own business offering services to government and to the private sector in security or counterintelligence. A list of other industry-specific consultant work is as followed:

**Environmental.** Consultants in this area identify, evaluate, and help resolve environmental problems. They advise clients on cleaning up contaminated sites, establishing a recycling program, and adhering to environmental laws and regulations.

**Security.** Consultants in this area help ensure the safety and security of physical/premises or human welfare. They advice and assist government and private entities on safe evacuations in the event of a manmade or natural disaster.

**Occupational Safety.** Consultants in this area help clients avoid workplaces hazards, assess safety risks associated with hazardous materials or machinery, check to ensure regulatory compliancy, and mitigate the likelihood of potential lawsuits resulting from injuries caused from safe code violations.

**Technology.** Consultants in this area help clients with all computer-related and information technology systems issues.



## SELECTED CAREERS IN MANAGEMENT, SCIENTIFIC, AND TECHNICAL CONSULTING SERVICES

Occupations	Responsibilities
Advertising, Marketing, Promotions, Public Relations, and Sales Managers	Oversee the marketing and sales departments, research and attract new clients.
Computer and Information Systems Managers	Ensure that the computer and network systems are fully operational; oversee other computer support and technical workers.
Financial Managers	Prepare financial statements; assess and protect the company's financial health.
Human Resources, Training, and Labor Relations Managers and Specialists	Supervise human resources activities, including managing personnel records, payroll and benefits; provide employee recruitment and training.
Engineering and Natural Sciences Managers	Oversee engineers and scientists.
Accountants and Auditors	Monitor financial transactions; prepare financial statements, tax strategies, and perform budget or retirement planning.
Administrative Services Managers	Oversee secretaries, data entry keyers, bookkeepers, and other clerical staff.
Systems Analysts	Design new computer systems or update old systems for new applications; solve computer problems and enable computer technology to meet organization's particular needs, such as implementing an online inventory database.
Computer Software Engineers	Design and install software systems for the control and automation of manufacturing, business, and management processes.
Computer Support Specialists	Provide technical assistance, support, and advice to customers and users.
Database Administrators	Work with database management systems software and determine ways to organize and store data.
Computer Programmers	Write programs and create software.

### Considering Consulting?

In light of the stiff competition that awaits them, entry-level consultants would fare better if they have a bachelor's degree and significant amount of on-the-job training (i.e. an internship) in their field. A master's degree, or higher, along with relevant on-the-job experience, is often preferred. However, there are consulting firms willing to hire college graduates with no previous work experience and put them through weeks or months of extensive on-the-job training.

Consultants must be analytical and possess excellent problem-solving abilities, along with superior written and verbal communications skills. They must demonstrate a strong attention to detail and a willingness to work long hours, when necessary.

Perhaps one of the most attractive things about this industry is the excellent opportunity to become an entrepreneur. Each year, according to the Association of Management Consulting Firms, thousands of consultants pool their resources together and form consultant ventures. Competition remains stiff, but with stamina, know-how, and determination, success is usually within reach. Those wishing to reduce the risk choose to remain employed with a larger organization, but do independent consulting on the side.

### Job Prospects are Good for Consultants

According to the Department of Labor Occupational Handbook, all areas of consulting should experience strong growth as businesses continue to engage expert advisers to remain competitive. Particularly in high demand will be management consultants who can draft business plans and budgets, develop strategy, and determine appropriate salaries and benefits for employees. Businesses will also continue to need advice on compliance with government workplace safety and environmental laws.



## COMPUTER SYSTEMS DESIGN AND RELATED SERVICES

There is no denying the indispensability of the computer to today's marketplace. All businesses today rely, to some degree, on computer and information technology to operate more efficiently and competitively. In fact, according to the BLS, workers in managerial and professional specialty occupations – finance, management, and business administration – are the largest users of computers and the Internet. With increased computer usage in the workplace comes a greater need for professionals in computer systems design and related services industry.

The computer systems design and related services industry offers opportunities to job seekers who are creative and technical. Work is available in the custom computer programming services, the computer systems design services; the computer facilities management services, disaster recovery and software installation, web site development, administration, maintenance, and information technology (IT) security.

### Getting In

Occupations in the computer systems design and related services industry require varying levels of education. However, most workers have college degrees, according to the BLS, primarily in computer science, mathematics, or information systems. Others have been certified in computer programming and other IT disciplines. A two-year degree or certificate may be sufficient for some positions, depending on the employer's needs, but the applicant must also possess the right technical skills.



## OCCUPATIONS IN COMPUTER SYSTEMS DESIGN INDUSTRY

Occupations	Responsibilities
Computer Programmers	Write, test, and maintain the detailed instructions that computers must follow to perform their functions; convert specifications into a language that the computer understands.
Computer Engineers	Design, test, and monitor computer software programs, systems, and hardware and related equipment.
Software Engineers or Software Developers.	Design computer programs; develop algorithms; analyze and solve programming problems for specific network systems; and write code.
Computer Systems Software Engineers	Write, modify, test, and develop software to meet the needs of a particular customer; develop software systems for control and automation in manufacturing, business, and other areas
Computer and Information Scientists	Innovate and develop solutions to complex hardware and software problems.
Systems Analysts	Integrate hardware and software to make computer systems more efficient; implement new software applications, design new systems; prepare guides to proper coding; perform cost-benefit analyses, and ensure that systems perform to their specifications by testing them thoroughly.
Network Systems and Data Communications Analysts	Design and evaluate network systems, such as local area networks (LANs), wide area networks (WANs), and Internet systems; perform network modeling, analysis, and planning, and may deal with the interfacing of computer and communications equipment.
Web Developers	Design and create web site.
Webmasters	Oversee the technical aspects of the web site, including performance issues, and for approving site content.
Network or Computer Systems Administrators	Install, configure, and support an organization's LAN, WAN, network segment, or Internet functions; maintain network hardware and software, analyze problems, and monitor the network to ensure availability to system users; plan, coordinate, and implement network security measures.
Database Administrators	Organize and store data; set up computer databases and test and coordinate changes to them; design and implementation of system security; plan and coordinate security measures.
Computer Support Specialists	Provide technical assistance, support, and advice to customers and users; interpret problems with hardware, software, and systems; answer telephone calls, analyze problems using automated diagnostic programs, and resolve recurrent difficulties encountered by users.
Computer and Information Systems Managers	Direct the work of systems analysts, computer programmers, and other computer-related workers; analyze the computer and information needs of the organization to determine personnel and goods and services requirements; plan and coordinate IT-related activities.

### Where will the jobs be?

According to the Department of Labor, the most rapid growth in the computer systems design will occur among in network systems because of the growing use of sophisticated computer networks and Internet and intranet sites. Occupations such as computer software engineers, computer systems analysts, and network and computer systems administrators will also experience rapid growth.

Because of the increasing need for security on the Internet, there will also be a heightened demand for cyberspace security services. This need includes analysts/consultants in areas such as security software installation services, disaster recovery services, and custom security programming.



## ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES

Job seekers entering the advertising and public relations industry should be prepared for a fast paced, exciting, and equally high-stressful career. The industry, which typically attracts younger workers, offers countless of employment opportunities; however, it is extremely competitive. Job seekers who want to succeed in this industry must be on the cutting edge of today's trends and be knowledgeable, highly creative and must be able to write and communicate effectively. Overall, a talent for generating interest must be reflected in the work these professionals produce, be it a written article or a bio or developing and implementing a marketing campaign.

### **Making the Distinction: Public Relations, Publicity, Promotions, Public Affairs, Advertising**

Many newcomers to this industry find it difficult to explain the subtle differences among the different fields in this industry. There are varying definitions among the various jobs and titles associated with public relations, publicity, promotions, public affairs, and advertising. However all are marketing tools used to affect some type of response from consumers or a targeted market. These responses can range from a change of attitude or opinion to a change of behavior/action.

**Advertising** brings the product or service to the attention of customers. There is normally a cost associated with this. The advertiser controls the message.

**Promotion** keeps the product in the minds of the customer and helps to stimulate demand for the product/service. Note: Promotion involves the on-going activities of advertising, publicity, public relations, special events, etc.). The promoter controls the message.

**Publicity** is having the product mentioned in the media. However, typically the reporter or writer, not the publicist, controls the message.

**Public Relations** is the management of activities to determine or change the attitudes and opinion the public towards a product or service or organization, and the strategic steps to earn the understanding, respect, acceptance, etc. of the public toward the product/service/organization. Simply put, the field of public relations focuses on the relationship between a product/service or organization and its public. In this area, practitioners work strategically to control the message through tools such as press releases, print or broadcast advertising, and/or client-sponsored publicity events, etc.

**Public Affairs** is likened to public relations, with the government or elected official serving the client/product.





## OCCUPATIONS IN ADVERTISING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Occupation	Responsibilities
Advertising and Promotions Managers	Analyze competitive activity and consumer trends, report client billing, forecast agency income, and combine the talents of the creative, media, and research areas.
Media Directors	Oversees planning groups that select the communication media—for example, radio, television, newspapers, magazines, Internet, or outdoor signs—to be used to promote the organization, issue, product, or service.
Public Relations Managers	Develop and administer strategic public relations plans; oversee activities and staff to deliver effective service and generate desired response.
Public Relations Specialists	Handle organizational functions such as media, community, consumer, and governmental relations; political campaigns; interest-group representation; conflict mediation; or employee and investor relations; prepare and disseminate outreach materials such as press releases.
Copy Writers	Write advertising text and develop concepts for print and broadcast media.
Art Directors	Develop the visual concepts and designs of advertisements; prepare paste-ups and layouts for print ads and television storyboards, cartoon-style summaries; oversee television commercials filming and photo sessions.
Graphic Designers	Create visual interpretation of written copy; develop the overall layout and design of print ads for magazines, newspapers, journals, corporate reports, and other publications; produce promotional displays and marketing brochures for products and services, design distinctive company logos.
Market Research Analysts	Analyze statistical data on past sales to predict future sales; provide company's management with information needed to make decisions on the promotion, distribution, design, and pricing of products or services.
Media Planners	Gather information on the public's viewing and reading habits, and evaluate editorial content and programming to determine the potential use of media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, or the Internet.
Media Buyers	Track the media space and times available for purchase, negotiate and purchase time and space for ads, and make sure ads appear exactly as scheduled.
Advertising Sales Agents	Sell airtime on radio and television, and page space in print media. They generally work in firms representing radio stations, television stations, and publications.
Demonstrators	Promote sales of a product to consumers.
Product Promoters	Induce retail stores to sell particular products and market them effectively.

### Entering and Succeeding in the Advertising and Public Relations Field

Most entry-level professional and managerial positions in advertising and public relations services require, at the very least, a bachelor's degree, with broad liberal arts exposure. However, there are positions where a four-year degree is not required, but there are other rigorous paths to acquiring the skills and abilities necessary to do the job well. Art directors, for example, usually need at least an associate's degree from an art or design school. Other occupations not requiring a four-year degree include administrative assistant, art director, and some copywriters.

For beginners entering the industry, completing an advertising-related internship while in school can provide an advantage. Courses in marketing, psychology, accounting, statistics, and creative design are also thought to offer excellent theoretical bases.

Experienced applicants who possess a master's degree may fill research positions. Marketing Research is an important, yet underrated, component to both advertising and public relations. The role and responsibilities of workers in the research department is to understand the desires, motivations, and ideals of consumers, in order to produce and place the most effective advertising or public relations campaign in the most effective media. Those who excel in this area usually have a background in marketing or statistics and years of experience.

In public relations, employers prefer applicants with degrees in communications, journalism, English, business, or public relations. Competition for entry-level public relations jobs is high. Gaining practical experience through internships, for example, is strongly encouraged. Although many workers enter the field through administrative positions, they often gradually work, under the tutorage of an experienced professional. Entry-level workers often start as research or account assistants and may be promoted to account executives.

### **Am I a good fit for this Industry?**

From all angles, practitioners of advertising, publicity, promotions and public relations services are influencers – people who work behind the scene to elicit a desired response from any particular target market. The opportunities are plentiful and the work is exciting.

Individuals interested in advertising and public relations should have excellent people skills, creativity, communication skills, and problem-solving ability. The ability to speak another language can be advantageous due to our country's multicultural demographics and opportunities to work for foreign firms that are located within the United States.

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- 68 percent of all advertising and public relations establishments employ fewer than 5 employees; and about 74% of these workers are between 25 and 54 years old.
- A lobbyist is a special type of public relations practitioner, whose job is to influence legislators in favor of the clients' special interests.



## 2006 - 2016 DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HIGH GROWTH OCCUPATIONS IN PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES

Occupational Title	Avg Hourly Wage	Avg Annual Wage	Education/Training
Computer Software Engineers, Applications	\$41.20	\$85,700	Bachelor's degree
Lawyers	\$71.79	\$149,330	First professional degree
Security Guards	\$15.93	\$33,140	Short-term on-the-job training
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$11.90	\$24,750	Short-term on-the-job training
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	\$29.65	\$61,660	Associate degree
Computer Systems Analysts	\$40.69	\$84,630	Bachelor's degree
Network Systems and Data Communications Analysts	\$37.03	\$77,010	Bachelor's degree
Legal Secretaries	\$29.30	\$60,940	Associate degree
Accountants and Auditors	\$36.43	\$75,780	Bachelor's degree
Public Relations Specialists	\$46.63	\$96,990	Bachelor's degree
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	\$36.50	\$75,920	Bachelor's degree
Management Analysts	\$39.88	\$82,960	Bachelor's or higher degree, plus work experience
Computer Software Engineers, Systems Software	\$43.27	\$89,990	Bachelor's degree
Executive Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	\$23.32	\$48,510	Work experience in a related occupation
Office Clerks, General	\$16.52	\$34,360	Short-term on-the-job training
Financial Analysts	\$41.64	\$86,610	Bachelor's degree
Computer Support Specialists	\$26.61	\$55,350	Associate degree
Business Operations Specialists, all other	\$41.49	\$86,300	Bachelor's degree
Market Research Analysts	\$33.92	\$70,560	Bachelor's degree
Database Administrators	\$36.36	\$75,630	Bachelor's degree
Accountants and Auditors	\$36.43	\$75,780	Bachelor's degree
Customer Service Representatives	\$16.56	\$34,440	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	\$29.65	\$61,660	Associate degree
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$21.21	\$44,130	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Computer and Information Systems Managers	\$60.28	\$125,370	Bachelor's or higher degree, plus work experience
Registered Nurses	\$35.11	\$73,040	Associate or higher degree
Architects, Except Landscape and Naval	\$38.58	\$80,250	Bachelor's degree



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**Note:** The statistics in this publication may change with receipt of additional information.

**Notice of Non-Discrimination**

In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Official Code Section 2-1401.01 et seq., (Act) the District of Columbia does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived: race, color religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, disability, source of income, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination, which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above-protected categories is prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.

The Department of Employment Services is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Provider. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities.



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