Human Resources

What is Human Resources?
Human resources deal with the management and development of the people or employees within an organization. Human resource activities include recruiting and staffing, compensation and benefits, training, knowledge management, labor and employee relations, and organization development. HR specialty areas include:

• Compensation and benefits—Conducting and analyzing salary surveys or administering benefits plans.
• Employment, recruiting and staffing—Recruiting and staffing specialists are common in organizations with a steady stream of hiring or a need to place new hires in jobs.
• Labor and employee relations—Usually found in unionized companies, labor and employee relations specialists learn the nitty-gritty of union contracts and may specialize in interpreting those contracts or resolving employee disputes and grievances.
• Training, learning and organization development—Leading new hire orientation or coordinating employee development activity.

Job Positions

**Human Resources Generalist**—Perform a wide variety of activities depending on the size of the organization. If the position is with a small company, it will require someone with a strong background in individual HR specialties who can perform human resource duties for the entire company. In larger companies, the position is for someone who is learning about the various areas. Responsibilities can vary greatly depending on the needs of the company.

**Human Resources Manager**—A middle management position that may require overseeing specialists responsible for several distinct areas in a division of a company. Strategic work may be involved such as planning human resource policy and setting procedures.

**Recruiter**—Screens, interviews, and recommends prospective employees, and extends offers to successful candidates.

**Benefits Analyst**—Qualifications can vary greatly depending on the company’s needs and the person’s experience. At the bottom of the scale, it can be entry level, involving carrying out benefits programs and possibly researching new ones. At the top of the scale, the position may report to a VP and involve strategy and business planning.

**Training Manager**—Designs, plans, and implements corporate training programs.

**Compensation Analyst**—Evaluates and conducts surveys and analyzes salary data to come up with the full monetary package offered to employees, including salary, bonuses and perks, such as stock options. In many cases, compensation analysts deal only with the packages offered to executives or even come in on a contract basis to help research and negotiate the package for an incoming CEO. In other cases, the compensation analyst will deal with all job categories in a company. Regardless, the compensation analyst has to be familiar with a company’s job titles and responsibilities.

**Labor Relations Manager**— Works primarily in manufacturing or service industries and deals with labor unions. A labor relations manager prepares information for management to use when a contract is up for renewal. He or she may supervise a group of labor relations specialists. Vice President of Human Resources—The VP of HR helps set the tone of the company’s corporate culture. He or she brings information about the workforce to executive management so that management can set policies after mergers, acquisitions, closures, layoffs, and similar changes. This position often involves extensive travel and very long hours.
For more information on human resources, industry trends or job postings visit the following:

**Careers-in-Business, HR** [www.careers-in-business.com/hr.htm](http://www.careers-in-business.com/hr.htm)

**Jobs4HR** [http://jobs4hr.com](http://jobs4hr.com)
Human Resources job listings.

**HR People** [www.hrpeople.com](http://www.hrpeople.com)
Tips and tricks on how to break into an HR career including interview advice, salary ranges and job expectations.

Description of human resources careers.

**Society for Human Resource Management** [www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org)
Provides educational program information, careers, volunteer opportunities and articles.

**The American Association for Training and Development** [www.astd.org](http://www.astd.org)
The leading resource on workplace learning and performance issues. Lists jobs and resources.

**College and University Professional Association for Human Resources** [www.cupahr.org/index.aspx](http://www.cupahr.org/index.aspx)
Contains job listings, resources and HR news.

**Vault, Career Insider Guides** [http://career.opcd.wfu.edu (*must use your WFU email to access)*](http://career.opcd.wfu.edu)
Vault, Career Insider – Vault Career Guide to Human Resources

**Wetfeet Careers & Industries** [http://wetfeet.com](http://wetfeet.com)
Overview of the human resources industry and careers within the field.

### SKILLS

- Organization
- Multitasking
- Discretion and business ethics
- Rapport building/relationship management
- Ability to maintain confidentiality
- Ability to balance employee and management viewpoints
- Ability to demonstrate fairness
- Strategic
- Team orientation
- Analytical
- Customer service