

Is There a Great Job in Your Future? WRITTEN FOR WOMAN'S WORLD

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), there will be 20.3 million more jobs by the year 2008. 57 percent of this job growth will be for jobs that require no education or training beyond high school, other than short-term on-the-job-training. "It's a very bright outlook," says Jon Sargent, Senior Economist for the Bureau. "Unemployment is low right now and jobs are plentiful. It's a tremendous job market for people with good, basic educational skills willing to learn and grow. Employers want those people!"

So, for career changers and anyone just entering the workforce ... the Bureau recently came out with its much anticipated list of the 25 jobs that it predicts will grow like *wildfire* from now until 2008. All of them are expected to grow by at least 40 percent, and some more than 100 percent! That means that not only will there be a wide choice of openings for anyone trained in these fields, but salaries will grow as well.

Some great jobs that made the list: database administrators, paralegals, medical assistants, respiratory therapists, financial services sales agents, and correctional officers.

For each one, we'll explain why it's hot, how much the field is expected to grow, what the job involves, who is best suited for it, what it pays, what training you will need, how to find out more, and where to turn to get started.

DATABASE ADMINISTRATORS (DBA)

With technology taking over our lives, this is the hottest job in our list! By 2008 there will be a 77 percent growth rate. According to the IEEE (The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers), prospects are rosy for the computer field in general and there are lots of different jobs to choose from. They vary from one industry to another, and from one company to the next. Patrick Conlan, Program Manager, SQL Server, at Microsoft Corporation says "Databases are a growth industry, even in the post dot.com era. We need extremely skilled people to get the most out of limited resources." If you have a knack for technology, a head for detail, and everyone says you are the most organized person they know ... *this* job might be for you!

What a DBA does:

Their job is to find the best way to use software to organize and store data, and make a company's computer systems more reliable. They might also plan computer security systems. A DBA has to stay on top of new technologies and new design approaches.

Is It A Fit?

You'll need some previous job experience with computer systems, strong problem solving, organizational, analysis and communication skills. Musts — attention to detail, calmness under pressure, the ability to focus and juggle multiple projects, and being a team player.

Work Environment:

Usually a 40 hour work week in a comfortable office or laboratory. But when problems come up or a deadline looms, evening and weekend work is expected. There could be opportunities for some telecommuting.

Training Required:

The National Science Foundation reports that only 30 percent of people in the computer field have formal degrees in some aspect of technology. The level of education required depends on employers' needs. You can often advance with on-the-job training. Job seekers may get a degree in computer science or management information systems (MIS).

Pay Scale:

Average salary in the last BLS report is \$48,000, with a high of \$86,000. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, with a bachelor's degree ... earnings go up.

For More Information:

Contact the Institute for Certification of Computing Professionals (ICCP) at www.iccp.org, the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) at www.acm.org, or the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) at www.ieee.org. Also there are many technology job sites on the Internet, like www.dice.com.

PARALEGALS

With law firms, and legal departments in corporations and government, trying to lower costs and offer more services ... they are delegating to paralegals and this job field is growing fast! 62 percent growth is expected by 2008. American Bar Association Executive Director Robert A. Stein recently calls the use of paralegals "one of the key trends affecting the practice of law." Are you naturally organized, have a lot of common sense, and love to take on responsibility? This job may be for you, says Susan Witherspoon, National Federation of Paralegal Associations VP and Director of Professional Development.

What A Paralegal Does:

Lawyers still have most of the responsibility, but more and more of their tasks are delegated to paralegals. In many cases, the paralegals are doing the same thing as lawyers, but they can't set legal fees, give legal advice or present cases in court. They *can* investigate the facts of cases and gather all the important information for closings, hearings and trials. They might also identify appropriate laws, legal decisions, and other materials related to the case they are working on, analyze the information, prepare reports, and even help prepare legal arguments and assist the attorney in court. Their job varies quite a bit depending on who employs them and if they are working in litigation, personal injury, corporate law, criminal law, employee benefits, intellectual property, labor law or real estate.

Is It A Fit?

You'll need to be a good investigator, able to research, organize, and evaluate important information, and communicate it well. Other things in your favor: being good at resolving conflicts, negotiating skills, and

relating well to all kinds of people. Comfort with computers is important and a willingness to take on a lot of responsibility.

Work Environment:

Most of the work is done in an office or library, with some travel. Corporate and government paralegals usually have a standard 40-hour work week. Law firms often require long hours to meet deadlines but sometimes offer paybacks like bonuses or extra time off. Some paralegals are hired on a temporary basis to help with a larger than usual workload.

Training Required:

Many employers provide their own on-the-job training. According to the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, some paralegals get a one-year certificate or associate degree, and some get two-year or four-year degrees in paralegal studies. Over 800 formal paralegal training programs are offered by community colleges, 4-year colleges and universities, law schools, business schools, and schools with specific programs for this training.

Pay Scale:

This varies quite a bit depending on education, training, experience, location and the employer. According to the National Association of Legal Assistants, paralegals can expect to earn an average of \$34,000, with higher salaries reaching \$50,000. Many also receive a bonus.

For More Information:

Contact the American Association for Paralegal Education at www.aafpe.org, the American Bar Association's Committee on Legal Assistants at www.abanet.org/legalassts, or the National Association of Legal Assistants at www.nala.org. To find out about paralegal jobs with the Federal Government, one of the largest paralegal employers, call 912-757-3000 or see www.usajobs.opm.gov.

MEDICAL ASSISTANTS

Because of a growing and aging population the health services industry is booming. And more and more of our care comes from outpatient settings, which is where most medical assistants work. These jobs will grow 58 percent by 2008. Donald Balasa, Executive Director of the American Association of Medical Assistants, says that medical assistants are in demand because they do administrative duties as well as some medical procedures. If you are versatile and can multi-task, he says, this could be your calling.

What A Medical Assistant Does:

You might perform routine office administrative tasks like answering phones, greeting patients, scheduling appointments, handling insurance forms, organizing and running the office, and billing. Or you could also handle clinical procedures like preparing patients for their exam, helping the doctor with the exam, taking vital signs, drawing blood, giving meds and injections, and helping with other tests, all under the supervision of the doctor.

Is It A Fit?

Because you would be dealing with the public you need to be neat and well-groomed. And you must love working with people, and be good at putting them at ease and explaining the doctor's instructions. Confidentiality with the medical records is important, as well as some manual dexterity for the clinical work.

Work Environment:

Seven out of 10 jobs are in physician's offices, many are for chiropractors, optometrists, and podiatrists, and the rest are with hospitals, nursing homes and other healthcare facilities. It's usually a 40-hour week but some medical assistants work part-time, evenings or weekends.

Pay Scale:

Earnings vary according to experience and location. Average starting hourly wages are around \$10 per hour, and with five years of experience that goes to \$13.

Training Required:

Formal training is not always required and some medical assistants are trained on-the-job. You usually would need at least a high school diploma, and volunteer experience in the healthcare field is a big plus. If you want formal training, medical assistant programs are offered by vocational/technical schools, community colleges, and 4-year colleges and universities. They are usually one-year certificate or diploma programs, or two-year programs for an associate degree.

For More Information:

Contact The American Association of Medical Assistants at www.aama-ntl.org. Donald Balasa of the AAMA says that community colleges and vocational/technical schools often have job placement services, and that you might also find these jobs by contacting local medical societies or through newspaper ads.

RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS (RT)

Most people take breathing for granted. Many need the help of a respiratory therapist. This is a field that is growing fast right along with the numbers of older Americans, many of whom require pulmonary care. Robert Czachowski, PhD., Director of Education for the American Association of Respiratory Care, says there will be many openings for RTs across all healthcare services, from pulmonary physician's offices, to critical care facilities, and home care and rehab. 43 percent growth is expected by 2008. Can you follow instructions, pay attention to detail, work well with a team, and be sensitive to the needs of patients? Look into this job.

What A Respiratory Therapist Does:

RTs care for all kinds of patients with breathing disorders, from premature infants whose lungs aren't fully developed, to kids with asthma, to an elderly person with lung disease. Dr. Czachowski says during

a typical day in a critical care facility the RT might assess patients, connect and manage someone on a ventilator, provide oxygen delivery, draw blood and analyze it, administer meds, and talk with the patient and family members before discharge.

Is It A Fit?

You should really want to help people, be comfortable with the idea of emergency care, and have lots of stamina for long periods of standing and walking between patients' rooms.

Work Environment:

These jobs are available everywhere there are patients with respiratory needs. Nine out of 10 RTs work in hospital departments of respiratory care, anesthesiology, or pulmonary medicine. The rest are in homes, physician's offices, nursing facilities, rehab hospitals, or critical care centers. The work week is usually 35-40 hours but hospital work usually calls for evening, night and weekend hours.

Pay Scale:

Respiratory Therapists earn an average of \$35,000 a year, up to \$47,000. Of course, this varies with location.

Training Required:

Some formal training is required to be an RT. The minimum required, according to Dr. Czachowski, is an associate degree from a community college. Training is available through colleges and universities, hospitals, medical schools, trade schools, vocational/technical schools, and the Armed Forces. There are more than 400 respiratory therapist programs in the U.S. that offer the CRT or Certified Respiratory Therapist credential, or the RRT, Registered Respiratory Therapist degree.

For More Information:

Contact the American Association for Respiratory Care at www.aarc.org, and for more details on certification get in touch with the Committee on Accreditation for Respiratory Care. You'll find that many programs offer job placement services.

FINANCIAL SERVICES SALES REPS

As banks try to become one-stop-shops for their customers, they are looking for people with sales skills to make the most of all the new products they offer. "The bottom line is that competition in the financial services industry is intense," says Charlotte Birch, Director of Public Relations for the American Bankers Association. "Banks are diversifying fast and they need to *sell* more than they used to." Which means they are looking for the right employees to get the job done. This field will grow 41 percent by 2008.

Would you be good at talking to people and finding out what they need without being pushy? Do you like dealing with numbers? This might be a fit!

What A Rep Does:

Financial Services Sales Reps sell banking services and products. They meet with potential customers or talk to them on the phone, explaining the products they have to offer ... things like checking and savings accounts, lines of credit, CDs, financing, and investment services. It is their job to cross-sell ... to let the customer know about the product they are inquiring about, as well as others that might be useful to them.

Is It A Fit?

Prior sales experience and an interest in working directly with customers would help. Other good qualities: maturity, the ability to work independently,

Work Environment:

This is usually a 40-hour work week in a comfortable office setting. Some reps only work *inside* banks, serving “walk-in” customers. Others might spend considerable time *outside* of the office meeting with prospective customers.

Pay Scale:

Financial services sales representatives are usually paid a straight salary, and sometimes a bonus, but not commissions. This varies greatly but you can expect to earn from \$35,000 to \$45,000.

Training Required:

Many employers consider personal qualities and skills more important than academic training. Financial Services Sales Representatives typically learn their jobs through on-the-job training and can advance to managerial positions. “So much of finding the right salesperson is personality,” added Charlotte Church. “Someone who is a quick-starter and can easily learn the basics of the products can go far with the right training.”

For More Information:

Contact the bankers’ associations in your State to find out about job opportunities, or write directly to a specific bank. Or you can look for jobs in your local newspaper, and online through the many job search engines. Also touch base with the American Bankers Association at www.aba.com where you will find links to other helpful sites.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS

“There is a fast-growing inmate population in this country,” says James Turpin, Legislative Liaison for the American Correctional Association, “so there is a crying need for correctional officers.” These job

openings will grow 39 percent by 2008. Luckily for you, women are well-suited for this career. They are in demand to work in facilities with increasing numbers of women inmates. “And they often can communicate better than men because of their softer approach,” added Mr. Turpin, “especially with a primarily male prison population.” Are you physically fit, with good judgment skills? Up for a non-traditional career move? Go for it!

What A Correctional Officer Does:

The job differs for each setting and circumstance. Correctional officers are responsible for people who have been arrested and are waiting for trial or have been sentenced to jail, reformatory or prison time. They keep order and enforce the rules and regulations. In the course of the day they might check the log from the previous day for any problems, count the people in the facility, complete official forms, escort inmates to court, medical care or activities, talk to them about any needs they have, and generally be there as a resource and element of security.

Is It A Fit?

Correctional officers must be in good health and usually have to meet formal standards for fitness, eyesight and hearing. Good judgment and the ability to think and act quickly are also important skills for this job.

Work Environment:

Six out of 10 correctional officers work at State prisons, prison camps, and youth correctional facilities. Many others work at city and county jails, and the rest are at Federal correctional facilities. The work can be indoors and outdoors, depending on the specific duties. It's usually an 8-hour, 5 days a week job, on rotating shifts, since prison and jail security is provided 24-hours per day.

Pay Scale:

This varies from facility to facility and state by state, but the average salary for a correctional officer is \$29,000, and can go up to \$47,000. Salary levels for Federal jobs are the highest, with the average at \$36,000.

Training Required:

According to the American Correctional Association, there is plenty of opportunity for women to come in at an entry level and move up in the system based on hard work and on-the-job training. Specific requirements vary from agency to agency. Most institutions require at least a high school education and many Federal, State and local departments of corrections provide training. Some States have training academies.

For More Information:

Just go to www.corrections.com where you will find links to many industry associations, including: the American Correctional Association at www.corrections.com/aca. To find out about a Federal job, call 912-757-3000 or try www.usajobs.opm.gov, or www.bop.gov, the Federal Bureau of Prisons.