



ALTERNATIVES TO BECOMING A LAWYER



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INTRODUCTION

Becoming a lawyer requires a great deal of commitment; time, money and effort. Sometimes, students who are interested in law question whether becoming a lawyer is the right choice for them. For some, it is the duties of a lawyer such as presenting a case in court, or conducting exhaustive research that don't seem to fit their skills and interests. For others, the high standards of entrance requirements are daunting. Some students may want to explore other options or not apply right away. Whatever your reason, this package will help you examine what aspects of law interest you most and link these aspects to alternative careers. This package is the beginning of this process, meant to help you understand what some of the other alternatives may be. The final section with UTM Career Centre resources and services outlines how you can continue to plan your career and reach your goal.

CAREER OPTIONS AND RELATED SKILLS

We make our career choices based on many different factors. These factors range from our personal factors such as interests, values, personality and skills to external factors such as labour market trends. Skills are a very important factor, as the types of skills that we use on a daily basis can greatly influence our decision of choosing our "ideal job". These skills are often already related to our interests. The chart below outlines the major tasks of a lawyer, along with some of the transferable skills associated with these tasks.

Task	Skills
Advising clients of legal rights, responsibilities and potential problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Critical listening skills- Oral communication skills- Understanding components of complex problem- Mediating/negotiating conflicts- Social perceptiveness
Presenting cases in court	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Public speaking skills- Presenting and defending a position- Influencing and persuading people- Leadership skills
Researching rules and regulations and previous cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Utilizing proper research method- Analytical skills- Investigating skills- Interpreting data- Technical skills
Preparing legal documents and wills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Written communication skills- Organizational skills- Comprehensive writing skills

Take a moment to see which part of the chart above interests you the most. Wondering what other jobs would require you to use the same or similar skills? Below is a list of some career alternatives. Keep in mind that this is not an exhaustive list.

Lawyer's Task	Jobs requiring relevant skills
Advising clients for legal rights, responsibilities and potential problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Airport security officer: communication and monitoring observation - Bailiff: persuading, in control, communication - Communications Specialist: communication, training, listening - Correctional officer: monitoring, communication, listening - Customs Broker: technical, organization, communication - Event planner/coordination: listening, solution appraisal, service orientation - Human resources coordinator: communication, analytical, leadership - Humanitarian Aid Worker: communication, technical, analytical - Interpreter: communication, technical, analytical - Management consultant: leadership, communication, interpreting data - Paralegal: written comprehension, research, communication - Police officer: monitoring, communication, listening - Political aide: writing, research, communication - Probation officer: monitoring, investigating and social perceptiveness - Public health administrator: instructing, social perceptiveness, supervision - Social worker: communication, social perceptiveness and mediation
Presenting clients in the court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activist: public speaking, communication, influencing - Advertising account manager: creative, persuading, communication - Bank Manager: leadership, communication and organization - Community relations officer: communication, organization, presentation - Economic development officer: technical, leadership and communication - Equity officer: persuasive, monitoring and social perceptiveness - Fundraiser: ascertaining, motivating and explaining - Lobbyist: communication, motivating and social perceptiveness - Marketing coordinator: persuasive, organization and creative - Politician: public speaking, persuading and presentation - Recruiting officer: communication, social perceptiveness , persuading - Sales representative: persuading communication and public speaking - Teacher/professor: organization, communication and public speaking - Volunteer Manager: monitoring, leadership and organization
Researching rules and regulations and previous cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Campaign Worker: organization, research and writing - Coast guard: investigating, leadership and technical - Conservation Officer: monitoring, investigation and supervising - Coroner: investigation technical and analytical - Crime scene investigator: investigation, social perceptiveness, communication - Criminologist: research, analytical, organization - Demographer: analysis, information gathering, communication - Detective: investigating, analysis, social perceptiveness - Developer: analytical, monitoring, organizational

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economist: research, analytical, writing - Evidence technician: analytical, investigating, communication - Foreign service officer: supervising, monitoring and research - Forensics investigator: investigating, technical and research - Immigration officer: estimating, investigating, computing - Insurance investigator: investigating, understanding, research - Policy analyst: mediating, research and communication - Research analyst: writing, research and analytical - Sociologist: analytical, research and social perceptiveness - Statistical research analyst: research, analytical, organization
<p>Preparing legal documents and wills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Constable: communication, organization and writing - Consumer advocate: mediation, communication and analytical - Court clerk: organization, public speaking and writing - Court reporter: comprehensive writing, communication and accuracy - Criminalist: analytical investigating and writing - Editor: organization, writing and communication - Environmental health officer: investigating, writing, communication - Explosives specialist: technical, analytical, organization - Food inspector: investigating, technical and writing - Intelligence service officer: analytical, monitoring and organization - Journalist: writing, research and communication - Legal secretary: communication, writing and analytical - Loss prevention officer: monitoring and technical - Market research analyst: analytical, information gathering and writing - Newspaper editor: organization, writing and communication - Reporter: writing , analytical and research - Stenographer: writing, taking notes skills - Technical write: research, information gathering and motivational - Urban policy planner: analytical, organization, technical

Do you see a career that interests you? Come by the Career Centre, the career assistants will be happy to help you research further. If none of the careers above interest you, then our career counselors can help you explore your options.

Before you move on to the Gaining experience section, take some time to identify your skill set. These are the transferable skills developed through summer or part time jobs, volunteering, university, and extracurricular activities that can be crucial in the work environment. Communication skills, leadership, organization, motivation, time management and multitasking are some examples of the skills you might have already developed. In order to identify your skills, first list you previous paid and unpaid experiences including projects and assignments completed in the university, next outline the tasks involved with those experiences and lastly for each specific task think of the skills you used the most. If you find it difficult to come up with the relevant skills come to the Career center and book an

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appointment with a career counsellor. After identifying the skills you have, go back to the careers of your interest to help you identify the skills you would like to develop or improve.

SAMPLE ALTERNATIVE CAREER PROFILES

ACTIVIST

JOB DESCRIPTION

When deciding on a career, some people follow the money. In other words, they look for the highest paying careers. Others follow a cause or a strong belief. They look for a career that will help them advance that cause or belief. Activists definitely belong in the second group.

There is no typical activist. The sign-toting student rallying against tuition hikes is an activist. So is the politician who uses her power to fight for the powerless. People who chain themselves to trees to prevent logging are activists. So are those who sit at desks making phone calls to raise money for women's shelters. To be effective, activists have to understand and use the media to their advantage. A protest is pointless if no one hears about it. Activists develop relationships with the media. They do a lot of interviews with reporters to raise awareness for the cause. They also send out press releases.

Activists interact with governments, too. They spend time writing speeches, policy briefs and letters.

Activist organizations rely on large number of people doing a wide range of work. Some positions pay a salary but many don't. Whatever their position, activists must be passionate about their cause. Sometimes, that's their only reward. Its tough work canvassing door to door or calling people for donations all day long.

CORE TASKS & ATTRIBUTES

- Use the media to raise public awareness about issues
- Organize and attend rallies and demonstrations
- Make speeches and presentations
- Some lobby government officials, canvas door to door or do research
- May call people for donations
- Volunteer experience is useful

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- Communication skills
- Able to handle differing opinions
- Persuasive
- Good with people

WORKING CONDITIONS

You don't have to join an organization to be an activist. But activism is often most effective when a group of people join forces for a cause. All activists are volunteers. Most people continue working full time or part time at other jobs. Within large and relatively well funded organizations, there are some paid positions. Many activists work as administrators or fundraisers. Others work in communications.

Some organizations also hire professionals from other fields, such as scientists. They may need lawyers, researchers and planners as well. In general, activism is work for outgoing people. Activists spend a lot of time talking to people in public places and addressing groups. They make countless phone calls, and deal with the media. Many activists travel. Usually, they have to manage this on a shoestring budget. They travel to take part in rallies, get publicity, and lobby for their cause. They also network with other activists. Being an activist can be tough work. It can be mentally or emotionally stressful. Sometimes it is a physical challenge as well. Volunteers often spend a lot of time on their feet canvassing for support. They attend demonstrations in all kinds of weather, too.

There are no set hours in activism. An activist does what it takes to get the job done. There might not be anyone to check what time you come through the door in the morning. But, if your organization needs more money to stay afloat, you keep working until you find it.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

There is no formal education required to be an activist. But, you do need a good understanding of the issues you are working on. You also need passion and perseverance.

Activists come from many educational backgrounds. Some have a high school diploma. Others have a diploma or bachelor's degree. The area of activism you want to get into can influence your field of study. For instance, a law degree is useful for political activism. A degree in education or sociology may be helpful for social activism.

Some people come to activism through other careers. For example, a lawyer may represent low-income tenants at a legal clinic. A journalist may raise public awareness of environmental issues.

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The amount and kind of education you earn is up to you. You are more likely to get paid if you have relevant post-secondary education. It can also help you build a broad social network. These connections are important to an activist.

Volunteering with activist agencies is a great place to start. You'll have the chance to gain relevant skills and experience, and to prove your dedication. In some cases, these positions can lead to paid work.

EARNINGS

Activists may volunteer or work part time or full time, depending on the organization.

Activists get paid out of the organization's budget, and the salaries are generally low. A full-time organizer of a small group might make \$15,000 to \$20,000 a year. The head of a small organization might make less than \$30,000 a year.

It is possible to earn more at a well-funded organization. Many people start out as volunteers and work their way up to staff positions. Earnings for these positions depend on the nature of the job and the level of responsibility. Skill and education also affect income.

An activist in a clerical position may earn \$25,000 a year. An experienced fundraiser may make as much as \$80,000 a year. Some activists work in communications or policy direction.

PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEWS

1. Tell me about your job. Is what you do different in any way from what others in your occupation do?

I'm the president of an international human rights centre. My job is to defend and promote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights throughout the world. The centre helps protect national and international human rights and teaches people throughout the world how to assert and preserve their rights.

We also give people the tools to do these things themselves. That way, people whose rights are being violated—whether through torture, denial of land rights, or suppression of free speech, culture, or religion—can stand up for themselves. We call this capacity building—that is, helping people learn how to undertake political activism.

Some of the issues the centre is involved in include indigenous people's land rights, freedom of expression and political thought, and the rights of women. We travel around the world and train people in political activism. Sometimes we even provide them with computers and offices. Then we link them with other groups that have gone through a similar process. The groups can then share insight and information.

I spend a lot of my time writing speeches, policy briefs, letters, press releases, and statements to various governmental organizations. Doing interviews with the media and answering press calls takes up a lot of my time as well. In addition, I do an enormous amount of travelling all over the world—sometimes to attend human rights conferences and other times to meet with government officials.

2. Can you tell me about your background and how you got into this field?

I started out as a lawyer. I was always interested in fighting for the rights of others—I helped set up the first legal aid system in Montreal. Then I did my PhD in France. When I got back to Canada I got involved in issues like Medicare, pensions, and unemployment insurance, and practiced law for 7 years. Finally, I decided to enter politics and ran for office.

I was a Member of Parliament for 31 years. I fought hard for issues such as bringing women into the RCMP, establishing Medicare, and abolishing capital punishment.

After leaving politics, I was appointed president of a human rights organization. The basics of this work aren't much different from politics. I'm still fighting for rights, but not within the political party system. Now I have a broader international focus.

3. What personal characteristics are required for someone to be successful in your job?

As an activist, you must be sensitive to the needs of other people and care about the people you're helping. The work can be frustrating because change often takes place very slowly. So you must be dedicated and motivated. As well, you have to demonstrate leadership.

It's also crucial to be passionate and optimistic. You have to believe that you can change things. I was involved with others in fighting apartheid in South Africa—it took a long time, but eventually apartheid was abolished. The same thing happened with the Baltic States and their

independence.

It's vital that you can write and express yourself well because a lot of activism is done through writing and speaking. As with most jobs, you have to be able to work well with other people and be a good listener. A willingness and ability to learn a second, or even third, language is helpful.

4. How much job security is there for people in your field?

Unfortunately, there's not a whole lot of job security as a paid activist. A lot depends on funding, whether it's from foundations, non-governmental organizations, the government, or private individuals. People in this career tend to move around because they get better offers, but they usually stay in the same field.

Once you get experience, you can move into many areas. In this respect, job security isn't that bad. If you become knowledgeable in your subject area, you make connections with other groups and opportunities will present themselves. Sometimes governments hire activists for social programming.

You can do this job for life, even if you go from a full-time paid position to a volunteer one. For instance, if you take a full-time job in an unrelated field, there are always volunteer opportunities. You can do it full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer. You can work for a foundation, a government, a non-profit organization, or a charity.

5. What other jobs could you do with the skills you have gained in this field?

Most activists are committed to social causes, so if they leave jobs as full-time paid activists, they often still work as volunteer activists.

With the proper training, activists could do social work or law, or they could run for political office. There are many ways of doing political and social good.

Some activists are journalists or writers. For example, Linda McQuaig and Noam Chomsky are outspoken activists and authors.

6. What do you think the future holds for people in your occupation?

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It's hard to say what the future holds. Activists always have to be watching to make sure that the advances that have been made aren't reversed. Budget cuts can have serious impacts on things like education, health care, and social programs.

The plight of Aboriginal people in Canada is serious. Racism, inner-city poverty, and hatred against women, gays and lesbians, and lots of other groups are still prevalent. There will always be a need for political activists. You can't take it for granted that things are improving.

Advances in communication technology will continue to make activism easier. We can now get the word out immediately to other activist groups when something needs to be done and pressure needs to be put on government officials. For example, there was a girl in Pakistan who wanted a divorce, but her family killed her rather than let her get a divorce. A murder attempt was also made on her lawyer. My organization took urgent action on this case and was able to put pressure on the Pakistani government. The centre protected the girl's lawyer.

However, technology can also facilitate negative things, such as the spread of hate groups on the Internet. So, we have to always be aware of what's going on in other countries as well as in cyberspace.

7. What are the biggest challenges in your job?

The biggest challenge is dealing with people who have fixed attitudes and ideas, and trying to get them to change their minds and views. It's hard to break down stereotypes unless people actually get a chance to meet with people from the other side. Stereotypes exist when people haven't met anyone from the group they're stereotyping.

It's hard to handle pessimism and people who give up. Even the victims themselves sometimes get this way. It's also hard to deal with people who are always struggling against tyranny, torture, and other abuses. You can get very frustrated and then burn out.

It's often difficult to get people to cooperate with each other—everyone has his or her own idea of how things should be solved. You may not all have the same goal, but you have to know how to come to a consensus. If everyone works alone, you'll never get results.

It's frustrating trying to get the media interested in things that would help prevent tragedy. For instance, we tried to tell the media that genocide was going to happen in Rwanda and they wouldn't listen. Shortly afterward, genocide occurred. The media only view an issue as newsworthy once something horrible happens.

8. Are there many opportunities in your field? What should people do to get started?

There are many volunteer opportunities. There is a lot to be done in the world and not enough people or funding to do it. There's not enough money to hire the people needed, so volunteering is your best avenue to get involved.

I would strongly encourage people to volunteer while going to school. Personally, I hire people who have done volunteer work and I look at the type of volunteer work they've done. This is very important. There are many groups that would welcome volunteers. You could work in a women's shelter, help people with disabilities, volunteer for environmental or social causes—there are hundreds of organizations that need help. Volunteering provides good experience, and it shows you care. It can also end up leading to other jobs.

BAILIFF

JOB DESCRIPTION

In a perfect world? Everyone would be willing and able to pay the debts they owe. But money problems aren't that simple. Sometimes a debtor who has borrowed money is no longer making repayments. The creditor may hire a bailiff to resolve the issue. Bailiffs are sometimes known as the recovery agents. They are more often called repo men and women. They have the legal authority to seize property on behalf of the creditors. Their work is important part of maintaining law and order. In some cases, bailiff may negotiate alternatives repayment plans with debtors. They do this rather than seizing property.

Every province has a unique set of rules for its bailiffs. In all regions, a provincial authority appoints the bailiffs. Once they are appointed, most work for private bailiff companies. Bailiff companies get contracts from creditors like landlords, banks, and car dealerships. They may also work on behalf of municipal governments. For instance, a car dealership may hire a bailiff company to repossess vehicles. The bailiff gets involved if debtors stop making their payments. Or, bailiffs may seize and sell property from a company or a person that has failed to pay taxes or bank loans.

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Besides vehicles, bailiffs may seize computers or office equipment. They may also seize machinery. Bailiffs have to evict tenants from their businesses. In some provinces, they can evict owners from their homes. They do this if tenants or owners have fallen too far behind on paying the rent or mortgage.

In some provinces, bailiff companies are also contracted by courts. They may seize property if directed to do so by a judge. Or, they may serve civil and criminal documents to citizens. They serve these documents by delivering letters to people. The letters inform the people of their part in an upcoming lawsuit or trial. For example, a person may be getting sued in court or appearing as a witness in a criminal trial.

Bailiffs are representatives of the law. They must operate by a strict code of ethics at all times. They learn the provincial and federal laws about the recovery of property. They act as the professional liaisons between debtors and creditors.

CORE TASKS & ATTRIBUTES

- Locate people who owe money
- Seize possessions, such as cars, computers or office equipment
- May evict people from their businesses or homes
- May serve people with civil and criminal records
- Exact duties vary depending on the province
- Need to be physically fit and be a people person
- Need to be calm, persuasive and patient

WORKING CONDITIONS

Bailiffs are appointed by a provincial authority. This position is usually for life. Most start out by working for bailiff companies. With experience, they may work as independent agents. Some start their own bailiff companies. Work hours depend on the nature and the number of contracts a bailiff has. To seize the property, they have to locate the debtor. In principle, this means they have to be available 24/7 hours. Some people work from late afternoon to the early hours of the morning. Other bailiffs manage to fulfill their duties within standard work business hours. They may develop ways to finding debtors during the day. A bailiff's work often involves uncomfortable or unpleasant situations. Debtors may be upset or angry and they may try to resist the seizure of the property. Bailiffs often work alone.

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They may take along a few people with strong backs if they need to move heavy items. For some contracts, they need to move appliances or machinery.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

To become a bailiff, you need at least a high school diploma. A college diploma or a university degree is recommended. Programs related to law, justice, and criminology are good options. Practical training requirements depend on the province you will work in. In some provinces, you may have to work as a bailiff's assistant for up to 2 years. Then, you can apply to become a bailiff yourself. In other provinces, you need to do a formal training program. You may also have to pass an exam. In all provinces, you will have to undergo a criminal background check. You will also need a driver's license and a clean driving record.

EARNINGS

Bailiffs are often paid by the company they work for on a job-by-job basis. Others work on commission. This means they receive a percentage of the value of the property they seize. Most full-time bailiffs earn from \$20,000 to \$60,000 a year. In rural areas, bailiffs may work only part time and earn around \$10,000 a year. In urban centres, experienced bailiffs can earn \$70,000 a year, or more. Average earnings for bailiffs across the country range from around \$35,000 to \$50,000 a year. Income for bailiffs depends on their employer. It also depends on how efficiently they work and how many contracts they receive.

PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEWS

1. Tell me about your job. Is what you do different in any way from what others in your occupation do?

I do what most bailiffs working in the private sector do. I work for a bailiff firm, which requires me to repossess vehicles and seize property from people who have failed to pay taxes or have other outstanding debts. I also process and serve court documents to individuals involved in upcoming trials.

2. Can you tell me about your background and how you got into this field?

I grew up in a small town. After graduating from high school, I worked as a sculptor and also helped to renovate homes. Later, I had my own business dealing with lease liquidation, and I acted as a recovery specialist.

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While I was self-employed, I worked with a bailiff for 2 and a half years whenever I found time. This training was without pay, but it eventually led to my own appointment as a bailiff.

3. What personal characteristics are required for someone to be successful in your job?

All bailiffs must maintain peace while they are doing their job. This means that a bailiff must be able to remain calm and professional even when faced with extremely hostile people. Bailiffs must also be diligent and persistent, since many debtors will try to evade or misdirect them.

4. How much job security is there for people in your field?

Most bailiffs can count on having their job for life. The number of bailiffs in a certain area is determined by the population living there, so there will always be a controlled number of positions. Once you are appointed, however, your career is basically set.

5. What other jobs could you do with the skills you have gained in this field?

With some extra training, bailiffs can work in other areas of law enforcement, such as policing. They can also do collections for banks, lease companies, and collection agencies. Auctioning and appraising are other possibilities, since bailiffs develop knowledge of the value of different goods during their daily work.

6. What do you think the future holds for people in your occupation?

I think the demand for bailiffs will increase in the future, largely due to the growing population. The government regulates the number of bailiffs in a given area according to the population there. Populations are increasing in most parts of the country, so this should lead to the appointment of more bailiffs.

Downturns in the economy can create a boom in this industry. When more people have financial problems, more bailiffs are needed to recover money and property to pay for outstanding debts.

7. What are the biggest challenges in your job?

The most challenging aspects of being a bailiff are maintaining an awareness of legal issues and dealing with hostile people. As a bailiff, you must always be aware of how different court decisions apply to different circumstances.

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You must also be able to deal with angry people who will do anything to defend the goods and property you are obligated to take from them.

8. Are there many opportunities in your field? What should people do to get started?

There are limited opportunities for new bailiffs, precisely because the law determines the exact number of bailiffs per area. The best way to get involved in the field is to work as an assistant to a bailiff. Once you have this experience, there is a chance that you will get the position of a retiring bailiff or get appointed in a new area.

COURT CLERK

JOB DESCRIPTION

Are you drawn to the drama of the courtroom, but not the idea of years of school and the demands of becoming a lawyer or a judge? Working as a court clerk puts you in the middle of the action. Clerks have many different duties within the court. Before a session begins, they prepare documents and evidence for the day's proceedings. Clerks also make sure recording equipment works properly. They then use it to record what goes on in the courtroom.

During a session, clerks call the court to order. They call cases and read charges, and swear in jury members and witnesses. Clerks must also handle any evidence in a safe and a secure way. For examples, criminal court clerks may need to handle weapons or drugs for an exhibit. When court is adjourned clerks keep records of the sessions and store the evidence. Outside of the courtroom, they file court documents and keep the court's accounts. They speak with lawyers, defendants, witnesses and the public.

CORE TASKS AND ATTRIBUTES

- Prepare dockets before court hearing begins
- Call the court to order, call cases and read the charges to the court
- Swear in jurors and witnesses, and record courtroom proceedings
- Collect, handle and store evidence
- File court documents, and gather information from lawyers, defendants and witnesses
- Require good organizational and communication skills
- Need to be detail oriented and have knowledge of legal terminology and courtroom procedures

WORKING CONDITIONS

Court clerks work for federal, provincial and municipal courts. They mostly work in courtrooms and offices. They must be able to sit for long periods of time. Clerks work with many people. Over the course of the day, they may speak with judges, lawyers and witnesses. They may also come into contact with jurors, defendants and the public. Senior clerks may be in charge of a large staff and many departments. Criminal court clerks may come in contact with violent offenders. There is a strict security to make sure everyone is safe in the courtroom. Clerks may be exposed to tense situations, disturbing testimony and graphic evidence. Clerks work about 40 hours a week, usually during regular business hours. These hours may vary depending on the court proceedings and the judge. Overtime is common, since court time can run longer than expected. Clerks have duties to complete after each session.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

To become a clerk, you will need at least a high school diploma. Other requirements depend on the court you want to work in. You will need related experience to work in some courts. You may need between 6 months and 3 years of experience working in an office. It helps if some of your work focuses on court or legal procedures. Courses in a related field can count towards this requirement. Useful programs include legal assisting, paralegal services, and court reporting. You can also study law and public or business administration. General clerical courses are also helpful, but you should learn about the legal system. In other courts, related experience or training can be an asset, but are not needed. In these cases, senior clerks train new clerks on the job. You will likely have to pass a typing test. You may be tested on legal terms and court procedures.

EARNINGS

Salaries for court clerks range from about \$35,000 to 68,000 a year. Case managers and other senior clerks may earn more. Court clerks' incomes depends on their education and experience and the level of the court. Clerks who work for federal courts tend to earn more than provincial court clerks. Clerks who work full time usually get benefits. These can include paid sick days, vacation time and dental coverage.

PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEWS

1. Tell me about your job. Is what you do different in any way from what others in your occupation do?

I am a criminal court clerk with 11 years of experience. I deal with bail hearings, guilty pleas, and trials (for things like murder and drug charges). Because of my experience, I can often make procedural suggestions to judges and lawyers to speed things along.

2. Can you tell me about your background and how you got into this field?

During high school, I worked for 2 summers at the courthouse doing odd jobs like filing and photocopying. When I graduated, I was told that there was an opening for me, and I had to decide whether to take the job or go on to college or university. I decided that I would like to start working. I started this job by scheduling trials for parking and speeding offences (I did this for 3 or 4 years). When I earned the title of court clerk, I moved on from traffic offences to the criminal court. I have also worked in legal aid for about a year-and-a-half.

3. What personal characteristics are required for someone to be successful in your job?

Court clerks need people skills, because we deal with many different personalities and emotionally charged situations, such as confrontations with defendants. It also helps to be good at “reading” people and to be able to anticipate a judge’s sentence. This ability helps me get all the paperwork and procedural stuff done properly.

People in this occupation should also be good listeners and have excellent concentration skills. We must be aware of everything that goes on in the courtroom in order to do our jobs properly. During a trial, my phone might ring, and I’ve got to be able to talk on the phone and write down everything the judge is saying at the same time.

4. How much job security is there for people in your field?

As a court clerk, you only have to worry about job security during the 6-month probationary period at the beginning. Once you have completed this period and have been asked to continue at the court, your job is pretty secure. I’ve seen other government departments cut back 50 to 70% of their staff, but the court clerks have never been a victim of this downsizing.

5. What other jobs could you do with the skills you have gained in this field?

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With extra training, court clerks can work as paralegals or become provincial prosecutors.

Just about any position that involves dealing with people (for example, sales or customer service representative) is an option for a court clerk.

6. What do you think the future holds for people in your occupation?

I believe the demand for court clerks will remain more or less the same. However, population increases and other demographic changes might cause an increase in demand. Since I started working at the courthouse, I've seen the hours for bail hearings extend from Monday to Friday to 7 days a week because the demand has increased.

Legal and courtroom procedures are time-honored traditions and are very slow to change. There is pressure to cut costs, though, so I imagine court clerks might have to take on additional responsibilities in the future. For example, there has been talk of eliminating court reporters—a move which would undoubtedly lead to an increase in the workload faced by court clerks.

7. What are the biggest challenges in your job?

Keeping up with what's going on in this high-pressure environment can be very challenging. The lawyers and the judge are counting on you, and you feel that making a mistake just isn't an option.

8. Are there many opportunities in your field? What should people do to get started?

Opportunities depend on the jurisdiction. I suggest that you contact the courthouse nearest you and ask about the possibilities. Jobs like this aren't usually advertised in the paper, and many people move into them from positions in other government departments.

CRIMINOLOGIST

JOB DESCRIPTION

To understand the impact of crime, criminologists need to know all they can about it. To do this, they analyze crime statistics. They look for trends and things that are out of the ordinary. They learn what factors might make someone turn to crime. They may also find out where crimes is most common. This data can tell them who might benefit from anti-crime programs or other preventions. Their research can also tell them how police and courts handle criminals. They study how criminals are dealt with in prisons as well. They investigate how people are punished and research rehabilitations programs.

They want to know how effective these programs are and all this data can help them develop policies and proposals for dealing with criminals. Criminologists get their information from different sources. They do interviews and read studies done by experts in the field. This includes other criminologists, police officers and governmental employees. They can also learn a lot from lawyers, judges and correctional officers.

CORE TASKS & ATTRIBUTES

- Gather, examine and analyze information and statistics on crime
- Interview people in the field
- May attend crime scenes or autopsies to gather facts and data
- Prepare reports and give presentations
- Professors teach students and do research
- Are very detail oriented and possess research and analytical skills
- Need to be comfortable with public speaking

WORKING CONDITIONS

Criminologists work for:

- Police departments
- The RCMP
- Colleges and universities
- Prisons
- Governmental agencies

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- Alarm companies

They work in offices, libraries and from their own homes. Some travel to crime scenes or to interview witnesses. They may also travel to conferences. People in this field can work alone or as part of the team. This line of work isn't for anyone who has a weak stomach since they have to review the details of gruesome and disturbing crimes. Most criminologists work 40 hours a week and sometimes they work overtime including nights and weekends. Those who work as professors have more flexible schedules.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

You need to earn at least a bachelor's degree. It can be in criminology, psychology, or sociology. It takes about 4 years to complete a bachelor's degree.

With a bachelor's degree, you can get some entry-level positions. However, it's a good idea to complete a master's degree or PhD. This will qualify you for more senior positions. A master's degree takes 1 or 2 years to earn. A PhD takes another 4 to 5 years to complete. You need a PhD if you want to teach at a college or university.

Criminology programs offer courses in a variety of subjects. Topics you will study include:

- policing
- the court system
- young offenders
- psychology
- crime theory and policy

For some jobs, you cannot have a criminal record. That probably doesn't surprise you. But employers will do checks to make sure of this.

EARNINGS

In general, full-time criminologists earn between \$35,000 and \$140,000 a year. Their earnings depend on their education level and the type of work they do.

For example, professors can earn anywhere from \$40,000 to \$140,000 a year. The Canadian Association of University Teachers conducts a survey of earnings in the field. According to their survey, the average salary for a criminology lecturer is about \$58,000 a year. Assistant criminology professors make an average of about \$75,000 a year. Associate professors make an average of \$96,000 a year. Full professors earn around \$120,000 a year on average.

Criminologists who don't teach can make between \$35,000 and \$80,000 a year.

Income also depends on experience and employer. For example, some people in this field work for security companies. Experienced criminologists may work for the police. Those hired by an alarm

company tend to make less than those who work for the police. Those who work full time usually receive benefits. These can include health and dental benefits and a retirement plan.

PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEW

1. Tell me about your job. Is what you do different in any way from what others in your occupation do?

I am a professor of criminology. My job involves developing theories and hypotheses to explain crime-related phenomena. This includes conducting research projects to test the theories, applying for grants to fund them, analyzing the results, and then presenting those results at academic conferences.

I teach courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

2. Can you tell me about your background and how you got into this field?

After high school, I studied sociology and history at university. Then I continued my education with a master's degree and a PhD in sociology at the same school. I've worked as everything from a bartender to a camp counsellor. Since grad school, I've worked chiefly as a lecturer and researcher.

I've always been interested in criminology; the field is very challenging and always changing. Plus, you get to work a lot on your own. That autonomy is important to me.

For a while, I considered going to law school, but the sociology department provided better funding (a scholarship and a teaching assistantship) and I didn't want to go further into debt.

3. What personal characteristics are required for someone to be successful in your job?

To be a good criminologist, you have to be able to absorb and interpret a lot of information. And because you can be working with this information for a long time, you also need a great deal of patience. My job is very demanding, with a lot of different responsibilities and pressures.

It is also extremely important to be creative and have good communication skills, especially when you are teaching criminology. In order to get your ideas across to students, or to get your ideas published, you have to express complex thoughts in a way that's easily understood.

With all my responsibilities (teaching, writing, and research), the day can be very long.

4. How much job security is there for people in your field?

The career of a professor of criminology can be very insecure, at least in the beginning. However, once you've been at a university for a certain amount of time, you might be offered tenure. If a professor can get tenure, as I have, his or her position is pretty secure for life.

5. What other jobs could you do with the skills you have gained in this field?

Criminology is a very specialized field, so you can often find a niche at a newspaper or magazine writing articles on that subject, or as a government policy-maker. You can also use your experience analyzing statistics to work for a polling company, or do some freelance work using your writing skills.

6. What do you think the future holds for people in your occupation?

I think the need for criminologists will either increase or remain the same. Crime continues to be a popular topic in our culture, so universities will continue to offer courses in it. Governments are becoming more interested in dealing with high crime rates, so funding shouldn't be a problem.

Unfortunately, criminology is becoming more about crunching numbers and less about thinking critically.

7. What are the biggest challenges in your job?

The most challenging part of this job is applying for funding, conducting the research, and publishing, all of which are important if you want to qualify for tenure. Teaching, although stressful, is not as demanding.

8. Are there many opportunities in your field? What should people do to get started?

If you're thinking about becoming a professor of criminology, there's good news. Many professors are approaching retirement. At the same time, the demand for government researchers seems high.

In order to get that entry-level position, you should start by selecting a good university graduate

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program, one that will offer you the opportunity to teach as you study. Then you should get some research experience and try to get some articles published in criminology journals.

DETECTIVE

JOB DESCRIPTION

Imagine a robbery has taken place in your town. It happened in the middle of the night, and there were no witnesses. How will the local police find and catch the perpetrator? The police will most likely turn to the detectives on the force. These experts can piece together the crime and identify the thief.

Detectives are police officers with special training. They investigate and solve all types of crimes, from homicide to fraud. They gather evidence and facts that help them crack even the most complicated cases. They can often specialize in one of the areas including: homicide, robbery, financial crime etc. Large police forces usually include a few departments or units. Each unit focuses on solving a certain type of crime. A detective may be part of the child abuse unit or the drug squad. In smaller police forces, however, detectives often work on all types of crime.

Their specific duties can vary, depending on their area of focus. The needs of their police force are also a factor. But most detectives perform some of the same basic tasks. When a crime such as a robbery occurs, they gather as many facts as they can. They usually start by collecting evidence at the crime scene. Detectives may take pictures or find physical evidence, such as glass shards. They also interview witnesses. Evidence helps them make a list of one or more potential suspects.

In some cases, detectives go on collecting evidence after they identify suspects. They may track the suspects' movements or conduct interviews with them. They might search suspects' computer files or analyze their credit card records. During this process, detectives keep careful records of their findings. Once they have enough evidence, they can make arrests. If a case goes to court, the detective is often required to testify. Besides solving single crimes, detectives may also work on much broader cases. They may help investigate a local drug ring or a global smuggling operation. Wide-ranging cases often require detectives from several police forces to work together. In some cases, they may have to go undercover to get evidence. For instance, a detective may infiltrate a local gang to see if they are dealing drugs.

CORE TASKS & ATTRIBUTES

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- Take pictures, gather physical evidence and interview witnesses at crime scenes
- Identify and investigate suspects, keeping records of the findings
- May go undercover to obtain evidence
- Make arrests and testify in court
- Need to have problem solving skills and be observant
- Detail oriented and need to be able to work as a part of a team

WORKING CONDITIONS

Most detectives work for local and provincial police departments. Others work for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Most people in this field work full time. Detectives work in many settings, depending on their duties. They spend a great deal of time working indoors in police stations. But they also work at crime scenes, which can be indoors or outdoors. They have to travel in their region to carry out some of their duties. These can include tracking suspects and testifying in court.

Detectives' schedules vary depending on their workload. Sometimes they work a regular 9-to-5 schedule. But, they often need to put in overtime. As a result, they end up working more than 40 hours a week. They must work evenings, weekends, and even holidays when major cases are underway. Many are also on call, and must be ready to go to work whenever they are needed. This type of work can be dangerous. Detectives may be at risk of physical harm when they work undercover or arrest suspects. But they are well-trained for these instances. They may need to take extra safety precautions, such as wearing protective vests. They use latex gloves when handling evidence at crime scenes.

There can be a great deal of stress in this career. Detectives are often present at disturbing scenes. They might inspect the aftermath of a car crash or a murder. They may interview distraught victims or witnesses. They also may question or arrest aggressive suspects. They are often under pressure to solve crimes as soon as they can. As a result, their work can be mentally and emotionally draining.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

To become a detective, you will first need to work as a regular police officer. The requirements for new recruits vary by police force. Most require you to be a Canadian citizen and at least 18 years old.

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You also need a high school diploma. Some police forces require you to have some post-secondary education. Officers who become detectives usually have a degree or diploma. Useful programs include police studies and criminology. You must also pass fitness tests and have a valid driver's license.

New officers complete basic training before their first case. The length of training often ranges between 3 and 6 months. Recruits usually get a mix of classroom and on-the-job training.

After training, you need to spend time working as a regular officer. You will then be eligible to be promoted to detective. The amount of time you must work varies by force, but is usually about 5 years.

Police forces often consider on-the-job performance when considering who to promote. You may need to take specialized courses before you become a detective. You also might have to pass a written exam.

EARNINGS

Most detectives work full time. They earn an annual salary from one employer.

Income is based on several factors. Their experience, rank, and level of education affect earnings. Their employer and location can also factor in. For example, large urban police forces tend to pay higher salaries. Detectives who work for smaller forces located in rural areas usually make less.

People in this field usually start their careers as constables. These officers can earn between \$35,000 and \$80,000 a year. Income is based on their level of experience.

Detectives earn higher salaries than regular constables. They tend to make from about \$70,000 to \$120,000 a year. But experienced detectives in large cities may make more.

PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEW

1. Tell me about your job. Is what you do different in any way from what others in your occupation do?

I am a detective lieutenant at a suburban police department. I supervise the investigations division; this unit is made up of four detectives and two task force officers. We have six evidence technicians and a ten-person high risk entry team.

In addition to my daily duties here, I am also an assistant commander with the suburban major crimes task force. This unit has approximately 100 investigators. We assist suburbs in the metro area with investigating homicides.

2. Can you tell me about your background and how you got into this field?

I have worked at this police department since I was a teenager. After high school, I worked as a part-time police dispatcher. After getting an undergraduate degree, I was hired full-time. From there, I was a patrol officer and, essentially, moved up the ranks—ultimately becoming a lieutenant.

Initially, I was interested in the field because my father was a police officer. It was always something I had wanted to do.

3. What personal characteristics are required for someone to be successful in your job?

Because you are always interacting with the public, you must have good communication skills and be an excellent listener. People are often anxious due to tense situations so it is also good to have a lot of patience. And when you interact with victims of crime, it is imperative to be compassionate. They have been hurt and need to be treated with tender care.

Lastly, your job requires you to be a problem-solver. A detective needs to troubleshoot cases and be persistent.

4. How much job security is there for people in your field?

Job security is definitely a benefit in this field. There will always be a need for law enforcement. Unless you do something drastically wrong, you can stay in the field for life.

5. What other jobs could you do with the skills you have gained in this field?

There are a lot of opportunities to use your skills as a detective in other jobs. You could work as a private investigator, insurance investigator, or fraud investigator. You could also work in the areas of bank security or even bank fraud.

6. What do you think the future holds for people in your occupation?

The manner in which we investigate is changing for the better. Technology—such as computers, DNA testing, and CSI techniques—is improving by leaps and bounds. This is making our job easier.

7. What are the biggest challenges in your job?

Every day is different. Criminals keep us on our toes and on our feet. You never know what is going to happen next or when a seemingly predictable day will be thrown into chaos.

8. Are there many opportunities in your field? What should people do to get started?

Law enforcement jobs are available. However, there are a lot of people applying for those few positions. The best way to get into the field of law enforcement is to get a diploma or degree. Be patient and keep trying.

PARALEGAL

JOB DESCRIPTION

Are you interested in law, but don't want to become a lawyer? A career as a paralegal might be for you. Paralegals help lawyers prepare for cases and other legal activities. They perform some of the same tasks as lawyers. They do research for cases. They also interview clients and witnesses. They may prepare legal documents as well. Some of them even represent clients before courts, boards and tribunals.

However there are important differences between a paralegal and a lawyer. Paralegals don't handle kinds of serious legal cases like lawyers do. The types of issues they can deal with depend on the province or territory they live in. Paralegals are not allowed to give legal advice like lawyers. However, they can give legal information to people. The specific tasks paralegals do depend on the type of case. However, many prepare wills and contracts for clients. They draft and submit documents to court. They also write letters and correspondence on behalf of the firms they work for. They keep and file records as well. The people who work in this field can go by a few titles. The title and duties depend on the region and employer. In Ontario, the term paralegal often refers to those who work unsupervised. Those who work under supervision of lawyers are called law clerks.

CORE TASKS & ATTRIBUTES

- Assist lawyers with legal research and interview witnesses and clients
- Prepare legal documents such as wills and contracts
- Maintain records and file documents
- Provide information to clients

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- May represent clients in minor matters before courts, boards and tribunals
- Need to display strong analytical and logical skills
- Have good communication skills and be persuasive as a people's person

WORKING CONDITIONS

Most paralegals work in the private sector. They can work for paralegal firms, law offices and corporate legal departments. Some paralegals work for the government agencies or community clinics. They can work on law reform and legal education projects. Others are self-employed and work on contract basis.

Paralegals work mainly in offices. They do most of their work on computers and do a lot of online research. They may also use databases and other software programs to create and organize material. Sometimes, they must travel to gather information and perform other duties. Full-time paralegals work 8-10 hours a day, 5 days a week. They often have to work evenings and weekends. This is especially the case when they are preparing for court appearances. Their work can be stressful when deadlines are approaching.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

You need formal training to become a paralegal. Specific requirements vary depending on your province and employer. Many colleges and universities offer diploma programs for paralegals. These programs usually take 2 years to complete. They often include an internship to help you get experiences. A few schools offer bachelor's degree programs. It takes 4 years to earn a bachelor's degree. Some schools offer certificate programs for paralegals. These programs last to 1-2 years. They can be taken part-time or through distance education. Some of these programs require you to have prior legal experience. You may also be able to enter this field with a degree in a non-legal area. This job requires reading, writing and reasoning skills. In Ontario, paralegals must be licensed as you apply through the Law Society of Upper Canada. To qualify, you must graduate from an accredited paralegal program and pass an exam. Wherever you live, it's a good idea to check your provincial paralegal associations.

EARNINGS

Most people in this field earn \$30k - \$80k a year. Paralegals who are willing to work longer hours can bring in higher incomes. Senior paralegals in some areas can make more than \$100k a year. Earnings depend on education and reputation. Employer and location impact as well. Paralegals who work in major cities earn more than those who work in small towns. Earnings of self-employed paralegals

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depend on different factors. That includes the number of clients they have and how much they charge their clients. Their income increases when they work more hours. However, those who are self-employed must pay the costs of running their own business.

PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEWS

1. Tell me about your job. Is what you do different in any way from what others in your occupation do?

I am a paralegal. I handle civil litigation and some light real estate related matters. My role consists of research, setting court dates, reviewing court documents, and preparing written reports for lawyers. In every job, there are varying degrees of intensity and research each person might apply to an assignment and subsequently, the end product.

2. Can you tell me about your background and how you got into this field?

I completed a paralegal program at college. I have worked as a loan broker, a real estate salesperson, and an administrative assistant.

I got my start while working on my own legal case. I then started doing research for lawyers at the public law library. To get my foot in the door, I offered to pull cases, research, and brief the cases for a small office or sole practitioner who needed a law clerk or filing clerk. I've been a paralegal for 20 years.

3. What personal characteristics are required for someone to be successful in your job?

You need determination. It's essential in this business. When you're doing research, a particular topic can lead to many different scenarios and avenues to look into. Focus is important. You have to stay on track when researching. Since it's easy to start exploring different directions, it's possible to spend a lot of time looking at information you don't need. Consistency is important. You have to produce the best work possible every time.

You should be committed. You need to follow through in your work, which means reading and re-reading information, thoroughly researching a topic, and producing the best work you can within time restraints.

4. How much job security is there for people in your field?

In this field, job security can be difficult during bad economic times. There are a number of paralegals who don't work full-time in an office, but work as temps, travelling from location to location to work. In

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my experience, you work as an entrepreneur and sell yourself always. In this way, you are responsible for your own job security.

5. What other jobs could you do with the skills you have gained in this field?

Paralegals can work in administrative fields. As a paralegal, you are accustomed to doing detail-oriented tasks, writing, researching, and using your organizational skills. I've worked as an administrative assistant because of my office skills, computer skills, and the research and organizational skills I've acquired from being a paralegal.

6. What do you think the future holds for people in your occupation?

A lot of technology is involved with this profession and the challenge is to get up to speed with the emerging technology. Several years ago, electronic discovery was not as prolific as it is now. Electronic discovery involves emails and any other form of electronic data to be used for court cases.

With the use of the Internet, intellectual property has become a focus in litigation. And it's now a requirement for those in the legal profession to learn.

7. What are the biggest challenges in your job?

I consider legal writing or briefing to be most challenging. You must be able to write a large amount of information in a succinct manner. A lawyer may require rewrites based on his or her own perspective on what is pertinent to a case. Because there is some subjectivity involved, it takes getting to know a particular lawyer's preferences and each lawyer may be different.

8. Are there many opportunities in your field? What should people do to get started?

There are many openings in this field, but there is also a great deal of competition for jobs. Paralegals compete not only with others in the same profession, but with lawyers. Get as much relevant education as you can.

The best way to secure an entry-level position is to be very knowledgeable about your field. Be ambitious and stay that way. Take jobs, even those you're not keen on, in order to prove yourself.

Unless you know someone on the inside who is willing to help you out, be willing to work your way up.

PUBLIC POLICY ANALYST

JOB DESCRIPTION

Governments use public policies to achieve their social and political goals. At times, these rules don't align with what the public wants and needs. This can cause problems for society. Public policy analysts try to solve these issues. They create plans of action and suggest them to the government. They also study existing policies to find out if they are effective.

Policy analysts work for the federal and provincial governments. They work for lobbying and consulting firms as well. They work on policies of all kinds. They might work towards the creation of a law to support renewable energies. Or, they might try to get more doctors trained to work in remote areas on Canada. They may even secure funding for policies programs that reduce drunk driving.

Public policy analysts meet with politicians and government workers called civil servants. Analysts present the problems they find to these groups. Once they identify an issue, they do in-depth research on the topic. They gather all sorts of data from a range of resources. They come to know these issues very well. Then, they come up with options that they think will help solve the problem. They present these options to the senior-level government workers who will make the final decisions. Analysts explain the pros and cons of each option.

CORE TASKS & ATTRIBUTES

- Collect and analyze social, economic and demographic data
- Identify policy issues and make recommendations
- Give presentations on the findings
- Attend meetings and negotiations
- Write letters and press releases, and prepare politicians for speeches and interviews
- Need to be able to understand complex issues
- Have knowledge of current social, economic and environmental issues

WORKING CONDITIONS

Most public policy analysts work for the government. Other works for private consulting firms and advocacy groups. Some public policy analysts are self-employed. They work on a contract basis. They get projects from many companies, rather than working for one employer. Analysts work mostly in offices.

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They can work alone or as a part of a team. They spend most of their time reading and writing research papers. There can be pressure on them due to busy schedules and tight deadlines. Analysts work from 8-11 hours a day. This adds up to between 40 and 55 hours a week. They may have to work some weekends to meet deadlines. Important documents like press releases and budget statements are often time sensitive. Analysts sometimes travel to go to meetings and attend conferences.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

To become a public policy analyst, you need at least a bachelor's degree. But, you shouldn't stop there! Most analysts have at least a master's degree. You can get a bachelor's degree in subjects like public policy or political sciences, or you can study economics, sociology or statistics. You can also choose to study law or international relations. Other subjects may be useful if they relate to the area of policy you want to work in. You can focus on topics like the environmental or agriculture. Or, you can study health care or education.

If you are considering a career as a public policy analyst, you should be a good student with excellent analytical skills. You also need strong research skills to do this job. The ability to understand complex issues and communicate them well both verbally and in writing is crucial. Due to the complexity of the issues and quantity of information they need to convey, analysts must write in a clear and concise manner. Discretion and political savvy also come in handy. Fluency in French is a definite advantage, particularly if you want to work for the federal government.

You should be well-informed about current economic, social, and environmental issues. Reading relevant journals or magazines regularly is a good idea.

EARNINGS

Entry-level public policy analysts earn between \$45-65k a year. More experienced analysts can earn up to \$100k a year. Those who move up to policy director positions can make over \$120k a year.

Analysts who work full time often get benefits as well as a salary. These can include health and dental coverage. They may also get paid vacation days, sick days and pension plans.

PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEWS

- 1. Tell me about your job. Is what you do different in any way from what others in your occupation do?**

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I am a public policy analyst for a provincial government in the Ministry of Social Services. We have a budget of several billion dollars and are responsible for social assistance and childcare programs. I am involved in financial and strategic planning. For example, I recently helped prepare the Minister's annual budget.

2. Can you tell me about your background and how you got into this field?

I studied political science and English literature, and then earned my Master of Science in urban planning. During my university years, I held a variety of jobs. I worked at the university library, in an insurance company, and for a municipal government. I also had a summer job doing survey research for the federal government. I chose to work for the government because I have always had a commitment to public service. I like the idea of contributing to society in an impartial way.

3. What personal characteristics are required for someone to be successful in your job?

Public policy analysts must have good judgement. It is their job to provide decision-makers with well-balanced, concise policy information and advice. Someone who cannot tell what is really important or urgent will not make a good policy analyst. Communication skills are also important. Public policy analysts have to be able to write and speak clearly about complex issues. Policy analysts should also cooperate well. They work closely with politicians, academics, civil servants, and many others. Progress can only be achieved when people come to a consensus and work together.

4. How much job security is there for people in your field?

Periods of downsizing sometimes occur within governments. Many civil servants, including policy analysts, either retire or lose their jobs during these periods. Older people enjoy greater job security in times of downsizing, simply because they have more seniority within public sector unions. Younger people, however, do not enjoy the same security. Fortunately, the job may get even more interesting. Governments are becoming more open to new ideas and approaches. There will be more room for flexibility and innovation.

5. What other jobs could you do with the skills you have gained in this field?

Many former public policy analysts become management consultants and apply their analytic and strategic thinking skills to problems in the private sector. Others become policy advisors to professional organizations such as the Canadian Nurses Association. Getting involved in lobbying is another common job alternative.

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6. How do you think your job will change in the future?

There will be no radical changes in the way public policy analysts do their job.

7. Are there many opportunities in your field? What should people do to get started?

To have stable, long-term employment, you need specialized skills, as well as luck! A PhD in economics or political science is not necessary to do the job, but it may become essential to get the job in the future.

LEGAL SECRETARY

JOB DESCRIPTION

Lawyers need legal secretaries in much the same way that doctors need nurses. They perform many of the tasks essential to lawyers' work. They prepare and process a lot of legal paperwork. This paperwork is often used for legal transactions or court cases. But dealing with mounds of paperwork is not the only thing legal secretaries do. They spend a lot of time interacting with people, either on the phone or in person. They serve as the link between busy lawyers and their clients. They update clients about their cases and other legal matters. As well, they deal with secretaries and assistants in other offices.

They spend a lot of time preparing the documents for separations or divorces. They may also help process adoptions. They help clients prepare documents for their cases. It's their job to make sure that all paperwork gets filed with the courts on time. Missing a deadline can cause huge problems. Some lawyers advise clients who are buying a house. In these cases, secretaries prepare many of the documents. They usually speak with people in real estate offices as well. It's vital that the sale takes place in a smooth manner and on time. If a client needs a mortgage, secretaries contact the mortgage officer at the bank. They check to see if the money will be ready in time to close the sale.

CORE TASKS AND ATTRIBUTES

- Prepare and file legal documents, such as mortgages and contracts
- Answer phones and pass messages on to lawyers and clients
- Schedule appointments and meetings
- Organise and maintain clients' files

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- May work with or supervise other secretaries or assistants
- Also requires additional skills such as communication, organization and detail oriented

WORKING CONDITIONS

Legal secretaries can work from many places such as law firms, governmental agencies, courts and corporate legal departments. Secretaries may have their own office or share a large office with other legal assistants. Most legal secretaries work a regular workweek during normal business hours. Those who work in large firms may have to work extra shifts depending on the flow of cases. The work can be demanding as some clients may be impatient and difficult to deal with. They may have to run the office on their own if the lawyers are away.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Some legal secretaries train on the job. But most employers prefer you to have post-secondary training for legal secretaries. Many colleges and vocational schools offer programs in this field. The names of the programs vary depending on the school. They are generally called legal secretary, legal administrative assistant, or legal office administration. They range in length from about 6 months to 2 years. At the end, you earn either a certificate or diploma. In these programs, you will learn how to draft and prepare legal documents. That includes wills, powers of attorney, and agreements of sale. Many programs also teach you about various areas of law, such as family law, trusts and estates law and sometimes criminal law as well.

EARNINGS

Earnings for legal secretaries range from about \$23,000 to \$74,000 a year. Some secretaries have specialized knowledge in lucrative areas of law. They might work in trademarks or commercial real estate, for example. They can make more than \$74,000 a year. Most legal secretaries work full time. Salaries vary depending on the firm, location, and the type of law practised. Large law firms tend to pay the most. Experience and responsibilities also affect earnings.

PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEW

1. **Tell me about your job. Is what you do different in any way from what others in your occupation do?**

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I am a legal assistant working for a lawyer who specializes in personal injury and family law. I prepare correspondence and memoranda and generate court documents. I also perform general accounting duties which include generating accounts, docketing, and disbursement entry.

2. Can you tell me about your background and how you got into this field?

I have always had an interest in the legal field. I enjoyed watching movies and television shows based on the legal profession. In high school, I completed a co-op placement at a law firm in my community. While I enjoyed my work experience, I saw the long hours and stress of being a lawyer. I wanted to pursue the legal field further, but I wanted a life too, so I decided to become a legal assistant instead of a lawyer.

I went to college for a 2-year office administration program with a legal option diploma. I obtained a job immediately after school. My first job was as a legal assistant in a personal injury law firm in a large, urban centre.

3. What personal characteristics are required for someone to be successful in your job?

Time management: You have to be able to perform a number of tasks at the same time, keeping in mind various deadlines.

Organization: Keeping files and yourself in order is very important. You have to be able to locate documents in files with ease. Keeping a tidy work area is important so that documents are not lost or misplaced. Keeping a diary or calendar is also very important when working as an assistant. There are many court dates and deadlines that need to be kept track of and in most cases it is the responsibility of the assistant to make sure the lawyer is advised of upcoming deadlines and court dates.

People skills: As an assistant you have many dealings with clients, lawyers, assistants, and doctors. Being able to speak with them in a professional and courteous manner is very important. Most of the time you are trying to get some information from these individuals, so it is important to come across as a nice person.

4. How much job security is there for people in your field?

If you show your employer that you are a dedicated worker and you perform to the best of your abilities, then your job security is very good—unless the firm downsizes.

I feel this occupation is a necessity and there will always be a need for legal assistants. Therefore, as a

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whole, the job security is very good even if it means changing employers. Having changed jobs myself, I don't worry that in the future I will not be able to find employment in this field.

5. What other jobs could you do with the skills you have gained in this field?

I think that legal assistants can work in any office setting as an assistant. I feel it would be a lot easier for a legal assistant to work as an administrative assistant than for an administrative assistant to work as a legal assistant, as they do not have the legal background.

6. What do you think the future holds for people in your occupation?

I believe that this job will always be around. There are always updates to the specialized computer programs that are out there for assistants. As well, I'm sure there will be new computer programs that will make our lives in this occupation much easier. But I don't think the technology will ever replace us. There will always be a need for a real person in this job.

7. What are the biggest challenges in your job?

The most challenging aspect of my job is keeping up with the always changing court procedures and rules. It is very important to be up to date on all court procedures. Being able to manage your time efficiently is also important. There are times where I am trying to complete several tasks at the same time.

8. Are there many opportunities in your field? What should people do to get started?

There is a demand for people in this field, especially in large, urban centres where there are many big law firms. As to finding these jobs, I would first speak to instructors who teach the legal office administration programs. They often receive phone calls from employers looking for legal assistants. Also, if the program you are taking has some sort of work placement, I would make sure I take part in that placement. This is a great opportunity to get your foot in the door.

MEDIATOR

JOB DESCRIPTION

Mediators help people solve many kinds of disputes. Mediation is usually used when it's not clear what the fairest or "right" solution is. It is not used in criminal cases like murder. Mediators help with conflicts about:

- business or employment contracts
- discrimination in the workplace
- family inheritances
- child custody
- divorces

Hiring a mediator is less expensive and faster than taking a conflict to court. It is usually less stressful as well, since it is kept more private. The media and public often have access to what goes on in courtrooms. Most people do not want others to know about their disputes. The process of mediation helps to avoid this. The whole purpose of mediation is to come up with a solution that works best for all sides involved. Mediators do not have legal authority and cannot force a solution on their clients. They may present a range of possible solutions, but the clients must come to an agreement themselves.

CORE TASKS AND ATTRIBUTES

- Encourage communication between the disputing parties
- Clarify issues and make sure the resolution process stays on track
- Propose options and help parties find a reasonable solution
- Put agreement details in writing and have parties sign the contract
- Required to stay calm under pressure and remain neutral
- Strong problem solving and communication skills are also an asset

WORKING CONDITIONS

Mediation is a relatively new practice. As a profession, it is not yet well-defined or regulated. Mediators typically have formal training and experience in a field such as:

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- law
- psychology
- human resources
- insurance
- health care

Most mediators work independently. They get clients through their professional or personal networks. Some mediators form partnerships and see clients together. Others join or form mediation firms. Mediators work mainly in offices. They might travel a lot to meet clients at other offices or their homes. The first mediation session usually involves all parties. Then, they hold private sessions with each of the parties separately. Mediators deal with people and conflicts that are full of emotion. Sometimes, this can be tough. Mediators must be skilled at staying calm and collected during and after sessions. They also must be careful not to take sides, even if they agree with one party over another. The mediation process may be stressful but coming to a final solution is very satisfying.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

To be a mediator, you need at least a bachelor's degree. You also need a lot of work experience in a related field. Any field that allows you to develop your negotiation and problem-solving skills is a good place to start. Many mediators work as lawyers, psychologists, or human resource specialists. Some of them work in health care or insurance. This kind of background is helpful if you want to handle disputes in these fields.

Since mediation is not formally regulated in Canada, there are no strict requirements. You don't need any special training to call yourself a mediator. However, to set up a practice, you should have professional credentials in another field. It's also a good idea to get some kind of training in mediation. Formal training is offered by a number of agencies. Some universities and colleges offer programs in mediation. You can earn a certificate or a diploma. Many of these programs require you to have a diploma or degree before you apply. A few master's degree programs are also available. In some programs, you can focus on one area like family mediation.

EARNINGS

Most mediators have another full-time job and do mediation work on the side. Their income depends on what they make in their other line of work. Most mediators work in law, psychology, insurance, or human resources. Mediators' yearly salaries depend on what they charge and how many hours they work. Earnings can range from about \$30,000 to \$75,000 a year. Mediators set their own fees based on each case. They usually charge by the hour or by the day. Hourly rates can range from \$50 to over \$500. In addition to the actual session, mediators can charge for all the hours it takes them to work on the settlement. For cases that involve a large amount of money, mediators often set a higher rate. Sometimes mediators volunteer their services.

PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEW

1. Tell me about your job. Is what you do different in any way from what others in your occupation do?

I am not a full-time mediator. I am also an employment lawyer. I specialize in mediating workplace disputes, but also do social work and personal injury disputes. In addition, I design dispute resolution systems for companies.

2. Can you tell me about your background and how you got into this field?

I have two undergraduate degrees, one in political science and philosophy and the other in law. For my master's degree in law, I studied in London, England.

For 4 years I worked as an associate lawyer with a small, city-based litigation firm. Then I took my ADR (alternative dispute resolution) training. The company I took it with liked me and offered me a chance to take its mentor program and mediate on its behalf. The same year I began operating my own employment law and dispute resolution practice.

I was attracted to mediation work by the opportunity to work with people and to do creative problem-solving.

3. What personal characteristics are required for someone to be successful in your job?

You have to like working with people. You should have empathy for them, and a real desire to help. This requires listening and communication skills as well as patience. Creativity is also important. You need to come up with new ways of solving a problem. Every situation is different.

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Stamina and flexibility are needed to stay positive throughout the mediation process. If the parties involved sense that you are giving up or are becoming frustrated, they will too.

4. How much job security is there for people in your field?

If you are able to maintain a steady flow of work, you should be able to make a career out of it. But, as it is a relatively new field, and contract-based, it's hard to say exactly how long the work will keep coming.

5. What other jobs could you do with the skills you have gained in this field?

With extra training, mediators could get jobs in social work, therapy, or management consulting. They could also do a less formal kind of mediation known as facilitation.

6. What do you think the future holds for people in your occupation?

I think the demand for mediators will increase. This is a new way of resolving conflicts. It's less adversarial than going to court.

Technology will continue to be of great benefit to the field. For example, we use financial analysis software to quickly show different options and scenarios to the parties in a divorce settlement.

7. What are the biggest challenges in your job?

Selling the value of the mediation process is my biggest challenge. As it is a relatively new field, it is difficult to get paid work.

8. Are there many opportunities in your field? What should people do to get started?

There aren't many opportunities at present. There are more people wanting to do mediation than there is work available. For example, lawyers who would like to be mediators have to continue with their law work to support themselves. Your best bet is to get a university education in a professional field such as law, engineering, business, social work, psychology, or accounting, and then get training in interest-based negotiation, facilitation, and mediation.

You could also find a mentor program and volunteer to get experience.

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HOW CAN THE CAREER CENTRE HELP?

Library Resources

The Career Resources Library contains information about a wide range of occupations in all industries, resume and cover letter resources, effective work search methods, graduate/ professional school preparation guides and more.

You can also visit our online library collection by going to the Career Centre website:

<https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/> and click on the Career Planning icon and then scroll down to Library Resources. Once you register, you can download a book for up to 14 days.

Appointments

- Attend a one-on-one appointment with a [career counsellor or an employment strategist](#) to discuss what career options might work for you and determine a job search plan.
- Meet with an [academic or departmental advisor](#), who can guide you in achieving academic success. Contact the Office of Registrar or your department for more information

Career Planning by Year

Visit our Career Planning by Year page for ideas of important career related activities for each year. You can visit us in the Career Centre to find out more about careers that interest you. The UTM program plans are also a good resource to learn more about how you can use your degree and to find out how to map out your academic career path for each year while at UTM: www.utoronto.ca/program-plans.

The Natural Occupational Binder

The National Occupational Code Binders in the Career Resources Library provide very detailed, specific and extensive information relating to hundreds of careers. From general overviews of the job, to working conditions, to sample job postings related to the field and related articles, the binders are sure to provide you with in-depth answers to many of your job-specific questions.

Tip sheets

Do you like information in an easy-to-read, easy-to-digest, take home format? Take a look at our tip sheets on subjects like Effective Interviewing, Networking and Preparing for Graduate School.

Events

Would you like a chance to interact with prospective employers and expand your networking circle? The Career Centre offers a number of events that help you brush shoulders with professional and experts from all fields. Attend the Get Experience Fair, Get Hired Fair, Professional School Fair and Summer Job

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Fair. Practice putting those networking skills to use and land yourself a job! Check out the events and workshops section of the Career Learning Network to find out what is happening on Campus.

Job Shadowing Program

Are you still curious about what career path is best for you? Would you like a chance to experience working in an industry to find out if it's really the path for you? The Job Shadowing Program can help. This job-shadowing programs grants you a one-to-five day placement in a career of your choice. Go to the Career Learning Network to register for the workshops that will help you to prepare for your placement. To register go to: www.clnx.utoronto.ca and then go to [workshops and events to see when the next workshop is happening.](#)

Talk to Professors

Connecting with our professors can be a great way to explore the different paths a major can lead you to, as well as learn about possible opportunities for research, volunteer, or becoming a TA. Drop by during their office hours or request an appointment.

Career Counselling

Are you feeling lost, unsure and overwhelmed with finding out what career path you would like to choose? Or you've decided on a career or the type of job you want, but what are the next steps? Our career counsellors are here to help. Book an appointment with one of our professionals who can help you determine what paths you can take after graduation or how your area of study can relates to a career postgrad.

Job postings

Are you graduating soon or a recent graduate? Sign up for the Graduating Students Employment Service (GES) or the Recent Graduate Employment Service (RGES). These services allow you to gain access to full-time job postings while your final year of study or access full-time job postings for up to two years after you graduate. To learn more, check out our Career Centre website.

Please feel free to come and visit us in Room 3094, South Building. You can also reach us by phone, 905-828-5451 or email at careers@utm.utoronto.ca.