



PERSONAL ASSISTANT

JOB DESCRIPTION

Personal assistants (PAs) support business executives and senior managers in their day-to-day work. They set up meetings for their employer, manage their correspondence, organize their travel requirements, and file documents. Experienced PAs may even represent their employers at meetings.



SALARY

Junior PA ★★☆☆☆
Executive PA ★★★★★

INDUSTRY PROFILE

High demand for candidates with computing and language skills • PAs required in every sector of business

CAREER PATHS

The role of a PA can vary enormously depending on the employer. The most senior PAs earn good salaries and have a detailed understanding of their employer's business. Ultimately, they may even move into management roles themselves.



RECEPTIONIST Highly experienced and skilled receptionists may be able to move into higher roles within a company's administration.

ASSISTANT You can begin your career as an administrative assistant after you have completed high school. You will have to carry out tasks such as keeping records, maintaining databases, and answering routine queries from colleagues, clients, or suppliers.



GRADUATE If you have a degree and good administrative skills, you may find a job as a PA for a senior executive. Proficiency in languages or knowledge of the employer's business sector is an advantage in most roles.



PERSONAL ASSISTANT With experience, you will develop knowledge of the business in which you work. You can move into more senior roles, such as human resources or office management.



SKILLS GUIDE



Good communication skills for negotiating with others, writing reports, and dealing with inquiries.



Strong interpersonal skills for dealing with people at all levels in an office or organization.



The ability to remain calm under pressure, prioritize work, and multitask when necessary.



A thorough knowledge of standard office software and Internet research methods.



A good understanding of business, bookkeeping, and management techniques.



MEDICAL PA Works with senior doctors to manage their patient lists, arrange appointments, and ensure patients receive appropriate treatment. The job requires a thorough knowledge of medical terminology.



VIRTUAL PA Operates from home and provides administrative support to one or more business clients via the telephone and Internet.



EXECUTIVE PA Combines the role of a general PA with organizing an employer's personal and social calendar. They usually work for wealthy, high-level executives.

AT A GLANCE



YOUR INTERESTS Computers • Administration • English • Foreign languages • Business studies • Law • Mathematics • Communications



ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS PAs may be able to find work out of high school, but they may need a degree to work for some companies.



LIFESTYLE Regular office hours are the norm, but tight deadlines or other demands may require overtime. A professional appearance is essential.



LOCATION PAs are usually office-based, but they may need to accompany managers to meetings. This may involve international travel.



THE REALITIES Some managers can be demanding. Working very closely for one individual daily can be difficult.

▼ RELATED CAREERS

- ▶ **BOOKKEEPER** Maintains thorough records of a company's financial transactions, such as purchases, invoices, wages, and taxes paid.
- ▶ **LEGAL ASSISTANT** Supports lawyers in carrying out administrative or routine legal tasks to enable them to prepare for client meetings or court appearances.
- ▶ **OFFICE MANAGER** Oversees the efficient day-to-day operation of an office. This includes supervising administrative staff, arranging supplies of business equipment and stationery, and maintaining a healthy office environment.