

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

HUMAN RESOURCES

Selection and placement
Recruitment
Onboarding/Orientation
Retention
Career planning/Counseling
Benefits
Compensation and payroll
Employee relations
Wellness
Labor relations
Dispute resolution
Risk management
Regulatory compliance
Occupational safety
Equal employment opportunity
Diversity, equity, and inclusion
Policy development
Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS)
Human Resource Management System (HRMS)
Strategic planning
Consulting

EMPLOYERS

Human resources professionals are employed in nearly all industries:

- Financial institutions
- Hotel, restaurant, and retail chains
- Manufacturing firms
- Hospitals and healthcare organizations
- Transportation companies
- Educational institutions
- Employment and staffing agencies
- Professional employment organizations (PEOs)
- Other medium and large size organizations
- Nonprofit organizations
- Labor unions

Federal government agencies:

- Department of Labor
- Employment Security Commission
- Bureau of Labor

Local and state government agencies
Consulting firms

STRATEGIES

In smaller organizations, human resources professionals are generalists and wear many hats. In larger organizations, human resources staff members are more specialized.

Be willing to start in an entry-level human resources or benefits assistant position and advance with experience.

After gaining professional experience in human resources, prepare to take the Professional Human Resource Exam (PHR), SHRM Certified Professional (SHRM-CP), or SHRM Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP) to increase job opportunities and earning potential.

Research other specialized certifications such as the Certified Employee Benefit Specialist (CEBS).

Earn a graduate degree in human resources, business, or law to reach the highest levels of human resource management.

Develop strong computer skills including spreadsheets, databases, and HR-related software.

Gain related experience through internships in human resources.

Join the student chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management and participate in programs. Seek leadership roles in campus organizations.

Become comfortable communicating and working with people from diverse backgrounds. Strong interpersonal skills are valuable in this field.

Cultivate strong analytical and decision-making skills and develop an eye for detail.

Learn about Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards and compliance.

Research government application procedures and utilize your campus career center for assistance.

Complete a federal government internship program if interested in government positions.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Instructional design
Program development
Onboarding/Orientation
Industrial training
Technology training
Management development
Employee and organizational development
Performance improvement
Organizational change

Corporate universities
Consulting firms
Business and industry training facilities
Manufacturing companies
Retail and customer service industries
Restaurant and hotel chains
Hospitals and healthcare organizations
Educational institutions
Other large corporations

Develop teaching skills through tutoring or training positions on campus.
Obtain related experience through internships.
Be prepared to start working in another area of human resources before moving into a training position.
Earn a master's degree in human resources, training and development, or related field.
Develop the ability to comprehend operational systems and to process new information quickly.
Stay abreast of current issues in technology, industry, and business education through professional association journals.
Develop solid knowledge of the content area being addressed in training.
Hone communication and presentation skills. Gain comfort in working with people of varying backgrounds.
Learn about important issues such as, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards and compliance and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) criteria.

INDUSTRIAL/ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Organizational development/Effectiveness
Assessment and evaluation
Personnel selection/Hiring systems
Performance appraisal
Job analysis
Behavioral analysis
Individual development
Labor relations
Employee safety
Ergonomics
Training
Teaching
Research
Consulting

Consulting firms
Educational services
Colleges and universities
Large private and public companies in a variety of industries
Government agencies
Military research organizations
Test preparation companies

Double major or minor in psychology as an undergraduate.
Conduct an independent research study or volunteer to assist a professor with research to gain experience.
Maintain a high GPA and secure strong faculty recommendations to pursue graduate school.
Demonstrate strong interest in studying the behavior of people at work.
Obtain internships in areas of organizational development.
Develop aptitude in statistical analysis and relevant software packages.
Earn a doctoral degree in industrial/organizational psychology.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

LAW

See also What Can I Do With This Major in Law?

Arbitration and mediation

Labor relations

Employment law

Contractual

Corporate

Nonprofit or public interest

Government

Other specialties

Law firms

Federal, state, and local government

Private practice

Corporations

Special interest groups

Universities and colleges

Legal aid societies

Nonprofit and public interest organizations (e.g.,
ACLU, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Legal
Services Corporation)

Legal clinics

Other private legal services

Plan to attend law school. Maintain a high grade point average and secure strong faculty recommendations. Prepare for the LSAT (Law School Admission Test).

Develop strong research skills and attention to detail. Participate in debate or forensic team to hone communication skills.

Get involved in pre-law and mock trial organizations. Take courses in employment law, conflict management, and labor relations.

Shadow an attorney to learn more about the field and various specialties.

Gain experience and build skills through part-time or summer work in a law firm or an organization related to your particular interests.

Volunteer with a public advocacy group.

Seek experience with mediation and conflict resolution.

BUSINESS

Sales

Customer service

Marketing

Management

Insurance:

 Claims management

 Underwriting

Real Estate:

 Sales

 Property management

Service providers

Wholesalers

Manufacturers

Retail stores:

 Department stores

 Specialty stores

 Discount stores

 Super retailers

 Online retailers

Call centers

Transportation companies

Financial institutions

Insurance companies

Real estate companies

Property management firms

Apartment complexes

Develop career goals and seek relevant experiences to prepare for those goals.

Obtain relevant experience through part-time jobs or internships.

Work a part-time or summer job in a retail store.

 Demonstrate a willingness to take on additional responsibilities such as "assistant manager."

Participate in student organizations and seek leadership roles.

Learn to work well with different types of people.

 Develop a strong commitment to customer satisfaction.

For sales positions, develop the ability to work well under pressure and be comfortable in a competitive environment.

Be willing to start in a management-trainee program or other entry-level positions.

Understand the top skills employers desire and be prepared to demonstrate them, such as communication (oral and written), computer, interpersonal, leadership, and teamwork.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

NONPROFIT

Fund/Raising/Development
Volunteer coordination
Programming
Administration
Management
Public relations
Research
Grant Writing
Direct Service

Local and national nonprofit agencies
Foundations
Charitable organizations
Trade or professional associations
Special interest groups
Labor unions
Libraries
Museums
Historic sites/Historical societies
Research organizations and think tanks
Educational institutions

Volunteer in community development projects or with a nonprofit organization of interest.
Obtain leadership roles in relevant campus and community organizations.
Learn grant writing techniques and how to administer a budget through coursework or volunteering.
Develop program planning and event management skills, as well as strong communication and research skills.
Complete an fund-raising or related internship.
Demonstrate knowledge and experience in a specialty area (e.g., public health, environment, urban issues).
Research organizations' values to find a good fit with yours.
Investigate term of service or service corps positions as a way to gain entry into the field.
Consider earning a graduate degree for more job opportunities and advancement.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Take a well-rounded selection of courses that blends social sciences and communications classes with business curriculum.
- Be prepared to start in entry level positions within organizations and advance to positions of greater responsibility. Develop an area of expertise along the way.
- Graduate education including MBA, MS, or JD qualifies one for higher level positions in human resource management.
- Obtain internships in an area of interest such as human resources, training, or organizational development.
- Participate in related co-curricular activities and obtain leadership positions to broaden skills.
- Successful human resource professionals are business-minded and well-rounded. Cultivate "hard skills" such as technology and statistics along with "soft skills" such as mediating and advising.
- Develop excellent communication skills, both verbal and written, and the desire to work with people of various backgrounds and education levels.
- Join professional associations such as American Society for Training and Development, Society for Human Resource Management, American Management Association, Employment Management Association, Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, and network with professionals.
- Network with human resource managers through professional association meetings and conferences.
- Ensure familiarity with different types of related technologies. Areas including Big Data Analytics and cloud-based applications are used for managing risk, identifying trends, and centralizing data. Utilization of social media platforms and mobile applications to recruit candidates is increasing, and technology continues to advance. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is another area beginning to impact the industry.