



What Can I Do With A Concentration in HRM?

West Mall Centre Room 2330
Phone: 778.782.5544
Email: bbacareers@sfu.ca
beedie.sfu.ca/careers



There are many ways to use your degree in Business Administration from SFU. Below we have outlined some of the most common career paths for students with a concentration in Human Resources Management.

Careers in Human Resources (HR)

The HR function in corporations is increasingly a strategic function that helps businesses position themselves for success and growth in today's economy. There is a global "war for talent" taking place and HR specialists help to design organizations and systems to best attract, retain, develop and utilize talent. As new grads, HR specialists focus on one aspect of the talent management portfolio. Often these roles are support or coordinator roles, like recruitment coordination or benefits administration. At more senior levels, HR specialists get involved in strategic decision-making in all aspects of any business that relies on motivated, competent employees. They are involved in implementing change, managing the integration of acquisitions and mergers, managing inter-cultural issues in companies that operate in different parts of the world, and designing work to optimize the integration of people and technology.

Careers in Consulting

HR consultants are contractors hired to provide advice, and work in one or more areas including: compensation and salary surveys, benefit administration and design, employee relations, training, and performance management. Consultants also advise on organizational design, change management and HR information systems. Recruitment is a particularly "hot" area these days and opportunities will increase for the foreseeable future. There are many types of recruitment consultants, from individuals working on their own to large recruitment agencies and executive recruitment firms. Entry-level positions are quite competitive and usually involve behind the scenes coordination, analysis, research and report creation.

Careers in Industrial Relations

Industrial Relations involves managing union/management relations. You may work for the union or management side of things and your role could include research in preparation for arbitration, union/management negotiations, or mediating disputes. Practitioners must have strong research and communication skills and a high tolerance for stress and conflict.

Careers in Management Positions

Basic HR skills and the ability to manage people and teams are required for all management roles. Individuals with a background in HRM may also get into fields that involve helping people organize and solve problems together. For example, careers in community development, mediation, arbitration/negotiation, stakeholder engagement and scenario planning.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS IN HUMAN RESOURCES

To give you a better idea of careers in the main HR functions, we have included brief job descriptions below.

Recruiters

Recruiters work with hiring managers to define employment needs. They screen, interview, test, and perform reference checks. They also communicate with prospective employees about personnel policies, wages, benefit packages, working conditions, and promotional opportunities. Technical recruiters help companies find IT professionals. Executive recruiters search for key management team members such as VPs and CEOs. Recruiters need to know the best ways to attract potential employees. They run ads, search the Internet, attend job fairs, and interview at schools. Recruiters sometimes travel to interview potential applicants, and can expect to work some nights and weekends.

Careers in HRM (continued)

JOB DESCRIPTIONS (continued)

Trainers

Many larger organizations hire people to manage their employee-training programs. Responsibilities may include orienting new employees, providing on-the-job training, updating professional skills, preparing line-staff for management positions, and developing and facilitating leadership management programs.

Compensation Managers

A compensation manager sets the pay rates and performance pay plans within an organization. Surveys are conducted to compare current pay rates to others in the industry. The compensation manager ensures pay plans comply with changing laws, regulations and industry trends. A keen understanding of financial planning and forecasting is required.

Employee Benefits Managers

The employee benefits manager analyzes, designs, recommends and implements benefit packages that are as favorable as possible to both employer and employee. Standard benefits usually include insurance plans for health, dental, life, and disability. Pension plans may include profit sharing, stock ownership, and savings options.

Generalists

Often, generalists act as the interface between a particular department or group of employees and the HR team. In this case, employees and managers can contact their dedicated HR generalist directly. These generalists focus on bigger picture HR planning for the group, such as training and staffing needs, as well as performance management and other group specific issues. Alternatively, in smaller firms, a generalist may be someone that performs all the duties in several of the HR function areas.

HR Manager

At the top of a large organization's HR team, there will be a VP HRM or Chief Talent Officer. The VP is a strategic partner in the company's overall management team that helps the business position itself for success and growth. Senior HR managers are involved in implementing change, managing the integration of acquisitions and mergers, managing inter-cultural issues in companies that operate in different countries, and designing organizations to optimize the fit between people and technology.

TIPS ON GETTING INTO THE FIELD

There are a lot of great opportunities both on and off campus to build your resume while you earn your degree. Both work and volunteer experience can be helpful in landing your first 'real' job. Co-op is a great way to gain relevant work experience. There are also many clubs and volunteer opportunities on campus. Consider getting involved in the HR club or representing SFU in the Excalibur HR case competition. In HR, communication skills are key, both verbal and written. Any experience you can gain working with teams or training and recruiting volunteers or staff will be extremely valuable. Basic financial skills are also important. Find ways to strengthen your analytical skills and demonstrate your understanding of how businesses work and earn revenue. As with any job search, networking and information interviews are also crucial. Take advantage of all of your contacts (profs, students, clubs) and networking opportunities on campus. Also, remember that no matter what the focus of the networking event, there are usually HR people (recruiters) in attendance.

CLUBS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Clubs and associations are a great way to get involved in your field, start making contacts and learn about job openings.

- SFU Human Resources Students' Association - www.sfubiz.ca/hrsa
- BC Human Resources Management Association - www.bchrma.org
- Canadian Society for Training and Development - www.cstd.ca
- Canadian Council of HR Associations - www.cchra.ca
- International Labour and Employment Relations Association - www.ilo.org
- Human Capital Institute - www.hci.org

HOW WE CAN HELP

The SFU Beedie Career Management Centre is here to help you launch your career in business. We can give you the tools you'll need to succeed in today's competitive job market and show you how to manage your career and your future. Some of the services we offer include company recruiting and info sessions, networking events, career skills workshops, online job postings, an extensive resource library, and one-on-one coaching to help with resumes, cover letters, job search, career path planning and more. Visit our website and log on to Beedie Community to access our resources. Website: <https://beediecommunity.sfu.ca>