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Human Resources

8 Highest-Paying Jobs in Human Resources

The human resources field is projected to show strong job growth through 2031. Learn about the top eight highest-paying jobs and their degree requirements.



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- Top-paying positions include chief human resources officer and compensation and benefits manager.
- Top-paying positions require at least a bachelor's degree.

The human resources field continues to be as important as ever, especially as industries strive to [improve employee retention](#). Some of the highest-paying jobs pay well over \$120,000 per year, which significantly exceeds the median household income of \$67,520 reported by the [U.S. Census Bureau in 2020](#).

When looking at human resources jobs, you'll find a growth rate reflecting the number of jobs added or lost to the position projected over a decade. A "much faster than average" job growth rate means the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects 11% or more jobs added. An "as fast as average" job growth rate is about 4-7% more jobs added. The BLS projects strong growth rates for many HR positions between 2021 and 2031.

Highest-Paying Jobs in Human Resources

Chief Human Resources Officer
Median Annual Salary (May 2021)
\$179,520
Job Growth Rate (2021-2031)
6% (As fast as average)
Compensation and Benefit Managers
Median Annual Salary (May 2021)
\$127,530

2% (Slower than average)

Human Resources Manager

Median Annual Salary (May 2021)

\$126,230

Job Growth Rate (2021-2031)

7% (As fast as average)

Training and Development Manager

Median Annual Salary (May 2021)

\$120,130

Job Growth Rate (2021-2031)

7% (As fast as average)

Management Analyst

Median Annual Salary (May 2021)

\$93,000

Job Growth Rate (2021-2031)

11% (Much faster than average)

Median Annual Salary (May 2021)

\$79,640

Job Growth Rate (2021-2031)

12% (Much faster than average)

Labor Relations Specialist**Median Annual Salary (May 2021)**

\$77,010

Job Growth Rate (2021-2031)

-3% (Decline)

Human Resources Specialist**Median Annual Salary (May 2021)**

\$62,290

Job Growth Rate (2021-2031)

8% (Faster than average)

Source: BLS

2021 Median Annual Salary: [\\$179,520](#)

Job Growth (2021-2031): 6%

Top-Paying States: Washington D.C., Hawaii, Washington, South Dakota, Massachusetts

A chief human resources officer develops the human resources strategy to support an organization's overall direction. They share the department's needs with the organization's top executives, shareholders, and management team. The BLS states that most positions require a [master's degree in business administration](#) or a [master's in human resources](#).

Compensation and Benefit Managers

2021 Median Annual Salary: [\\$127,530](#)

Job Growth (2021-2031): 2%

Top-Paying States: New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Washington, California

A [compensation and benefits](#) manager plans and oversees employee compensation, including salaries, bonuses, stock options, pensions, and other benefits. They ensure that a fair wage is industry competitive and within federal and state regulations. You'll need at least a [bachelor's degree in human resources](#) or business for this position.

Human Resources Manager

2021 Median Annual Salary: [\\$126,230](#)

Job Growth (2021-2031): 7%

Top-Paying States: New York, New Jersey, Washington D.C., Massachusetts, Rhode Island

A human resources manager oversees an organization's human resources department and ensures all matters are handled within federal, state, and local laws. They also manage the hiring process and analyze compensation and benefits trends to attract top talent.

According to the BLS, you need at least a [bachelor's degree in business, communication](#), or [psychology](#) for this career. Some companies may require a master's degree in human resources,

Training and Development Manager

2021 Median Annual Salary: [\\$120,130](#)

Job Growth (2021-2031): 7%

Top-Paying States: New York, New Jersey, California, Colorado, Massachusetts

A training and development manager creates and manages the training and development of staff. They handle the training programs' budget and coordinate with other department managers to determine training needs. According to the BLS, this position usually requires a bachelor's degree in communication, business, or social science. A [master's degree in training and development](#) or human resources management may also be beneficial.

Management Analyst

2021 Median Annual Salary: [\\$93,000](#)

Job Growth (2021-2031): 11%

Top-Paying States: Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Washington, Illinois

A management analyst's role involves analyzing an organization's efficiency and making recommendations to improve processes. They may work as consultants, or they can be a permanent part of determining a business' strengths and weaknesses. A bachelor's degree in business administration, finance, or a similar field is required. But the BLS states you may need a master's degree in business administration.

Human Resources Professor

2021 Median Annual Salary: [\\$79,640](#)

Job Growth (2021-2031): 12%

Top-Paying States: California, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, New York, Maryland

business administration. The BLS states that four-year schools may prefer a doctoral degree, along with research experience.

Labor Relations Specialist

2021 Median Annual Salary: [\\$77,010](#)

Job Growth (2021-2031): -3%

Top-Paying States: Washington D.C., Hawaii, Maine, New York, Alaska

Labor relations specialists advise on contracts and work alongside labor union representatives and company management to meet employee needs. They use labor law knowledge to negotiate contracts and act as a liaison between management and labor. The BLS states you need at least a bachelor's degree in labor relations, human resources, or business administration to start your career in this field.

Human Resources Specialist

2022 Median Annual Salary: [\\$62,290](#)

Job Growth (2021-2031): 8%

Top-Paying States: Washington D.C., New York, Washington, New Jersey, California

Human resources specialists review and screen job applicants, recruit candidates, and contact references. They also maintain employment records and onboard new employees. The BLS states that the position requires a bachelor's degree in human resources, communication, or business.

Frequently Asked Questions About Human Resources

Is HR a good career?

It also enables you to specialize in various industries and pursue several aspects of HR, whether that's compensation and benefits, employee engagement, or recruitment.

What degree do you need for human resources?

Most [human resources positions](#), such as human resources specialist, require at least a bachelor's degree, ideally in human resources or business. However, many HR employers accept four-year degrees in communication or psychology.

If you simply want to get your foot in the door, an [associate degree in human resources](#) is valuable for entry-level positions. However, as you advance in your career, especially if you'd like to pursue management or executive-level positions, you may need a master's degree.

Can you be in HR without a degree?

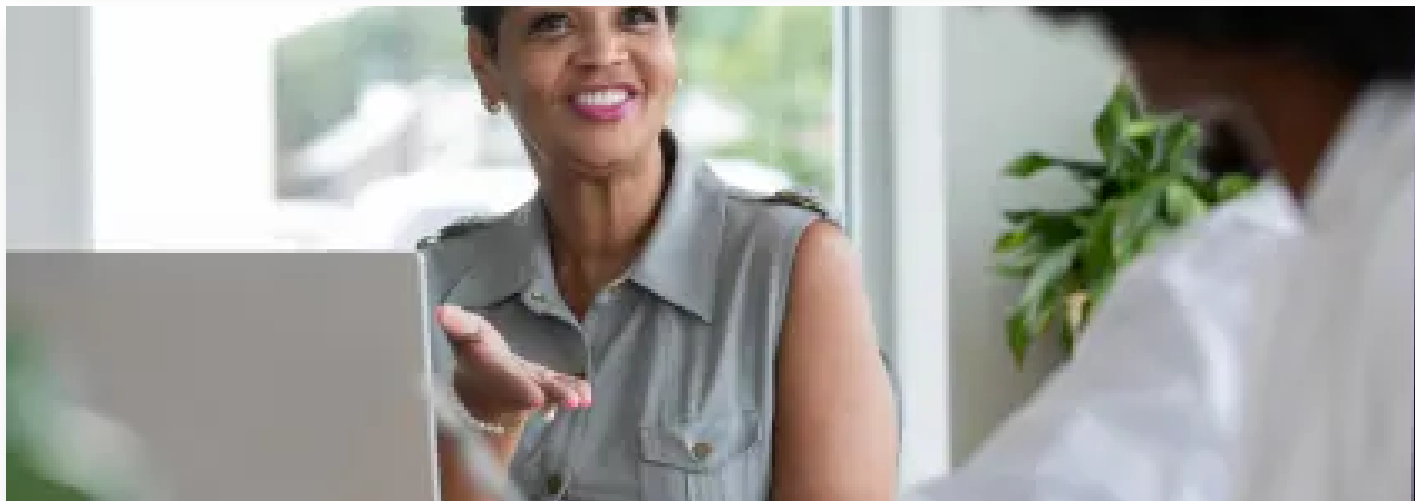
Yes! Many positions only require a high school diploma and can lead to growth opportunities in your company. For example, a [human resources assistant position](#) can lead to more responsibilities in HR as you gain more experience.

On-the-job training is a valuable asset to this field. What can have an obvious solution in a textbook may look far different in real-life scenarios. So, even though having a degree is beneficial, your success is not limited without one.

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