



Secretary

Level Advanced

Salary £18,000 to £25,000

Do you work well under pressure?

A secretary plays an important role within an organisation, providing essential all round administrative support. This can be given directly to a Manager or Director or even to a whole department. This role has become increasingly difficult to define as content and levels of responsibility vary depending on the type of company that you work for or even, the Manager that you have.

Primarily, a secretary will be responsible for dealing with routine administrative duties, ensuring that tasks are completed correctly and to deadline. It is essential to have good organisational and time management to succeed in this role.

Skilled Secretaries are always in demand.

This role is also referred to as: Administrator, Clerk

The 'Low-down'

A secretary's day-to-day activities are based on routine administrative duties. They are relied upon to keep records updated and to make sure tasks are completed on time. Variations in role will depend on the type of company or organisation. Typical duties may include:

- Typing, filing, word processing, photocopying
- Maintaining diaries
- Organising meetings
- Creating letters/reports/presentations
- Reception duties
- Devising office systems
- Making appointments

And the list goes on. There are many tasks that can fall under the remit of a secretary and many even move on to specialise within a specific area. For example: finance or agriculture.

A typical day...

9.00	Check messages from previous evening
9.30	Organise diary for the day
10.30	File invoices
11.30	Type up minutes from yesterday's management meeting
12.30	Lunch
13.30	Reception duty
14.30	Reception duty
16.30	Book rooms for following weeks meetings
17.30	Organise post

The Facts

Hours:	Secretaries tend to work regular office hours (9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday) with 1 hour for lunch but this may vary depending on the type of company or organisation. It may be necessary to work overtime during busy periods. Flexible working hours may be available.
Salary:	Entry salaries start from approx. £18,000 and can rise to approx. £25,000 with more experience. Higher salaries can be found in London and surrounding areas.
Prospects:	Excellent scope for progression into a senior secretarial/administration role or to a PA (Personal Assistant). Skills acquired in this role can be transferred into other sectors such as: Event Management, Human Resources or Finance.
Location:	Secretarial roles can be located in a variety of environments.
Travel:	No travel.
Environment:	The choice is yours! You could be a secretary in a Doctor's surgery or based in a remote farm.
Stress factor:	This role requires a high degree of organisation with tasks having to be routinely, completed on time. Could get a little stressful when extra duties are needed.

What skills will I need?

The role of a secretary can be demanding. You will certainly need some fundamental skills in order to succeed. Ideally, you should:

- Have good communication skills
- Possess a good command of written English
- Be numerate
- Be computer literate
- Have a confident telephone manner
- Be organised and methodical
- Be able to deal with confidential information

Is it possible to specialise?

Some Secretaries choose to specialise in order to advance their career in a new direction. For example, you may take a medical route or you may learn a new language and become a Bi-lingual secretary. Specialising often includes further training but will lead to your skills being more in demand and will increase your salary.



Opportunities

As a secretary you will develop key skills that will set you up for your future career. Skills such as computing, typing, communications, time-management, organisation are fundamental to so many roles. As you progress, you may move into a more senior role, managing a team of Junior secretaries or you may choose to transfer your skills into a completely different industry.

Where do I start?

There is no minimum qualification required for the role of secretary. Many employers will look for a good general education, GCSE's (grades A-C). However, previous experience, presentation and personal qualities can often be more important. It is possible to enter this role through an Advanced Apprenticeship.

