

Careers in Telecommunications for Liberal Arts Majors

What is the telecommunications industry?

Telecommunications began when Alexander Graham Bell first spoke to his assistant, Mr. Watson, across his newly developed telephone line. The industry has undergone major changes since then, especially in the last 25 years. Telecommunication firms now encompass local phone service, long-distance service, wireless products and Internet access provision.

What kinds of positions are available in telecommunications?

Basically, there are two general types of jobs: (1) technical, engineering jobs, and (2) non-technical, business-oriented jobs. Within each general type are a variety of positions.

Non-technical positions include marketing, sales, accounting and finance, human resources and public relations. Entry-level positions, as well as those requiring experience exist in all these areas.

What skills are needed for a career in telecommunications?

- ◆ Excellent communications skills
- ◆ Flexibility
- ◆ Experience always a plus
- ◆ Strong academic record
- ◆ Adaptability
- ◆ Analytical ability

Because the corporate landscape has changed so rapidly for the telecommunications industry, new employees must be able to adapt to changing situations and job descriptions. Liberal Arts students are traditionally high on measures of flexibility and adaptability. And remember, grades matter. Companies seek bright new employees for both technical and non-technical positions.

What salary range is expected for entry-level positions?

New hires in entry-level non-technical positions can expect a salary range of \$35,000 to \$40,000. Some fast-track leadership/management programs may bring higher salaries. Keep in mind that all companies want new hires to become leaders in the company—salary increases as responsibility and experience increase.

How should Liberal Arts majors prepare for a career in telecommunications?

- ◆ Improve both verbal and written communications skills
- ◆ Gain practical experience through internships, co-ops or jobs, especially in the telecommunications field
- ◆ Work toward a strong academic record
- ◆ Research telecommunications companies—find out what they specifically value in new employees