

What Are Job Requirements?

 thebalancecareers.com/what-are-job-requirements-3928054

[Job Searching Job Listings](#)

Definition & Examples of Job Requirements

By

...

Read The Balance's [editorial policies](#)

Pixsooz / iStock

[Alison Doyle](#)

Updated July 18, 2020

Job requirements are the skills, experience, and attributes an employer expects to find in a candidate who is hired for a position. The employer deems those qualifications as essential to satisfactory performance in that job.

Find out more about what job requirements are and get examples.

Most job listings state the requirements needed for candidates to successfully do the job. They may include specific skills, types and amounts of work experience, personal qualities, educational credentials, professional certifications, areas of knowledge, and other qualifications. These requirements help set expectations for both employers and potential employees, and help ensure that qualified people apply for positions.

How Job Requirements Work

Employers should try to be as specific as possible when listing job requirements in order to reduce the pool of applicants. This can help attract candidates who are as close a match as possible to the job and streamline the [application process](#).

It's important for candidates to take the time to show the hiring manager that their qualifications match the requirements for the job. Before applying for a job, candidates should carefully review the requirements for the position and reference as many of their corresponding qualifications as possible in their job application, cover letter, and [resume](#).

Employers may choose candidates who excel in certain key areas but are lacking in others. When creating a job listing, [employers imagine an ideal candidate](#), but they may never find someone who meets all of their requirements. Therefore, during the application process, be sure to emphasize the qualifications that you do have.

Often, job listings include a long list of requirements, some of which are much more important to the job than others. Candidates don't necessarily need to meet every requirement to be considered for a job.

For example, someone's educational background is a close match for the job and they have employment, volunteer, internship, or learning experiences that would support the application, then it's worth taking the time to apply. If it's obviously a stretch—the job requires a Ph.D., for example, and an applicant only has an undergraduate degree—then it would likely be a waste of time.

Types of Job Requirements

Common types of job requirements include skills, experience, and education.

Skills

Skill requirements can include both hard and soft skills. Hard skills are generally teachable, measurable abilities, such as the ability to do use specific software programs, analyze data, code, implement social media campaigns, and draw blood. Soft skills usually refer to traits that are hard to quantify, such as critical thinking, active listening, creative problem-solving, and communicating effectively.

Requirements might also mention a combination of skills and a knowledge base that the employer is seeking, e.g., application of mechanical engineering designs to power systems.

Experience

Experience requirements typically refer to time in a specific field or role related to the position. They might also include working with a specific population or in a specific industry or employment sector. For example, a firm looking to hire a junior-level accounting position may require three years of accounting experience working for a financial institution.

Educational Requirements

Some positions will require applicants to have a certain level of education. For example, the job may require a high school diploma, a college degree, or a graduate degree. In some cases, related work experience, known as equivalent experience, may be substituted for some or all of the educational requirements.

Key Takeaways

- Job requirements include the skills, education, and experience employers are looking for in employees they hire.
- Employers generally seek candidates who are the closest match to the job requirements they have set for the position.

- When applying for jobs, candidates should match their qualifications to the job requirements to demonstrate that they're the right fit for the job.