



Top Executives

JOB OUTLOOK

The overall employment of top executives is projected to grow 4 percent from 2019 to 2029, about as fast as the average for all occupations.¹

Projected employment growth varies by occupation. The high pay and prestige associated with these positions attract many qualified applicants.

Those with an advanced degree and extensive managerial experience will have the best job prospects.

SALARY RANGE¹

\$62,290 – \$208,000+

WHO ARE THEY?

Top executives lead organizations or companies to implement their goals, plans, functions, or services. They envision the future of the company to maximize resources and make sure that its potential is fulfilled. They can be true visionaries who want to use their company to effect positive changes in the world. They are often quite passionate about what they want to accomplish for the company.

These positions frequently involve starting up and carrying out projects. They can involve leading people and making many decisions. Sometimes they require taking risks, both financially and personally.

Top executive officers are sometimes known as “chief executive officers,” or “CEOs”, or as executive director, managing director, or president.

WHAT DO THEY DO?

Top executives plan strategies and policies to ensure that an organization meets its goals, expands, and grows.

The responsibilities of top executives depend on the organization's size. In large organizations, top executives focus on creating policies or planning strategies or are visionaries for change. Top executives often consult with other executives, staff, and board members to ensure continuing operations, maximize returns on investments, or increase productivity. They may negotiate or approve contracts and agreements. They may appoint department heads and managers and analyze financial statements or sales reports to identify ways to cut costs and improve performance.

In smaller organizations, such as independent companies, the owner can be the top executive. These executives are often responsible for all aspects of the business, from hiring, training, and quality control to day-to-day supervisory duties.

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/top-executives.htm>.



Top Executives (Continued)

EDUCATION/ TRAINING

- Bachelor's degree: generally required
- Leadership Experience: five years preferred
- Master's degree in Business Administration (MBA): preferred

HOW DO I BECOME ONE?

Some top executives start their own companies or organizations.

Sometimes, top executives advance within their current organizations, moving up from lower-level positions. Top executives promoted from lower-level positions may be able to substitute extensive experience for education.

Top executives generally have a bachelor's or master's degree in an area related to their work. Top executives in the public sector may have a degree in business administration, public administration, law, or the liberal arts. Top executives of large corporations may have a master's degree in business administration (MBA).