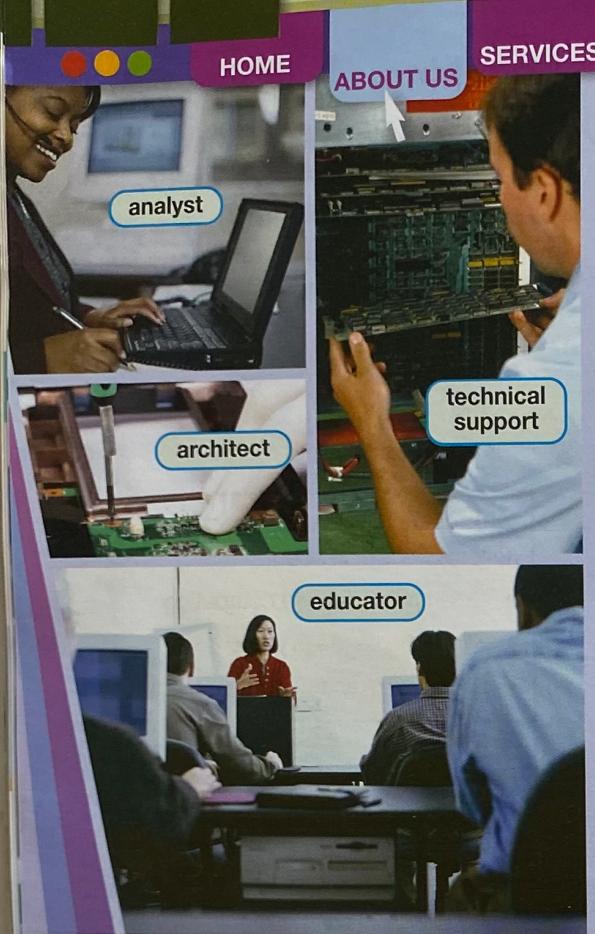


# 15 Career Options

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Software engineering is a rapidly growing industry in today's high-tech economy. The **software life cycle** is quickening. This means that companies must develop technology faster and faster.

So what are your options? Many engineers start in **technical support**. This is a good place to become familiar with different technologies. Some engineers also learn about products as **testers** and **analysts**. These jobs promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

If you enjoy concepts and theories, check out the educational field. Universities need well-trained **educators**, especially those with skills to be **researchers**. Even if education isn't your long-term goal, it's a great opportunity for **professional development**.

More experience and education will help you **advance** your career. Nowadays, almost every professional industry has some need for software development. Some companies hire full-time **developers**, while others take on **freelancers** and **contractors**. Many developers are owners and **managers** of their own small businesses.

Are you looking for something a little different? If you enjoy general computer engineering, consider becoming an **architect**. Functional hardware is an important part of reliable software. Its development is another expanding industry that needs bright, talented engineers. Whatever your goals, consider joining the **IEEE** and **ACM**. **Memberships** in these professional organizations come with opportunities for networking and further career development.

## Get ready!

- 1 Before you read the passage, talk about these questions.

- 1 What are some different career options for software engineers?
- 2 How does the software life cycle affect jobs in the software industry?

## Reading

- 2 Read the webpage. Then, complete the table.

Action	Benefit
Starting as a tester or analyst	1 _____
2 _____	Is an opportunity for professional development.
3 _____	Most industries have software development needs.
Becoming an architect	4 _____
Joining a professional organization	5 _____

## Vocabulary

- 3 Match the words and phrases (1-10) with the definitions (A-J).

- |            |           |             |                          |
|------------|-----------|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1 <u>j</u> | tester    | 6 <u>a</u>  | freelancer               |
| 2 <u>f</u> | ACM       | 7 <u>c</u>  | researcher               |
| 3 <u>i</u> | advance   | 8 <u>b</u>  | membership               |
| 4 <u>e</u> | manager   | 9 <u>g</u>  | technical support        |
| 5 <u>h</u> | architect | 10 <u>d</u> | professional development |

- |   |  |    |
|---|--|----|
| A | a worker who is hired for temporary jobs                             | 10 |
| B | an official status indicating that someone is part of a group        | 8  |
| C | a professional who studies and analyzes something                    | 7  |
| D | the process of gaining knowledge that furthers one's career          | 3  |
| E | a professional who runs a business                                   | 6  |
| F | a professional organization that supports the study of computers     | 2  |
| G | the process of assisting people with hardware or software problems   | 9  |
| H | a professional who designs and creates hardware                      | 5  |
| I | to cause something to achieve a higher status                        | 4  |
| J | a professional who uses products to determine how well they function | 1  |

#### 4 Read the sentences and choose the correct words or phrases.

- 1 The company's software **testers / developers** design all the new programs.
- 2 The **IEEE / professional development** is a group that supports technological innovation.
- 3 An **analyst's / architect's** job is to examine existing systems and identify opportunities for improvement.
- 4 The engineer is a **manager / contractor**, so she works on projects for different companies.
- 5 **Educators / Freelancers** are most commonly found in classrooms.
- 6 The **membership / software life cycle** explains why there are so many jobs in software development.

#### 5 Listen and read the webpage again. What is a benefit of joining a professional organization?

## Listening

#### 6 Listen to a conversation between an intern and an engineer. Mark the following statements as true (T) or false (F).

- 1 f The man recently completed an engineering degree program.
- 2 t The woman recommends starting an engineering career as a researcher.
- 3 f The man applied to be a member of the IEEE.

#### 7 Listen again and complete the conversation.

**Intern:** Eventually, I want to 1 be a developer.  
**Engineer:** But the academic side interests me, too.  
**Engineer:** So you 2 might want to be a researcher?  
**Intern:** I'm considering it. What 3 do you think of that idea?  
**Engineer:** I think that's a smart move. You have to be able to 4 analyse technology before you can develop it.  
**Intern:** That's what I thought. Then maybe I could be a freelancer 5 on the side.  
**Engineer:** Oh, sure. That's a great way to advance your career.  
**Intern:** Right. Wow, it really seems like there are 6 lots of options in this field.

## Speaking

#### 8 With a partner, act out the roles below based on Task 7. Then, switch roles.

##### USE LANGUAGE SUCH AS:

Have you decided what ...?

Eventually, I want to ...

What do you think of ...?

**Student A:** You are an intern. Talk to Student B about:

- your engineering career goals
- his or her opinion about your plans
- other resources for career information

**Student B:** You are an engineer. Talk to Student A about his or her engineering career goals.

## Writing

#### 9 Use the webpage and conversation from Task 8 to write an application letter for an engineering degree program. Include: the applicant's career goals, his or her plans immediately after graduation, and how the program will help meet his or her goals.

