Human resource assistants are the behind-the-scenes collaborators and colleagues whose main job responsibilities are focused on helping HR directors and managers accomplish HR-related tasks.

HR assistants are involved with nearly all programs and services that relate to a company’s human resources division. Their work, which is often decidedly administrative in nature, involves documenting grievances, terminations, absences, performance reports, and compensation and benefits information.

Beyond administrative duties, however, HR assistants are also often involved in recruiting, hiring, and training new employees. Typical tasks, therefore, include posting job openings, gathering information on new applicants, contacting references, and informing employees of their hiring status. These members of the HR team are also often responsible for handling everything from scheduling the office holiday party to handling travel arrangements for company executives.

## Job Duties and Responsibilities of Human Resource Assistants

Daily job duties and responsibilities of today’s HR assistants include:

* Answering employee questions
* Processing incoming mail
* Creating and distributing documents
* Providing customer service to organization employees
* Serving as a point of contact with benefit vendors/administrators
* Maintaining computer system by updating and entering data
* Setting appointments and arranging meetings
* Maintaining calendars of HR management team
* Compiling reports and spreadsheets and preparing spreadsheets

HR assistants are involved in a number of areas of human resources, including:

Recruitment/New Hire Process

* Participating in recruitment efforts
* Posting job ads and organizing resumes and job applications
* Scheduling job interviews and assisting in interview process
* Collecting employment and tax information
* Ensuring background and reference checks are completed
* Preparing new employee files
* Overseeing the completion of compensation and benefit documentation
* Orienting new employees to the organization (setting up a designated log-in, workstation, email address, etc.)
* Conducting benefit enrollment process
* Administering new employment assessments
* Serving as a point person for all new employee questions

Payroll and Benefits Administration

* Processing payroll, which includes ensuring vacation and sick time are tracked in the system
* Answering payroll questions
* Facilitating resolutions to any payroll errors
* Participating in benefits tasks, such as claim resolutions, reconciling benefits statements, and approving invoices for payment

Record Maintenance

* Maintaining current HR files and databases
* Updating and maintaining employee benefits, employment status, and similar records
* Maintaining records related to grievances, performance reviews, and disciplinary actions
* Performing file audits to ensure that all required employee documentation is collected and maintained
* Performing payroll/benefit-related reconciliations
* Performing payroll and benefits audits and recommending any correction action
* Completing termination paperwork and assisting with exist interviews

## Qualities of Competent HR Assistants

To effectively perform the duties of a human resources assistant, individuals must be able to demonstrate a number of competencies that are essential to the position, which include:

* Must be adept at problem-solving, including being able to identify issues and resolve programs in a timely manner
* Must possess strong interpersonal skills
* Must be able to communicate clearly, both written and orally, as to communicate with employees, members of the HR management team, and in group presentations and meetings
* Must be able to effectively read and interpret information, present numerical data in a resourceful manner, and skillfully gather and analyze information
* Must be able to prioritize and plan work activities as to use time efficiently
* Must be organized, accurate, thorough, and able to monitor work for quality
* Must be dependable, able to follow instructions, respond to management direction, and must be able to improve performance through management feedback

## How to Become a Human Resources Assistant

The minimum qualification to become a human resource assistant is typically a bachelor’s degree in human resources, although HR assistants may also possess undergraduate degrees in areas such as finance and business administration.

A Bachelor of Science (BS), a Bachelor of Arts (BA), or a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) in Human Resource Management is designed to provide students with the capabilities to serve as effective HR professionals.

Students in a BBA in Human Resource Management, for example, learn skills related to the management functions of strategic and effective human resource planning, compensation, recruitment, training and development, career planning, organizational effectiveness, and employee relations, among others.

A bachelor’s degree in an HR-related field not only prepares students to become HR assistants, but also opens the door for HR manager positions. Senior-level management positions in HR often require a graduate degree related to human resources, such as the MBA in Human Resource Management; therefore, HR assistants possessing a bachelor’s degree in an HR-related area are well-poised to continue their education at the graduate level.

Typical courses in a bachelor’s degree in human resources program include:

* Human resource management
* Leadership and group dynamics
* Labor problems
* Personnel compensation
* The staffing process
* Labor and social negotiation
* Workplace dispute resolution
* Behavior in organizations