# How can I become a network architect?

Beyond the requisite job experience – typically 5+ years in a hands-on networking role – network architects typically need at least a bachelor’s degree on the education front. Due to the demand for business knowledge in this role, some organizations prefer to hire network architects with a Master’s degree or MBA. Desirable majors for this position include network design or administration, information systems management, computer science or a related IT discipline.[\n]

In-demand technical skills to look for in a network architecture degree program include network design and modeling, information security, telecommunications, cloud computing, virtualization, software engineering, technical writing, and information systems management. A network architect learning plan should also cover skills in popular vendor technologies, especially those from industry-leader Cisco Systems.[\n]

A major factor in becoming a network architect is understanding the business side as well as the technical, and being able to analyze and express how these two worlds interact. Thus, a strong set of Soft Skills is key to getting hired – and succeeding – in this role. Marketable soft skills in network architect training programs include critical thinking, creative problem solving, effective verbal and written communication, project management and leadership.[\n]

The subject matter in computer networking training programs works well in online learning formats, especially those that employ the latest digital simulations which can accurately mimic network hardware configurations and real-world scenarios.