

Network Administrator

Occupation Snapshot

A Network Administrator, also known as a systems administrator, LAN administrator, information systems administrator, network operations analyst, network technician, or junior network engineer, is an IT professional who manages an organization's PCs and LAN network. This management includes rolling out new equipment, as well as performing corrective and preventative measures on existing equipment.



Duties of a network administrator, for which nearly every network out there requires at least one, include the installation, configuration and maintenance of PCs, networking equipment and network operating systems. As well, a network administrator must deal with patching systems where necessary as well as locking down systems so that only authorized personal can access and use them. Network administration is a rather highly technical role. A good understanding of network operating systems, network equipment and networking protocols is essential, as well as a basic ability to program scripts and batch files. However, relatively strong interpersonal skills are also

important, as the network administrator must understand the networking needs and problems of users and be able to address those issues in a timely fashion. Lastly, a network administrator must be diligent at documenting the network as well as be proficient at troubleshooting problems, often under tense situations. This includes knowing when to give up trying to be the hero when solving a problem and having the humility to go to outside sources for help.

A person may consider entering this field after attaining a Computer Science or Computer Engineering university degree or a one or two year computer diploma from a local technical institute. However, some Network administrators are quite proficient without this recommended educational background. Either way, at least some dedicated training and related certification in one or more leading network operating systems is highly recommended as is training and certification on network equipment and protocols. A large dose of caution is also important as is the ability to plan for what-if scenarios and to remember to provide management and users with a heads up on system changes and upgrades.



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A network administrator often moves on to becoming a network or systems engineer and reaps higher salary rewards as a result. As well, those with exceptional communication and interpersonal skills often slide into management roles, but not generally until first becoming a network or systems engineer.

Salary information is so dependent on an IT professional's particular skill set, experience and geographic location. However, fairly experienced network administrators can attain salaries around \$80,000.