

Computer Support Specialist

What They Do

Computer network support specialists analyze, troubleshoot, and evaluate computer network problems. They do routine maintenance of their organization's networks, such as performing file backups on the network. Solving an information technology problem promptly is important because organizations depend on their network systems. Network support specialists may assist computer users through phone, email, or in-person visits. They often work under network and computer systems administrators, who handle more complex tasks.

Computer user support specialists, also called help-desk technicians, usually provide technical help to non-IT computer users. They respond to phone and email requests for help. They can usually help users remotely, but they also may make site visits so that they can solve a problem in person.

Qualities

Computer support specialists must be patient and sympathetic. They often help people who are frustrated with the software or hardware they are trying to use.

Support workers must be able to understand the problems that their customers are describing and know when to ask questions to clarify the situation.

Support workers must identify both simple and complex computer problems, analyze them, and solve them.

Support workers must describe the solutions to computer problems in a way that a nontechnical person can understand.

Strong writing skills are useful for preparing instructions and email responses for employees and customers, as well as for real-time web chat interactions.

Wages

The median annual wage for computer network support specialists was \$65,450 in May 2020. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$40,620, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$110,450.

The median annual wage for computer user support specialists was \$52,690 in May 2020. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$32,830, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$88,940.

Education

Education requirements for computer support specialists vary. Computer user support specialist jobs require some computer knowledge, but not necessarily a postsecondary degree. Applicants who have taken some computer-related classes may be qualified for these jobs. For computer network support specialists, many employers accept applicants with an associate's degree, although some prefer applicants to have a bachelor's degree.

