

NATURE OF WORK

Drafters use their drawing and computer ability to create drawings and designs of all types of items we see in our daily lives. Their visual guidelines provide the technical details needed for the construction of anything from roads, buildings, and machinery to toys, boats and blenders. Their drawings are used as a basis on which additional technical details are added by engineers, surveyors, architects, or scientists. Drafters use technical handbooks, tables, calculators, and computers to complete their designs.

WORKING CONDITIONS

A 40-hour work week is the most common for drafters. Drafters work in a comfortable office that is furnished to accommodate their tasks. Drafters utilize computers or they may sit at drawing boards or drafting tables when completing their designs. Caution needs to be used to make sure that sitting in one position for many hours does not impact their health.

TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS

Employers are interested in drafters who have gone beyond high school for training in traditional drafting, CAD, mathematics, science, and engineering technology. It is also important that drafters have the ability to communicate effectively with others, can do some problem-solving and can work in a team environment. Some employers are willing to pay for continuing education to keep the drafter's knowledge up to date.

JOB OUTLOOK

Drafters who have the ability to perform tasks that were traditionally done by engineers and architects will be more valued than those who can only do simple drafting projects. Overall it is expected that there will be an increase of 6% in the need for drafters from 2006 to 2016. This is slower than the average employment growth for most industries. Outsourcing these jobs overseas and the fact that computers have made some of the drafting easier to do may be the cause of the slowed growth. Having at least two years of formal training in drafting will provide more opportunities for individuals looking for jobs in drafting.

CAREER OPTIONS

Drafter

ESTIMATED SALARY RANGE

New Mexico— \$20,000—\$26,000

Nationally — \$20,000—\$28,000

(depending on skill, experience and responsibility)

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

Aeronautical drafter, architectural drafter, civil drafter, mechanical drafter, electrical drafter, electronic drafter

SJC Basic Program Information

A certificate option and two degree options are available for students interested in pursuing a career in drafting: students can obtain a one year certificate in drafting and/or a two-year AAS degree in Civil Drafting and Design and/or in Mechanical Drafting and Design. The one year certificate will prepare a student for an entry level position in this environment. The two year Civil Drafting and Design provides students with a firm technical foundation in civil drafting, while the Mechanical Drafting and Design program provides a mathematical and scientific foundation for entry-level positions in engineering technology with the possibility for advancement.

For further information go to:

www.sanjuancollege.edu/pages/158.asp

Click on AAS link under Career Programs

www.bls.gov/oco/ocos111.htm

www.adda.org



*Most of this information is from the Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-2009

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