



Working for the Great Outdoors

Contract Specialist/Contracting Officer



Are your career interests in business administration? Does the thought of working for a public land management agency in work locations with nearly unlimited recreational opportunities and some of the most scenic places in the Nation appeal to you? Does working in the field of contract preparation or negotiation, logistics, and supply appeal to you? If so, a career as a Contract Specialist, contracting officer, or other contract related position with the Forest Service may be of interest to you.

The Work Environment

Totaling hundreds of millions of dollars annually, Forest Service contracting, leasing and procurement activities are a large and complex workload. From the office to field locations, contract work frequently involves natural resource projects, road or trail maintenance, special studies, and many other activities.

Operating on the Job

Forest Service contracting personnel routinely apply negotiation, business law, logistics, production, procurement, business management, quantitative and qualitative analysis, and other management skills. Contracting personnel work with industry representatives, contractors, suppliers, Foresters, Engineers, contract inspectors, and other personnel to provide needed equipment, services and supplies. Examples include:

- Assisting resource management develop contracts, contract specifications, and other contractual documents;
- Advertising and soliciting bids for services, supplies, construction or other needs;
- Reviewing and analyzing bids and other procurement proposals;
- Leasing of office, warehouse or other buildings, and facilities to meet space needs;
- Responding to emergency procurement needs associated with fires, floods, or other disasters.
- Negotiating contracts for services such as technical studies, analyses, reviews, consultant services, fire fighting materials, equipment, and

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Career Paths and Requirements

supplies;

- Conducting inspections of contractor work to determine acceptability, needed adjustments, or other contract action; and
- Resolving contract claims and disputes.

Contracting personnel are hired at many different grade levels. Recent college graduates may be hired at the GS-5 or GS-7 grade level. They spend their first year or two in training and developmental assignments, and then may be promoted to the GS-9 grade level. Others with advanced degrees and experience may be hired at higher grade levels, and there is substantial opportunity for further development and advancement! To begin a career as a contract specialist you need, a 4-year course of study with a bachelor's degree in any field, or at least 24 semester hours in any combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management, or a passing score on an examination or examinations considered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) which demonstrates skills, knowledge, or abilities comparable to that of an individual who completed at least 24 semester hours (or the equivalent) of study in any these academic disciplines, plus appropriate experience or additional education.



These qualification requirements have been summarized for convenience. Full details are available at www.USAJobs.gov or the www.opm.gov subject index under "Qualifications."

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