



Shipping

There are many different types of companies involved in the shipping industry: ship owners, managers and agents, container services and terminals, freight forwarders, and even manufacturers and exporters who have their own shipping departments and require specially trained shipping personnel.

Shipping companies own and operate container vessels, container terminals, containers and container chassis. Their activities include container service management, road haulage, agency services, freight forwarding and cargo consolidation. Forwarding companies may not own their vessels, but they help their clients book shipment time, terminals and other transport services.



POSITIONS

Opportunities exist for graduates in a variety of departments, including information systems, trade, operations, and sales and marketing.

Administration keeps track of all the containers, cargo and documents via computer networks to provide round-the-clock, around-the-world cargo tracking. Accounting, maintaining the accounts of a company involved in shipping, is a challenging position, and offers promotion opportunities to financial controller.

Graduates usually enter this industry as executive trainees, receiving on-the-job management training that will allow them to advance quickly and also broaden their understanding of the entire shipping industry.

There are also opportunities within shipping for those who have studied law, particularly maritime law, to deal with the complex legislation governing shipping contracts and arbitration. Lawyers and insurance experts are also required for cases involving accidents, losses and damages to goods or vessels.

EDUCATION & REQUIREMENTS

Although some positions require a degree in a certain field, the shipping industry does not generally



specify particular disciplines as entry requirements. For administrative positions, an accounting or business administration degree is an advantage, as well as the ability to be well organised.

For accounting and legal positions, a relevant degree is necessary. For international shipping, a high level of written and spoken English is required.

SALARY & BENEFITS

Benefits and salaries vary from company to company, but most offer a comprehensive package, which includes medical and dental schemes, life and accident insurance, as well as annual and discretionary bonuses.

Starting salaries for most positions in shipping and transport are in the \$8,000-\$12,000 range. The general policy in the shipping industry is to promote from within.

FURTHER TRAINING

Many shipping companies provide in-house and on-the-job training, including management courses and executive development programmes.

Others may also grant education allowances for local or overseas courses of study that will help in career development. Most work is, of course, on dry land these days. But some companies may offer shipboard training to provide staff with exposure to seagoing operations.

The Department of Shipping and Transport of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University offers professional training in the field of shipping and transport. The Hong Kong Shippers' Council also organises various shipping courses on its own and in collaboration with the University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Morrison Hill).