

# Business & Customer Service



**4.7  
MILLION**  
SMALL BUSINESSES  
ACROSS THE UK

A FULLY QUALIFIED  
ACCOUNTANT CAN  
EARN OVER  
**£50,000 PA**

BUSINESS  
SKILLS CAN BE  
TRANSFERRED  
TO ALMOST ANY  
OTHER SECTOR!



**Business is all about getting stuff done. Whether it's launching and selling a product or starting up a company in your kitchen, business boils down to one thing; making money. If you have good business acumen, then you won't be far from success. Every business is hinged on meeting and dealing with customers and for that you'll need good customer service. A smile, a friendly demeanour and a professional but helpful attitude will help your customers feel at ease and in good hands.**

## You ask us...

### WHAT'S THE BUSINESS & CUSTOMER SERVICE SECTOR ALL ABOUT?

It's a huge sector that covers nearly every other industry out there. Everybody needs to make money to survive, from your local corner shop to the people who run the world's largest companies. It goes hand in hand with customer service, which businesses rely on to not only attract new customers, but also keep hold of current ones. This sector covers everything from management to entrepreneurial ventures (that's starting your own business to you and me!). With regards to customer service, you'll find roles in telesales, reception and more!

### WHAT KIND OF SALARY CAN I EXPECT TO EARN?

It depends on your role in a business and the type of company you work for. As a money orientated sector, you'll be making plenty of cash if you keep hitting targets. The average salary for starters in business is around the **£15,000** mark, but don't be surprised to see this figure increase very quickly. Customer Service starts out at about **£11,000**, but is a career ladder that's easy to climb with the right attitude and can in some cases lead to a career in PR.

### WHAT KIND OF ENVIRONMENT WOULD I BE WORKING IN?

A business environment is competitive and fast paced; sales targets have to be met in order to satisfy customers and management alike. If you're ambitious and enjoy a challenge then you'll revel in it and go far. Customer Service is a little more laid back, as you have to act as the face of the company and therefore require a more relaxed demeanour (you'll still have to be professional; don't be greeting top customers with 'Yo dude, how's it hanging?!').

### HOW DOES THIS SECTOR COMPARE TO OTHERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY?

This country sees over **8000** new businesses started every week; some from current companies merging, others starting up with just one staff member in somebody's house. Nearly a quarter of UK private enterprises are situated in the business services sector and recently new schemes have been brought in to help people aged 18-24 start up their own companies.

### WHERE IS THE WORK MOST CONCENTRATED?

It probably won't surprise you to hear that the largest concentration of work in the business sector can be found in the South of England, towards the London area. However, many new start up companies are found in the North, around major cities such as Manchester and Sheffield. Leeds is also renowned for its business district, where the headquarters of supermarket giants Asda, hair product company GHD and video games developer Rockstar are located.



## Careers Choices

**Business is vital to our economy; without it, there wouldn't be any money. And without money, there'd be no society. So it's imperative to make sure that businesses run to their best potential. To make these businesses work, there are many cogs in the machine, such as administration, human resources and management, all of which require a different set of skills.**

### ADMINISTRATION

Administration is the part of business that we as customers rarely see. Whenever we sign up for a contract on a phone or buy a house, that contract has to be processed, checked and filed away for future reference. These aren't skills to be taken lightly and the function of admin should never be underestimated. You can expect to earn between **£15,000** and **£20,000**, with the possibility to earn more with progression.

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

Customer Service is all about making customers feel like they're in safe hands when doing business with your company. Whether it's a friendly telephone demeanor or a simple smile and a handshake, a company's treatment of their clients goes a long way to doing future business. It also helps garner reputation to attract new customers that previously slipped through the net. Starting salaries are around **£12,000**, but progression can come quickly and with it comes a higher wage.

### HUMAN RESOURCES

Somebody has to look after the employees in a company and this job falls to the human resources department. This is no easy task, especially when it's a large company with hundreds of people in various job roles. Responsibilities include hiring and recruiting, keeping employee records, dealing with complaints and providing staff training for development. Salaries begin at around **£15,000**, while managers can earn close to **£50,000** a year.

### ENTREPRENEURIAL

Ever wonder why there isn't a product in the world that probably should exist but doesn't? Then why not go for it and start up your own business? Perhaps you have a talent which you can showcase as a service to other people or know how to turn a struggling business into a successful one. The government is currently running a scheme for 18-24 year olds who want to start their own business, providing funding, training and help to make sure young people starting from scratch are on the right path.

## Where to begin

### APPRENTICESHIPS

If you are 16 or over then you can enter an Apprenticeship, which would teach you the skills that you need while you work, you'll also earn a salary. On your Apprenticeship, half of your time will be spent doing the job and the other half will be spent learning in the classroom. Listed below are the Apprenticeship frameworks for this sector, which when completed will give you a Level 2 qualification in the form of a BTEC, Diploma or NVQ:

**Business and Administration**  
• **Contact Centre Operations**  
• **Customer Service**  
• **Management** • **Sales and Telesales**

### ADVANCED APPRENTICESHIPS

These are equivalent to A-Levels and can usually be joined after you complete the associated Intermediate Apprenticeship. Advanced Apprenticeships are perfect for those who want a practical role as they learn while

gaining relevant employment experience. People with Advanced Apprenticeships often progress up the career ladder faster than those without, because the skills that they learn are more suited to management or supervisory roles. Here are some of the Apprenticeship Frameworks for this sector, completing any of these will result in a Level 3 qualification such as a BTEC, NVQ or Diploma.

**Business and Administration**  
• **Contact Centre Operations**  
• **Customer Service**  
• **Enterprise** • **Management** • **Sales and Telesales**

### A-LEVELS

A-Levels are the most popular route into University and are sought after by most employers. The following A-levels provide a great path into this sector:

**English Language** • **Maths** • **Business Studies** • **IT**

### FOUNDATION DEGREES

A foundation degree combines the University lifestyle with practical, hands on work. It's basically a cross between an Apprenticeship and an Honours Degree. They are both used as gateway qualifications

to a full time Degree because they count towards the first two years of your Honours Degree. Foundation Degrees normally take about two years to complete and you will be in both the work place and on the university site. Nearly all universities provide Foundation and full Honours degrees in Business related fields.

### COLLEGE COURSES

A College course is another good way to get into the Business and Customer Service sector. To find out more about these courses, have a look at our website: [www.careersworld.co.uk](http://www.careersworld.co.uk).

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