

JOB PROFILE: ON-TRAIN STAFF

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Keep on track with a high-speed career working on the trains. As well as driving roles, there are many other jobs on board a train. On-train jobs are 'customer-facing' - an important role as customer service is highly important for a successful business.

On-train jobs involve tasks such as selling and checking tickets, communicating with passengers, responding to queries, keeping the train tidy and serving food and drink. At a higher level, some people will also have supervisory positions, responsible for the management of other on-train staff. And all the time, on-train staff have to make sure that health and safety requirements are met and that passengers are safe.

Working on trains can be exciting. You might travel long distances at high speed, or get to meet lots of different people. But it is also hard work. Shift work is common, as trains run early in the morning through to late at night. On-train staff usually work between 35 and 40 hours a week, and may work at weekends and on bank holidays.

THE ROLES

On-train staff can have a number of roles and titles. These include:

- conductor
- steward
- host
- chef
- buffet sales

QUALITIES & SKILLS

To be a member of on-train staff you need:-

- Understanding of good customer service
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Calmness under pressure
- Assertiveness, especially for dealing with difficult passengers
- Numerical and time-keeping skills
- Awareness of health and safety
- Good team-working skills

ENTRY

An understanding of customer service is very important for getting into the industry and employers will often look for previous experience in customer service roles.

However, you do not need any particular qualifications though some employers may ask that you have GCSE/S level passes in English and Maths.

It's likely that you would have to undergo a medical, testing for alcohol and drugs as well as checking general health and fitness to work.

Most employers will also require that you are 18 or older, though there is the potential for trainees to be taken on at 16. There are also a limited number of apprenticeships available for passenger service roles, which can include work on-board trains.

TRAINING

Employers will provide training to new staff. You will be trained in areas including health and safety, customer service and rail operations. Employees working with food will also be trained in food hygiene.

Once in the job, you may be able to work towards an N/SVQ level 2 in rail transport operations (passenger services).

PROGRESSION & SALARY

Starting salaries for on-train staff can vary from £11000 to around £15500. These salaries can increase with experience.

There are managerial and supervisory roles available too – and on-train staff can work their way up to these positions. On Train Managers, for example, can earn around £20000.

FIND OUT MORE...

For further information and advice visit:

GENERAL RAIL ADVICE

- Careers In Rail Website

www.careersinrail.org

- GoSkills

Concorde House, Trinity Park
Solihull, Birmingham B37 7UQ

Tel: 0121 635 5520

www.goskills.org

RAILWAY INFORMATION

- National Rail

www.nationalrail.co.uk