

High-paying non-desk jobs don't always require a four-year degree, finds CareerBuilder analysis

- 90 percent of the highest-paying non-desk jobs are in health care

- 170 growing non-desk jobs pay more than \$15 per hour and require an associate degree or less

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CHICAGO, April 16, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Millions of Americans earn their living from behind a desk and computer screen, and while that's a reality only likely to expand over the coming years, hundreds of non-desk jobs continue to grow and thrive, according to a new analysis of labor market data from CareerBuilder.

Ninety percent of the twenty highest paying non-desk jobs are in health care and most require a doctoral or professional degree, according to the analysis. Many of the fast-growing non-desk jobs, however, do not require a four-year degree or higher, and several offer workers a direct path to the middle class in a variety of industries.

The data for the analysis was provided by Economic Modeling Specialists Intl. (EMSI) – CareerBuilder's labor market data arm that pulls from more than 90 government and private resources.

"The U.S. workforce has gradually shifted to office-based work due to the rise of the professional services economy and productivity gains associated with information technology," said Rosemary Haefner, chief human resources officer at CareerBuilder. "But some of the healthiest areas of job growth year-after-year are in middle-skill occupations that don't require workers to sit in front of computer monitors and phones for 40-hours a week."

Haefner states that while they tend to pay less than desk jobs on average, occupations that require workers to move around provide real benefits. A 2014 [CareerBuilder/Harris Poll survey](#) found that workers in non-desk jobs were two times less likely to complain about their work environment and significantly less likely to report being overweight.

In all, there are 170 non-desk occupations that pay \$15 per hour or more on average, do not require a four-year degree for a typical entry-level position, and have seen six percent job growth from 2010-2014. The following table shows the top-paying non-desk occupations in various categories.

	Median Hourly Earnings 2010-2014 Job Growth	
Health Care Occupations		
Dental Hygienists	\$34.19	9%
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	\$31.93	15%
Occupational Therapy Assistants	\$26.57	14%
Construction & Extraction Occupations		
Elevator Installers and Repairers	\$37.81	6%
Boilermakers	\$27.74	6%
Rotary Drill Operators, Oil and Gas	\$24.79	47%
Installation & Maintenance Occupations		
Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	\$30.85	7%
Avionics Technicians*	\$26.92	6%
Signal and Track Switch Repairers	\$26.75	11%
Architecture & Engineering Occupations		
Mechanical Engineering Technicians	\$25.19	10%
Industrial Engineering Technicians	\$25.01	6%
Electro-Mechanical Technicians	\$24.68	8%
Green Energy Occupations		
Wind Turbine Service Technicians	\$23.79	21%
Solar Photovoltaic Installers	\$19.04	22%
Miscellaneous Non-Desk Occupations		
Locksmiths	\$18.25	10%
Massage Therapists	\$17.27	17%

Travel Guides	\$16.26	7%
Fitness Trainers & Aerobics Instructors	\$15.88	8%

**Avionics technicians inspect and repair various aircraft equipment, such as radar, radio and navigation systems.*

Definitions and Methodology

For this study, non-desk jobs are defined as any occupation where the majority of the average worker's time spent on the job would be away from a desk. Many occupations have core responsibilities split between a desk/office and non-stationary or field work – e.g. engineering occupations, power plant technicians/operators, real estate brokers, etc. Those occupations were not included in this analysis. For more information on work environments, see the [BLS's Occupational Outlook Handbook](#).

Data for this report comes from EMSI's 2014.4 Class of Worker data set and does not include self-employed workers.

The methodology for the referenced CareerBuilder/Harris Poll survey data can viewed [here](#).

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