

POLITICIAN

Information provided by CHOICES Career & Education Advice

WHO IS A POLITICIAN?

Making laws, shaping policies, and running campaigns. A politician's work can look pretty complicated at first glance. But at the core, a politician is just a person who chooses to represent the people in society. These may be people within a city, township, or even a whole country.

WHAT THE WORK INVOLVES?

Duties are varied and often time-consuming. Here are some of the general tasks:

- Listening intently to people in your area via in-person visits, reading their emails or even reading comments on social media.
- Being present at charitable or sporting events, fundraisers and more.
- Meeting with individuals who play an important role in your area like businesspersons, members of advocacy groups, church leaders etc.
- Informing the public about your party's latest activities.
- Updating yourself on current affairs and research related to your political areas of interest or responsibility.
- Planning with your team how to implement programmes and policies which meet the public's needs.



WHO IS THIS CAREER FOR?

As a mentally and sometimes physically demanding job, it requires a special type of person who:

- Has a lot of energy and stamina.
- Has loads of charisma and is comfortable speaking publicly.
- Can handle somewhat intense amounts of criticism.
- Is able to put the needs of the people above his/her own agenda or ambitions.
- Is able to understand different perspectives from people of various backgrounds.
- Is willing to give up some privacy due to media scrutiny.
- Has strong leadership skills.

WHAT CAN I EARN?

Medium to high level salaries are paid to elected individuals or other persons within a party who hold significant positions. However, party members who are not awarded salaries typically hold a part-time or even full-time position elsewhere as their steady source of income.

HOW DO I QUALIFY?

The field of politics is open to people from a variety of educational backgrounds. However, whatever your specific field of study, you can usually enter politics by volunteering for a party and gradually rising through with the connections and experiences you've made and had. Nonetheless, having a good, sound secondary and tertiary education is a good start. Subjects like sociology, history, and principles of business can prepare you to understand different issues in society. It can also help to study law, public policy, political science or criminal justice at the tertiary level. You can actually earn degrees in several of those at many of the universities and community colleges across the island. By participating in student government at any level, one can also get a glimpse of life in politics.

CONCLUSION

A politician's job is extremely difficult and, at times, thankless. They typically get a bad reputation for being corrupt or overly ambitious. However, we should try to remember how much we need such individuals to fill this role in order to help shape our society into the one we want it to be.

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