

BEST JOBS IN AMERICA *Money/PayScale.com's list of great careers* 2009

- Full List
- High Pay
- Job Growth
- Quality of Life
- Sectors



PHOTO: BRAD DEGENCO

And the winners are...

Great pay and superior growth prospects. Work that's meaningful. Those are some of the qualities we looked for when selecting America's best jobs. [More](#)

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Systems Engineer | 6. CPA |
| 2. Physician Assistant | 7. Physical Therapist |
| 3. College Professor | 8. Network Security Consultant |
| 4. Nurse Practitioner | 9. Intelligence Analyst |
| 5. IT Project Manager | 10. Sales Director |

• [See the top 100](#)



'I have the best job in America!'

Meet 10 people lucky enough to have the top careers on Money's list, and see why they love their jobs. [More](#)

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Most job growth

Demand for personal financial advisors should grow a whopping 41% between 2006 and 2016. Which other great jobs will see big opportunities? [More](#)



10 least stressful

Feeling overworked and overwhelmed? Maybe it's time for a career change. [More](#)

- Most secure jobs
- Most flexible jobs
- Most satisfying jobs
- Most meaningful jobs

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What do you think is the most important quality in a job?

- Satisfying work
- Good pay and benefits
- Flexible hours
- Growth opportunities

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America's best job

Systems engineers manage large projects and are in big demand, according to Money's 2009 list. Some, like Anne O'Neil, make the trains run. [Watch](#)

Top 3

HIGH PAY	JOB GROWTH	LEAST STRESSFUL
Job title		Best Jobs rank
Anesthesiologist		11
Physician/Ob-Gyn		22
Psychiatrist		24

[See the rest](#)

How we picked the Best Jobs

MONEY and compensation experts [PayScale.com](#) started with more than 7,000 jobs that the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects will grow 10% or more over the next decade and that require at least a bachelor's degree. [More](#)

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1. Systems Engineer

1 of 50 Next

Top 50 rank: 1

Sector: Information Technology

What they do: They're the "big think" managers on large, complex projects, from major transportation networks to military defense programs. They figure out the technical specifications required and coordinate the efforts of lower-level engineers working on specific aspects of the project.

Why it's great: Demand is soaring for systems engineers, as what was once a niche job in the aerospace and defense industries becomes commonplace among a diverse and expanding universe of employers, from medical device makers to corporations like Xerox and BMW.

Pay can easily hit six figures for top performers, and there's ample opportunity for advancement. But many systems engineers say they most enjoy the creative aspects of the job and seeing projects come to life. "The transit system I work on really makes a tangible difference to people," says Anne O'Neil, chief systems engineer for the New York City Transit Authority.

Drawbacks: Long hours are common; project deadlines can be fierce.

Pre-reqs: An undergrad engineering degree; some jobs might also require certification as a certified systems engineering professional (CSEP).



Anne O'Neil, a chief systems engineer at the N.Y.C. Transit Authority, is one of five female senior managers in a department of 1,500.

Do Systems Engineers have great jobs, or what?

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Systems Engineer stats

Pay	
Median salary (experienced)	\$87,100
Top pay	\$130,000
Opportunity	
10-year job growth (2006-2016)	45%



Most job growth

Demand for personal financial advisors should grow a whopping 41% between 2006 and 2016.

[See them all](#)

Systems Engineer job openings

[Systems Engineer - Anti-Tamper T5](#)
Baltimore, MD - Northrop Grumman

[Systems Engineer 4/5](#)
Annapolis Junction, MD - Boeing

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