

BEST JOBS IN AMERICA Money/Payscale.com's list of great careers

2009

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

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).



PHOTO: BRAD DECECCO
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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Phil Dikeman 10:04 am
do any of you realize how many "former" engineers and project managers are now working at Home Depot and Lowes?



Jeff Talaske 9:49 am
This is a great Job!



Jeremy Mitchell 9:30 am
I agree with Mr. Bidwell. RLTW

Cicely Daye 9:27 am

Systems Engineer job openings

jobs by **simplyhired**

- Systems Engineer**
Fort George G Meade, MD - National Security Agency (NSA)
- Senior Systems Engineer***
Atlanta, GA - Unisys
- Systems Engineer**
Foster City, CA - Visa
- Systems Engineer**
Santa Ana, CA - First American

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Top 3

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



Wow, didnt expect this. I knwo this field was growing but in 1.5 years I will be finishing up my masters in systems engineering. It is such and exciting field and with hard work and technical experience you cant lose!!

Displaying 4 of 45 posts.

[1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [Next](#) [Last](#)

Systems Engineer stats

Pay

Median salary (experienced)	\$87,100
Top pay	\$130,000

Opportunity

10-year job growth (2006-2016)	45%
Total jobs (current)	88,000
Online want ad growth (April 2009-August 2009)	22%

Quality of life ratings

Personal satisfaction	A
Job security	B
Future growth	B
Benefit to society	C
Low stress	C

From the November 2009 issue

Notes: All pay data from [PayScale.com](#). Median pay is for an experienced worker (at least two to seven years in the field). Top pay represents the 90th percentile. Job growth is estimated for 2006-16. Total current employment level is estimated number of people working in each specific job.

Sources: [PayScale.com](#), Bureau of Labor Statistics, Conference Board Help Wanted Online Data Series, and MONEY research

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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.
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