

Getting in to a Career in BPO



Getting in and staying ahead
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What is BPO?

Outsourcing is the delegation of work from an organization/company to a service provider company, where the service provider company typically carries out the same work cheaper and more effectively than the company which is outsourcing. Companies outsource work primarily to gain cost advantages, efficiencies and expertise.

Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) is the act of transferring some of an organization's repeated business processes to an outside service provider to achieve cost reductions while improving service quality. The outsourced business process can be a core or a non core function to the company.

With the advancement of information communication technology, outsourcing has become a global mega trend. The BPO industry potential is estimated to be a staggering 150 billion US dollars, which only a fraction of this is actually being outsourced. Countries like India and Philippines have created millions of jobs in BPO sector.

Typical areas of work in a BPO

While almost anything can be outsourced, several key industries are leading the outsourcing wave, and in response to this, BPO companies have begun to specialize in these areas.

Following are some of the key areas:

Medical Transcriptions, Financial Analysis, Finance & Accounting, Investment Research, Customer Service, Travel, Insurance, Banking, Logistics, Manufacturing, Retail, Healthcare, Legal, Engineering

As you can see from the above list, there is a wide spectrum of work areas that a BPO company could be engaged in. Typically, a BPO company will focus on few business process areas to build competencies. Depending on the focus area of the company, the work in a BPO can vary from providing customer support (e.g. answering customer calls), processing transactions (e.g. processing insurance claims), to high end research (e.g. investment research).

What are the skills required for getting in to a BPO?

Skills required to get in to a BPO can vary from just having good communication and analytics skills, OL/ALs to MBA's & PhDs. The skills requirement varies significantly from company to company based on what business process they provide for the clients. It is almost better to find out a company that matches your skills than getting trained in to get in to a BPO. The good news is that, many BPO companies have broken down the business processes in a way that even people with little or no skills can get quickly trained to work in these companies.

Generally, it helps to have some level of computer skills (the ability to operate a computer), communication skills, especially in English and skills to work in a team environment. As such, with basic level of skills many people can get a good job in a BPO company.

The Higher end BPOs, also called KPOs (Knowledge Process Outsourcing) generally requires a specialized skills. For example, accounting and finance, investment research and engineering related

BPOs typically require high-end skills such as a degree in specific area or a trade certification. These BPOs attract people who are typically already working in a related field in other companies or people who study for specialized degrees.

Many companies also make a significant investment in training employees on an off the job to help people get in to their companies and to advance in their careers.

How to get a job in BPO Company in Sri Lanka?

BPO is a fast growing vibrant sector of employment in Sri Lanka. Many global and local BPO companies have operations in Sri Lanka. WNS, TimeX BPO, Office Tiger, HSBC Data Processing Limited, Amba Research, Aviva are few of the leading companies.

All most, all the BPO companies hire people though out the year and the best way is to approach the company direct. Most of the companies have information and instructions on how to apply on their web sites (www.ITpro.lk Company Directory will soon carry a list of companies to help you directly apply for a job).

Increasingly, BPO companies are also focusing on career fairs and special hiring events to recruit people. (See www.ITpro.lk Events section for such events). Some companies will do walk-in-interviews at these events and it pays for you to come prepared with a CV. You may even walk out with a job!

For information on BPO careers and for specific advice from others about your career concerns, visit www.ITpro.lk.

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