

Just the Job

Information Sheet

Job title/s: APPRENTICE/CADET IN THE FIRE PROTECTION INDUSTRY

Job description:

The fire protection industry offers a number of exciting career choices.

You could be fitting sprinkler systems, installing alarm systems or being part of an inspection body. You could be in an office type role working towards being a project manager for major installations or involved in fire evacuation schemes.

The installation, commissioning, testing and inspection type work is basically hands-on and working on installations on different sites for the majority of the roles. The other roles are more office based.

For those who want to get more technically involved and interact with architects and building design, the practical hands-on roles are a good foundation for the route to becoming a system designer.

Qualifications required:

At school you will usually need to attain at least an award of 'achieved' at NCEA level 2 or 3. Level 3 is what you should aim for because, in most cases, apprentices will be expected to obtain NZQA level 3 and 4 qualifications in fire protection related subjects.

Any bench work will also be a good choice for fitters and installers whilst PC literacy is very useful for the office type roles.

The apprenticeship/cadet vacancies in the industry are aimed at year 13 students who are about to leave school but we also welcome applications from older applicants who have decided to make a late choice of career or simply want to switch to the fire protection industry.

Training costs:

Any academic training costs would need to be talked about during the interview and negotiated at the time of the offer. Most of the work is on the job and there would generally be no costs involved for this part of the apprenticeship/cadetship.

Location of job:

New Zealand wide depending on the location of the company. Most commercial buildings are located in the major towns and cities and that is where most of the work will be.

Career path:

The career path is progression within the chosen discipline from apprentice and intermediate levels up to supervisor or manager depending on how far you want to go. You can develop business skills in parallel and go on to own your own business if you have the drive and ambition.

Salary range:

Entry level is in accordance with current legislation for young people in New Zealand.

Six figure salaries are common in this industry for those who have developed successfully and put in the effort. For the business owners the wealth is self generated and there are some very wealthy owners out there.

Other careers this profession could lead to:

There are many opportunities within the fire protection industry and most people choose to stay within the industry.

There is the opportunity to own your own business and become wealthy and successful.

Tips on how to increase the chances of successfully entering this industry:

Make sure that you have a good understanding of the core subjects of English and Maths and get an 'achieved' NCEA at level 3. For fitters and installers it would help to have some practical skills like bench work.

Find out what you can about the industry from the websites of the bigger companies by searching 'fire protection' on an engine like Google.

Before attending an interview have a look at the Fire Protection Association New Zealand website. It will link you through to the major players in the industry and you can learn something about the fire protection industry that you can use at your interview. Interviewers are always more impressed with people that take the trouble to learn a bit about the subject matter. Be open-minded about using and learning hands-on skills and know what your goal is before the interview. Be realistic about what you can achieve and what you want out of a job.

Places/websites to source information about this job:

www.fireprotectionassociation.org.nz

www.fireprotectionapprentice.org.nz

Other relevant points:

A lot of young people care about their community and environment and don't get a work opportunity to use or show their care. Fire Protection is about saving lives, the environment and property. You can really make a difference to your own community and other communities by helping to keep New Zealand safe from the effects of fire and reducing the impact of it.

You can keep up with technology in an industry that is driven by legislation and a voluntary code that ensures a safer environment in which we live and work.

The industry needs young people to learn and grow and ensure that it remains sustainable. The practical hands-on people and the system designer are amongst those that will do particularly well in this industry.