

GETTING PLACES WORKING

# Economic development officer

Almost every city council in the UK has an economic development department, kick-starting and supporting regeneration. They exist to create new jobs, pinpoint new markets and opportunities for growth and attract new employers. Business development officers are fixers who put all types of employers and employees together for the benefit of both. The focus is often on training the local workforce to improve their prospects. Then you'll have to convince employers, public sector and voluntary organisations to get involved and provide on-going support. If you have a good business head and the power of persuasion, economic development could be for you.

## Degree needed

Entry is via a degree in a related subject. Economics, town planning, business studies, geography and estate management are all useful for a career in economic development.

The Institution of Economic Development (IED) has established an MSc in local and regional economic development. Designed to meet the needs of working practitioners, it is provided entirely through distance learning.

Employers usually provide additional training or work-shadowing options.

## Good courses

IED accredited master's degree:

- MSc Local and Regional Economic Development (Coventry University)
- MSc/Diploma/Certificate in Local and Regional Economic Development (University of Dundee)
- MSc/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate Local and Regional Economic Development (Sheffield Hallam University)



xxxx at work

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## Did you know?

Economic development takes into account a wide range of improvements to peoples' lives, including non-economic issues such as the amount of leisure time people have, access to education and health and concepts such as social justice.

## Facts and figures

### Starting salary

Between £18,000 and £21,000.

### Working hours

Generally 9am to 5pm.

### Days' holiday per year

On average 25 days per year.

### Skills and experience

Economic development officers must be numerate and have excellent verbal and written communication skills to enable them to influence and persuade a range of different groups, from councillors and employers to the unemployed.

### Likely employer types

- Local authorities
- Regional development agencies and sub-regional partnerships
- Enterprise initiatives such as Business Link
- Voluntary sector regeneration organisations

### How many jobs available?

Most local authorities have a dedicated economic development officer and many have whole departments dealing with economic development.

### Number of people employed in this field

No definitive figure is available. The IED has 1,000 members. It is likely that many more have a career in economic development.

## More information

- The Institution of Economic Development is a membership organisation for economic development practitioners and encourages best practice [www.ied.co.uk](http://www.ied.co.uk)
- Visit [www.lgcareers.com](http://www.lgcareers.com) for details about local government careers and open days
- For further detailed information about the role, see [www.connexionsdirect.com](http://www.connexionsdirect.com)
- For information about related career paths in town planning, visit the Royal Town Planning Institute [www.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.rtpi.org.uk)



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"My motto is: 'be the change you wish to see in the world'. Working in regeneration is just that - generating something new and better from what was there before."

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