
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN TRADE POLICY/PROMOTION

Description of the Field

Trade policy is becoming an important issue to more businesses in the United States as the barriers to trade and capital movement decline and foreign markets become increasingly interconnected with US markets. With the growth of regional trade blocks and increased membership in international trade organizations such as the World Trade Organization, the impact of US and foreign trade policy on the success of businesses in the United States will continue to increase. Trade policy directly affects virtually all industries.

Trade policy and promotion include a variety of activities such as analyzing markets, increasing attendance at trade events, identifying agents and distributors, and disseminating information on export financing. Additional activities include representing business interests with officials of foreign governments, national government agencies, international organizations, and trade missions; identifying joint venture partners; researching development projects; and understanding foreign standards, testing, and certification requirements.

Career Paths and Entry Salaries

Entry level titles include project coordinator, research assistant, government relations assistant, economic analyst, public relations specialist, and trade policy associate. A student with a graduate degree can expect a salary range between low to high 40's. However, professionals in the field emphasize that experience is key to both monetary and professional advancement.

Communication between business and government is critical given that US government policies directly affect a company's international business. Government policies and legislation can affect international tariffs, non-tariff trade barriers, export financing, export license and control requirements, counter-trade, and technology transfer. Therefore, people who have held positions in the public sector have experience critical to a firm's international activities. Export promotion at the Department of Commerce, export licensing at the State Department, and trade finance at the Department of Treasury are but a few examples of public sector work that would be considered desirable. The legislative branch also provides a setting for graduates seeking to develop knowledge valuable to global corporations. An individual who understands how government works and how to influence policy to the business sector's advantage is a particularly attractive candidate.

In the private sector, graduates will spend a considerable amount of time monitoring government activities to identify policies that could affect their organization and try to influence those policies. Again, a solid understanding of government procedures and intimate knowledge of key issues surrounding your business or industry is essential, as is the ability to research and analyze markets trends and political developments, both nationally and internationally. Inside knowledge of the federal government would be a great asset to any business seeking to influence trade policy.

Recommended Qualifications to Enter the Field

- ✓ Superior oral and written communication skills, especially in persuasion
- ✓ Ability to speak and present publicly
- ✓ Knowledge of the government process
- ✓ Intimate knowledge of current trade policy and regulations
- ✓ Functional expertise in areas such as international finance, political risk management, economics, strategic planning, or marketing
- ✓ Foreign area expertise
- ✓ Demonstrated foreign language proficiency
- ✓ Flexibility and ability to learn new concepts quickly
- ✓ Excellent quantitative and qualitative skills
- ✓ Strong economics background

- ✓ Demonstrated research and analysis in the field

Sample Group of Employers and Resources for Additional Information

Associations

- Center for Trade Policy Studies - www.freetrade.org
- Eldis Trade Policy Resource Guide - www.eldis.org/trade/index.htm
- Federation of International Trade Associations - www.fita.org/index.html
- Global Public Policy Institute - www.globalpublicpolicy.net
- Global Trade Network. World Trade Point Federation - www.wtpfed.org
- Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy - www.iatp.org
- International Gender and Trade Network - www.igtn.org
- National Foreign Trade Council - www.nftc.org
- Trade Analysis and Information System - <http://r0.unctad.org/trains>
- UN Economics and Trade United - www.unep.ch/etu
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce - www.uschamber.com
- U.S. Council for International Business - www.uscib.org
- U.S. Small Business Association - www.sba.gov

Career Resources

- Elliott School eRecruiting - gwuelliott.erecruiting.com

Federal Government

- Export-Import Bank of the United States - www.sba.gov
- Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA - www.fas.usda.gov
- Office of the US Trade Representative - www.ustr.gov/index.html
- Overseas Private Investment Corporation - www.opic.gov
- Trade Information Center - www.trade.gov/td/tic
- U.S. Commercial Service - www.ita.doc.gov/cs/index.asp
- U.S. Department of Commerce - www.doc.gov
- U.S. Department of State Trade Policy and Programs - www.state.gov/e/eb/tpp
- U.S. Department of the Treasury - www.treasury.gov
- U.S. International Trade Commission - www.usitc.gov
- U.S. Trade and Development Agency - www.tda.gov

Private Sector

- AT&T - www.att.com
- Eastman Kodak - www.kodak.com
- ExxonMobil - www.exxonmobil.com
- IBM - www.ibm.com
- Johnson & Johnson - www.jnj.com/home.htm
- Motorola - www.motorola.com
- Northrop Grumman Corporation - www.northropgrumman.com
- Philip Morris Companies, Inc. - www.philipmorris.com
- Pepsi-Cola International - www.pepsico.com
- Procter & Gamble - www.pg.com

Professional Organizations

- Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers - www.autoalliance.org
- International Trade Association/International Real Estate Institute - www.iami.org/irei.cfm
- International Chamber of Commerce - www.iccwbo.org
- National Federation of Independent Business - www.nfibonline.com
- United States Chamber of Commerce - www.uschamber.org
- Washington International Trade Association - www.wita.org