

### Employment

Stock clerks and order fillers held about 1.7 million jobs in 2000; they were, by far, the largest material recording, scheduling, dispatching, and distributing occupation. About 76 percent work in wholesale and retail trade. The greatest numbers are found in grocery stores, followed by department stores. Jobs for stock clerks are found in all parts of the country, but most work in large urban areas that have many large suburban shopping centers, warehouses, and factories.

### Job Outlook

Employment of stock clerks and order fillers is projected to grow more slowly than the average for all occupations through 2010, due to the use of automation in factories and stores. Because this occupation is very large and many jobs are entry level, however, numerous job openings will occur each year to replace those who transfer to other jobs or leave the labor force.

The growing use of computers for inventory control and the installation of new, automated equipment are expected to slow growth in demand for stock clerks and order fillers. This is especially true in manufacturing and wholesale trade industries whose operations are most easily automated. In addition to computerized inventory control systems, firms in these industries rely more on sophisticated conveyor belts and automatic high stackers to store and retrieve goods. Also, expanded use of battery-powered, driverless, automatically guided vehicles can be expected.

Employment of stock clerks and order fillers who work in grocery, general merchandise, department, apparel, and accessories stores is expected to be somewhat less affected by automation because much of their work is done manually and is difficult to automate. In addition, the increasing role of large retail outlets and warehouses, as well as catalogue, mail, telephone, and Internet shopping services, should bolster employment of stock clerks and order fillers in these sectors of retail trade.

### Related Occupations

Workers who also handle, move, organize, store, and keep records of materials include shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks; production, planning, and expediting clerks; cargo and freight agents; and procurement clerks.

### Sources of Additional Information

State employment service offices can provide information about job openings for stock clerks and order fillers. Also, see office and administrative support occupations and sales occupations elsewhere in the *Handbook* for sources of additional information.

General information about stock clerks and order fillers in retail trade can be obtained from:

► National Retail Federation, 325 Seventh St. NW., Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20004. Internet: <http://www.nrf.com/nri/>

(See introduction to the section on material recording, scheduling, dispatching, and distributing occupations for information on working conditions, training requirements, and earnings.)

## Weighers, Measurers, Checkers, and Samplers, Recordkeeping

(O\*NET 43-5111.00)

### Nature of the Work

Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers weigh, measure, and check materials, supplies, and equipment in order to keep relevant records. Most of their duties are clerical. They verify quantity,



*Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers verify the quantity and quality of items purchased or sold against records.*

quality, and overall value and condition of items purchased, sold, or produced against records, bills, invoices, or receipts. Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers check and document items using either manual or automated data processing systems. They check the items to ensure accuracy of the recorded data. They prepare reports on warehouse inventory levels and use of parts. Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers also check for any defects in the items and record the severity of the defects.

These workers use weight scales, counting devices, tally sheets, and calculators to properly record information about the products. They usually move objects to and from the scales using a handtruck or forklift. They issue receipts for the products when needed or requested.

### Employment

Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers held about 83,000 jobs in 2000. Their employment is spread across most industries. Department stores and air carriers accounted for about 16 percent of these jobs. Wholesale trade and services comprised 28 percent of employment.

### Job Outlook

Employment of weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through 2010. The emphasis on accurate and nondefective materials, as well as the use of records for verifying information, is an increasingly important responsibility for companies that will increase the need for weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers. Furthermore, automation should not have a significant effect on employment in this occupation because most of its duties need to be done manually. In addition to those resulting from job growth, openings should arise from the need to replace workers who leave the labor force or transfer to other occupations.

### Related Occupations

Other workers who determine and document characteristics of materials or equipment include cargo and freight agents; production, planning, and expediting clerks; shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks; stock clerks and order fillers; and procurement clerks.

### Sources of Additional Information

Information about job opportunities may be obtained from local employers and local offices of the State employment service.

(See introduction to the section on material recording, scheduling, dispatching, and distributing occupations for information on working conditions, training requirements, and earnings.)

## Office and Administrative Support Worker Supervisors and Managers

(O\*NET 43-1011.01, 43-1011.02)

### Significant Points

- Most jobs are filled by promoting individuals from within the organization, very often from the ranks of clerks whom they will subsequently supervise.
- Office automation will cause employment in some office and administrative support occupations to slow or even decline, but supervisors are more likely to retain their jobs because of their relatively higher skills and longer tenure.
- Applicants for office and administrative support supervisor or manager jobs are likely to encounter keen competition because their number should greatly exceed the number of job openings.

### Nature of the Work

All organizations need timely and effective office and administrative support to operate efficiently. *Office and administrative support supervisors and managers* coordinate this support. These workers are employed in virtually every sector of the economy, working in positions as varied as *customer services manager, teller supervisor, and shipping-and-receiving supervisor*.

Although specific functions of office and administrative support supervisors and managers vary considerably, they share many common duties. For example, supervisors perform administrative tasks to ensure that their staffs can work efficiently. Equipment and machinery used in their departments must be in good working order. If the computer system goes down or a facsimile machine malfunctions, they must try to correct the problem or alert repair personnel. They also request new equipment or supplies for their department when necessary.

Planning the work of their staff and supervising them are key functions of this job. To do these effectively, the supervisor must know the strengths and weaknesses of each member of the staff, as well as the required level of quality and time allotted to each job. They must make allowances for unexpected absences and other disruptions by adjusting assignments or performing the work themselves if the situation requires it.

After allocating work assignments and issuing deadlines, office and administrative support supervisors and managers oversee the work to ensure that it is proceeding on schedule and meets established quality standards. This may involve reviewing each person's work on a computer—as in the case of accounting clerks—or listening to how they deal with customers—as in the case of customer services representatives. When supervising long-term projects, the supervisor may meet regularly with staff members to discuss their progress.

Office and administrative support supervisors and managers also evaluate each worker's performance. If a worker has done a good job, the supervisor records it in the employee's personnel file and may recommend a promotion or other award. Alternatively, if a worker is performing poorly, the supervisor discusses the problem

with the employee to determine the cause and helps the worker improve his or her performance. This might require sending the employee to a training course or arranging personal counseling. If the situation does not improve, the supervisor may recommend a transfer, demotion, or dismissal.

Office and administrative support supervisors and managers usually interview and evaluate prospective clerical employees. When new workers arrive on the job, supervisors greet them and provide orientation to acquaint them with the organization and its operating routines. Some supervisors may be actively involved in recruiting new workers, for example, by making presentations at high schools and business colleges. They may also serve as the primary liaisons between their offices and the general public through direct contact and by preparing promotional information.

Supervisors also help train new employees in organization and office procedures. They may teach new employees how to use the telephone system and operate office equipment. Because much clerical work is computerized, they must also teach new employees to use the organization's computer system. When new office equipment or updated computer software is introduced, supervisors retrain experienced employees in using it efficiently. If this is not possible, they may arrange for special outside training for their employees.

Office and administrative support supervisors and managers often act as liaisons between the clerical staff and the professional, technical, and managerial staff. This may involve implementing new



*Planning work and supervising staff are key functions of office and administrative support worker supervisors and managers.*