

Expeditor/Purchasing Agent

Nature of Work

An expeditor or purchasing agent is the person in charge of scheduling purchases, purchasing, and scheduling the delivery of materials and services for construction jobs. An expeditor then checks orders and speeds the arrival of building materials or equipment to meet a progress schedule. Expeditors also make sure there are enough people scheduled to work each day to get the work done. An expeditor usually works in the office, scheduling material and equipment deliveries, and in the field, scheduling the work. The position requires dealing with many different types of people.

Education and Training

An expeditor needs a background in construction so that he or she is familiar with all types of building materials and prices. Expeditors also need to have knowledge of and be familiar with various work categories and scheduling. Good skills in math and English are very important, and the ability to deal and get along with others can be essential. A high school diploma is usually required.

Advancement Potential

The rapport an expeditor or purchasing agent must establish with the other key individuals of the construction processes provides a broad business understanding which is valuable in all managerial positions. For many construction firms expeditor is an entry-level position open to graduates of academic engineering or construction programs. Competence and efficiency as an expeditor can lead to a superintendent's position, management of a particular project, or even a job as project manager for all of a construction firm's work. Owners of some construction firms began their careers as expeditors.