

Accountant (GS-11)

Major Duties

A Forest Service Accountant (GS-11) is responsible for performing professional accounting work and is considered the expert in the field of accounting. A person at this level will supervise other employees (monitor employee performance, conduct performance appraisals, develop budgets, coordinate staff efforts, etc.). Other skills or duties that are important in this career include;

- Supervising all activities necessary to maintain the accounting system.
- Monitoring and reviewing expenditures and collections.
- Conducting reviews of finances.
- Preparing financial reports about expenditures and receipts.
- Determining the financial ability of companies wishing to do business with the Forest Service.
- Preparing reports on cost effectiveness and financial operations.
- Conducting examinations of financial records or accounts (called an audit).
- Evaluating internal controls and detecting fraud.

A Typical Day

Jody graduated from a local college with a degree in accounting. She started out with the Forest Service as an accountant Trainee (GS-5). After three years in that job, Jody moved up to her present job as an accountant (GS-11). From the time she was five years old she likes to work with people and numbers – especially when money was involved. That’s good, since Jody is handicapped and can’t walk. She always said that fighting fires was not her idea of a good time anyway, and that she would “rather put out financial fires than forest fires.”

Jody is a “team player”; people look to her for leadership in financial management. Every workday is a little different. This morning, she has a meeting with the management team to discuss the analysis of the accounting records. The management team is anxious to see how their unit costs compare with the previous year as this is one basis to measure performance. It takes Jody and her staff about one month to complete this detailed analysis. She has prepared a written report which includes graphs and charts that she created on the computer to enhance her presentation.

In the afternoon, she will work with a different group to find a solution to another important financial issue. Jody enjoys being busy as this is her way to contribute to the organization, but she is never too busy to ensure that her staff have what they need to do their job. Jody demonstrates her commitment to the Mission of the Forest Service; **Caring for the Land and Serving People.**

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Knowledge and Education

A college degree is required to be a Forest Service Accountant (GS-11). Types of courses that accounting students take include;

Accounting	Computer Science
Business Law	Finance
Economics	Management
Business Administration	Writing
Math courses	Public Speaking

Career Path

To become an Accountant (GS-11), you would begin as an Accountant Trainee (GS-5/7/9). The Accountant Trainee position is designed to orient the employee to the wide-range of accounting related work associated with carrying out the mission of the Forest Service. Assignments are given in incremental degrees of difficulty so the trainee is able to perform independently as well as trained, qualified Accountant (GS-11).

There are also many opportunities with the Forest Service as an accountant Technician (GS-7) is the primary assistant to the accountant (GS-11). They provide technical assistance to Forest Service units about accounting procedures and techniques in accounts payable, voucher preparation, preparation of financial reports, etc. The Accounting Technician (GS-7) is an essential position for achieving excellence in financial management.