

COMPANY SECRETARY



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THE company secretary forms an important link between the board of directors and various other departments in the company and he also ensures good relations with the shareholders and the public. He does this by the maintenance of management information systems inside the company.

A company has to fulfil certain responsibilities which are required by law. This includes the safekeeping of all financial records for a number of years, the management of most financial affairs and the storage of all important statements, as required by Company Law and the Registrar of Companies.

The company secretary is responsible for the creation and maintenance of information systems to be used in decision-making.

Most company secretaries are also responsible for the maintenance of the register of board members and other statutory books, payment of dividends, statutory returns, capital issues, control of the office and the general administration of the Companies Act.

The nature of the company secretary's work and his responsibilities vary from company to company due to the difference in size, field of activity, company tradition and nature of each company.

The company secretary has to attend board meetings at which policy is determined. At these meetings he acts in close co-operation with the chairman of the meeting. He has to make important contributions to the discussions and he has to remind directors of the legal, financial and tax implications of their proposals. In his preparation for meetings, he may have to assemble and collate information and present this information in a logical form to enable the board of directors to make decisions. After the meetings the company secretary has to draft accurate minutes of the meeting and ensure that the board's policies and decisions are implemented.

In many companies the company secretary also has the responsibilities for accounting, staff control and public relations and handles the company's contracts, agreements and insurances.

RECOMMENDED SCHOOL SUBJECTS

Accounting, Economics and Business Economics.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The minimum requirement for University studies is a Senior Certificate with matric exemption. For the University of Technology a Senior Certificate or equivalent qualification is required.

TRAINING

UNIVERSITY

For basic training as a company secretary, a person can study a BA or a BCom degree in Law, Economy, Accountancy or any business course. A BAdmin degree can also be considered.

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

At a university of technology a NDip in Administrative Management, Business Administration, Accountancy, Cost and Management Accountancy, Management or any other business related course can be considered, followed by the BTech degree.

The SA Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators offers training specifically for company secretaries.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The company secretary can work at any large private organisation, non-profit organisations or professional associations.