

Frequently (and not so frequently) asked questions about working at ALL4



What does an environmental consultant do?

Environmental consultants either work for or are hired by commercial or governmental organizations to assist in a number of areas where environmental concerns and governmental legislation have to be adhered to. Typically this includes any planning stages of a land development, or as part of an audit process, where a number of environmental assessments such as air quality impacts, land and environmental management, waste management and measuring contamination of land and water have to be made.

The actual tasks performed on the job include a mixture of scientific data collection, auditing and analysis, reporting results and findings, presenting results to regulatory agencies and the general public, and negotiating on behalf of clients with regulatory agencies.

Environmental consultants also may organize or take part in field surveys at the beginning of a consultation period, and can be required to continually keep up to date with environmental law and regulations and scientific findings and data. Consultants typically make money by billing their hours to the client, very similar to the business model of a law firm; however their billing rates are typically not as high as a lawyer.

What makes air quality consulting any different or unique?

The air quality rules and regulations are typically more complex than those for other media and the process it takes to obtain a permit for new sources of emissions or for changes at existing sources of emissions is much more lengthy and detailed. An air quality permit application may be several hundred pages long and may include analysis of the need for air pollution control equipment, the expected emissions impacts, ambient air dispersion impacts, a review of the applicable regulations and specific requirements set forth by the regulations, and proposed methods for demonstrating compliance.

A variety of air regulations also may apply to just a single source of air emissions such as a refinery, chemical plant, power plant, just to name a few of the more common and large sources of air emissions. These regulations require the sources to address a wide variety of compliance related issues that affect their day to day operations. Some of the issues we help our clients with include reporting, monitoring emissions, recordkeeping systems, training, compliance assessment, etc.

This does not sound like something they taught me in college, how will I learn how to be a consultant?

At ALL4 we coach our entry level engineers and scientists both through on the job training, in-house training, and through external courses. We have a mentor program to teach the culture of the

Frequently (and not so frequently) asked questions about working at ALL4

company and to acclimate you to the business world and the company in particular. We have a 12 session Air Quality 101 training program to teach you the key areas that you will need to be proficient to excel in our company. This course includes a role playing session using a model project where you will “present” the project to a “client” and then represent the client in front of a “regulatory agency”. Air Quality 201 is a follow-up to Air Quality 101 which is geared to provide training on more complex air quality compliance and permitting issues. We provide a Consulting 101 session to teach you about the consulting business and present our business model. We also provide various other training sessions to the company as a whole including Project Management, Public Speaking, and Technical Writing which are all important skill areas in our business.

ALL4 sounds like a relatively small company, how stable is your business and what are the future plans for the company?

We have been in business since 2002. We have grown from a staff of 5 to 27 since then and grown our revenue base from \$800,000 to just short of \$4,000,000. We are into the final year of a plan we put in place to grow the company to 50 people and \$5,000,000 in revenue by the end of 2009. We are in the process of finalizing an ambitious growth plan for the next five years.

I don't want to work in a cube, what is the working environment like at ALL4?

Our office in Kimberton is a restored barn. We are a service based business and we do most of our work on a computer at a desk. We are set up with cubicles, although 95% of our work spaces have a window view. Our typical tech staff employees are probably in the office 75% of the time or more depending on client needs.

I am an engineer, how does my degree match up to the type of work you do?

While the exact knowledge we “sell” to our clients is not taught in any university; we are looking for engineers and scientists that have been taught a process for problem solving that is applicable to our work. We like to hire mechanical and chemical engineers as they will have a basic understanding of the types of manufacturing processes that we deal with. The calculations and analysis that we do for clients is not “high level” science or engineering. We look for a well rounded person with strong organizational, communication and technical writing skills.

Frequently (and not so frequently) asked questions about working at ALL4

What type of salary do you pay entry level hires?

Our entry level salaries, depending on degree, range from \$40,000 to \$50,000 per year. In our business we are selling knowledge, and our knowledge is very specialized. Typically entry level engineers and scientist will see larger salary increases once they demonstrate that they have “saleable” knowledge of our business that our clients will be willing to pay for. This typically occurs within 3 years out of school. Long-term consulting can be a more financially rewarding profession than say a manufacturing position or a position with a very large organization in that your salary can be tied to what a client is willing to pay for your services.

Will you pay for additional education?

Yes, however the education has to be related to a skill set that can benefit ALL4.

Who would I work for?

Several different people. We utilize a matrix-type organizational structure which means that you may be “working for” someone different frequently depending on project work. Project managers control all the project work so you will be executing projects for one (1) or several project managers at any one time. We also have a technical staff coordinator that is the direct report for all entry level engineers and scientists. The technical staff coordinator is responsible for helping guide your initial career growth and to get you to the next level within the organization. The technical staff coordinator relies on feedback from your project manager(s) and peers to frame your personal guide for success.

What does success look like for someone 1-2 years out of college?

They will have completed their Air Quality 101 training and progressed to a Project Engineer or Scientist position. They will have worked on a variety of different projects such that they will have learned the basics of the business and will be at the point where they are “in demand” from the project managers because they have done so well on their initial work products that the project managers see a lot of value in having them on their upcoming projects. They will have had several different client visits and have had the opportunity to work directly with some of our key clients. They have seen at least one, if not two, salary increases and are known throughout the organization as someone that is dependable, produces quality work products, and will do whatever it takes to make sure our project managers are getting what they need accomplished on time.

Frequently (and not so frequently) asked questions about working at ALL4

Will you pay for me to get my PE? If I get my PE, is there any additional compensation?

Yes and yes. We offer an automatic salary increase when that occurs.

What is the makeup of your workforce? Average Age? Average Experience? Degree?

Average age: 35 years old; 10 of our employees are under 30 yrs old

Average experience: 10-12 years

By Degrees:

Mech Engineers: 4

Chemical Engineers: 5

“Other” Engineers: 4

Scientists: 8

Meteorologists: 4

What are the typical working hours?

Our core office hours are 8AM to 5PM. We have a very laid back work environment and culture; however, the consulting business is typically not a “punch the clock” type of job or work environment. We cannot always control when our clients will have emergencies or needs and our reputation has been built on our ability to be flexible and to respond right away. In order to do that we all operate with the understanding that our best laid plans can change at a moment’s notice. Thus, we have people that work from 6:30AM to 6PM; 8AM to 6PM; you name it. Generally there is someone in the office from 6AM till 8PM daily and most people work at least a 45-50 hour work week.

What type of traits/skills do I need to be successful?

- *Critical Thinking - Our clients pay us to solve their problems; usually when they come to us their issues require us to be able to creatively assess their problems and offer one or more solutions.*
- *Organization and Time Management - All of our consultants are working on multiple projects at the same time and each of these projects are “the most important” project to that*

Frequently (and not so frequently) asked questions about working at ALL4

particular client. The environment is deadline driven and can be fast-paced. Without real solid organization and time management skills, work quality will suffer.

- *Attention to Detail - Everything that comes out of our office is considered work product and can have consequences for our clients with respect to regulatory compliance. The ability to pay attention to and address detail in regulatory analysis, writing, and calculations is important to our success.*
- *Oral Communication - We communicate with and for our clients in many different settings on a routine basis. Consultants that can think on their feet and communicate their thoughts coherently are successful. Good phone skills, public speaking skills, and general presentation skills are necessary.*
- *Technical Writing - Most of our work product is a report, letter, application, or e-mail. The ability to write clearly and directly in a logical manner is extremely important. We understand that college does not prepare entry level engineers for our writing style so we are looking for people we believe have the ability and openness to be able to learn and adapt.*
- *Personality/Ability to Develop Relationships - Much of our success as a company hinges upon our relationships with our clients. The ability to maintain and create these relationships is the key to our client growth. Everyone makes mistakes from time to time. Those that can sustain good personal relationships can get past a hiccup or two; those that do not have good personal relationships often cannot overcome a bump in the road.*
- *Openness to Review/Critique - Internally, we review our documents and work products very carefully and critique is a common place for learning. Externally we get immediate feedback on our work products from clients. Those that have difficulty accepting constructive changes struggle; those open to accepting feedback learn and improve.*

What makes ALL4 unique?

- *Best in Class – We are continuously striving to meet the needs of our employees and their families. Several new additions include in-house massages, new Coffee/Tea/Hot Chocolate Maker, and Thirsty Thursdays Happy Hours.*
- *Routinely recognizing outstanding employee performance – We provide a monthly ALL4 Accolades award. We have recently been ranked by Inc. Magazine as one of the 5000 fastest growing companies and celebrated with a luncheon and an extra paid vacation day for our employees.*
- *Company Paid 100% Health Care & Dental Benefits – We provide employees with a company funded Health Savings Account (HSA) that rolls over in value from year to year (this means that if you do not go to a doctor all year you may have up to \$2000 in your HSA that can be used in the future for qualified medical expenses, such as laser eye surgery).*

Frequently (and not so frequently) asked questions about working at ALL4

- *On-site Fitness Center and shower.*
- *On-site Financial Advisement by our 401K Rep.*
- *Embrace Family Values – We are flexible when needed for family needs and unexpected events. We incorporate the family/spouse/significant other into events - we hold several planned social events and routine “semi-planned” happy hours.*
- *Constantly Educating and Challenging Our Employees – Some examples include, but are not limited to: New employee orientation, a marketing course, and ALL4 annual meetings.*

Can I make a difference at ALL4?

Absolutely, everyone makes a difference here the minute they walk in the door. We are big enough to be a solid, stable company with extraordinary benefits yet small enough that every employee’s contribution every day makes a difference to our clients and our future.

I love to travel to new places – are there any opportunities for me to travel at ALL4?

We don’t travel routinely as more companies we work with have utilized conference calling services and the internet to cut costs; however there are travel opportunities that arise, typically to client sites and in other cases to training and conferences. For those interested in traveling we try and make an effort to put them on projects that would require travel. Typically our clients are located in the Eastern half of the US and are manufacturing based, many in somewhat rural areas.

What type of work would I be doing if I became an intern at ALL4?

A mix of client project work and “busy” work such as putting together reports, making copies, handling office supplies, to conducting internal “projects” related to our admin group or marketing and sales support. Client related work entails developing spreadsheets of emissions calculations, making phone calls to regulatory agencies, internet searches, and quality assurance support of our tech staff. The level of client work that we can use an intern to help on is very unpredictable. Some summers we have had interns work directly on client projects for as much as 80% of their time. We have been successful in getting all of our interns out to client visits at least once during their tenure.

How many interns does ALL4 hire each year?

We have hired 1 per summer historically. We intend to hire at least two this year.