Planning Your Career Path in Psychology

The APA’s Resource for Individual Development Plans (IDP) is a free, online tool that helps you assess your professional interests, explore careers, match your skills and competencies to career options of interest to you, and create a plan to be on your way.

APA’s Center for Workforce Studies (CWS) collects, analyzes and disseminates data about the psychology workforce and education system. Use CWS’s data tools in the IDP process to learn more about jobs and occupations today.

STEP ONE
ASSESS YOUR VALUES, SKILLS AND INTERESTS

Use CWS’s Qualifications Data Tool

What Skills Do You Think You’ll Use?
- Leadership
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Analytics skills
- Computer skills
- Multilingual/specific languages
- Organizational skills
- Cultural Awareness
- Critical thinking/problem solving

THE SKILLS LISTED IN JOB ADS FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS

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STEP TWO
EXPLORE CAREERS
LEARN THE SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES NEEDED FOR THEM
Use CWS’s Careers in Psychology Data Tool

DOCTORATES/PROFESSIONAL DEGREES IN PSYCHOLOGY

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<th>Professional Services</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Management</th>
<th>Sales and Marketing</th>
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MASTER’S DEGREES IN PSYCHOLOGY

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STEP THREE
COMPARE AND CONTRAST YOUR CAREER GOALS WITH YOUR CURRENT SKILL SET AND TRAINING
Use CWS’s Qualifications Data Tool
Create a list of the skills, knowledge, abilities, experiences and competencies you need for the careers or jobs that interest you. Identify any that you are missing or need to develop further.

STEP FOUR
SET GOALS
MAKE CONCRETE PLANS TO IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS
Once you identify your ideal career path, focus on any skills you need to develop and create a strategy and time frame to accomplish your goals.

STEP FIVE
IMPLEMENT YOUR PLAN
USE MILESTONES TO MEASURE YOUR PROGRESS
Take advantage of opportunities to gain professional skills and competencies as part of your training, not just those outside of your current research/work responsibilities.

LEARN MORE
ON.APA.ORG/IDPLAN
ON.APA.ORG/CAREERSINPSYCH
ON.APA.ORG/SKILLSDATATOOL