Chart Your Course: Introduction to the Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Nadine Kabengi, Ph.D.
Associate Dean, The Graduate School
Associate Professor, Department of Geosciences

Dori Neptune, MA
Project Coordinator
The Graduate School
Agenda

01 What is an Individual Development Plan (IDP)
02 Benefits of developing an IDP
03 Tips for developing Your IDP
04 Getting Started: IDP Templates and Tools
05 Questions
• “An Individual Development Plan is a professional tool that OUTLINES OBJECTIVES that you and your mentor/supervisor have identified as important for your PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. A comprehensive review of your CAREER GOALS and objectives identified at the beginning of your appointment and during your semiannual appraisal provide constructive feedback from your mentor/supervisor that can help you become an independent investigator.” (Pfund et al. 2014)

— Entering Mentoring
• An IDP can help you communicate your professional development and career planning needs and intentions to others including your mentor, which can lead to helpful advice and resources.
Why developing an IDP?

Setting goals for professional development helps you communicate your professional development and career planning needs. It provides a framework for conversations with mentors. It helps you identify your strengths, talents and passions and planning ways to use them. It helps you communicate your professional development and career planning needs.
Use the following five questions to guide development of the IDP

1. What are your goals?
2. What competencies and skills will you need to successfully reach your goals?
3. What activities and experience will you engage in to gain the competencies and skills?
4. How will you assess your progress in mastering these competencies and skills?
5. Who will help you reach your goals and how?
#1: What are your goals?

**Ultimate goal**
- *I will be a professor of neuroscience at a research university.*

**Long-term (5–10 years)**
- *I will be a postdoctoral fellow studying the genetic basis of neurological disorders.*

**Intermediate-term (2–5 years)**
- *I will earn my PhD degree in neuroscience.*
- *I will contribute to the discovery of the genetic basis of Alzheimer’s disease.*

**Short-term (1–2 years)**
- *I will earn my MS degree in genetics.*
- *I will publish in a peer-reviewed journal.*

**Immediate (6 months–1 year)**
- *I will earn an A in biochemistry class.*
- *I will learn brain slice immunohistochemical staining techniques.*
- *I will apply for a summer research program.*
#2: Competencies and skills needed to reach goals?

**Research and Technical**
- Critical reading (scientific literature)
- Experimental design
- Experimental techniques
- Computer skills
- Documentation/laboratory notebook
- Problem solving and troubleshooting
- Data and statistical analysis
- Critical analysis
- Responsible conduct of research
- Identification of new research directions and next steps

**Professional and Interpersonal**
- Reliability and follow-through
- Communication (oral and written)
- Writing (manuscript, grant, fellowship)
- Teaching
- Mentoring
- Collaborating and working in teams
- Giving/receiving constructive feedback
- Collegiality
- Networking

**Management and Leadership**
- Time management (meeting deadlines)
- Prioritizing and organizing work
- Leading and motivating others
- Research project management
- Budget management
- Supervising/managing people
- Delegating responsibility
• Taking classes
• Tutoring, study groups
• Technique training
• Research experiences
• Conference attendance
• Professional development workshops
#4: How will you assess your progress?

- Mastery of coursework
- Mentor/instructor feedback
- Successful experimental outcomes
- Peer review
#5: Who will help you reach your goals and how?

- Instructors
- Mentors
- Peers
- Family members
- Departmental & University Resources
- External Resources
## Tips for Developing Your IDP: Questions 1 – 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Competencies &amp; Skills</th>
<th>Activities &amp; Experiences</th>
<th>Assessment of Progress</th>
<th>Support People and Their Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long-term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate-term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How often should I update my IDP?

- It is recommended that an IDP is updated every six to twelve months, although continual reflection is encouraged.

- An important part of IDP is reflection on real-life successes and failures, as well as receiving feedback from others involved in the developmental process. Your IDP should be a document that grows with you over time.

- Be sure to converse with your mentor, advisor, or supervisor about those changes.
Getting Started: IDP Templates and Tools

Tools for Graduate Students and Postdocs

myIDP - [http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/](http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/) planning tool for PhD students and postdoctoral scholars in the sciences.

ImaginePhD - [https://www.imaginephd.com/](https://www.imaginephd.com/) planning tool for PhD students and postdoctoral scholars in the humanities and social sciences.

ChemIDP - [https://chemidp.acs.org/](https://chemidp.acs.org/) planning tool for PhD students and postdoctoral scholars in chemistry.

Sample Template: [https://graduate.gsu.edu/document/idp-grad-template/]
Thank you for joining us! Please take a moment to provide feedback. Click the link or scan the QR code below.

Chart Your Course: Introduction to the Individual Development Plan (IDP)
https://gsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1yL7hj1hEIIMv5sO
Questions