

# ROADMAP TO AN IMPACTFUL IDP

Success in science often depends on a game plan, especially if you intend to stay in research. An Individual Development Plan (IDP) organizes your professional and personal goals and highlights the activities that you will undertake to meet those goals. IDPs can :

- Facilitate and support your current objectives
- Plan for both short- and long-term goals.
- Analyze your unique characteristics and credentials.
- Demonstrate how your experiences align with competencies.
- Focus on meeting specific goals within a defined timeframe.

An IDP is most effective when developed with the assistance of a mentor or advisor.

## Identify and Assess:

**Identify** - What kind of career do you see for yourself? What inspires you? What knowledge, skills, and competencies are necessary for success in this career?

**Assess** - How does your skill set match with the skills required for your ideal career? Do you have what it takes to be successful?

## Act:

Work towards your goals. For effective change, you need to:

- Clearly define your goals
- Be committed and motivated
- Share your IDP with others
- Analyze any lack of success
- Get support for behavior change
- Keep outcomes visible and measurable

Identify and Assess

Plan

Act

Evaluate

## Plan:

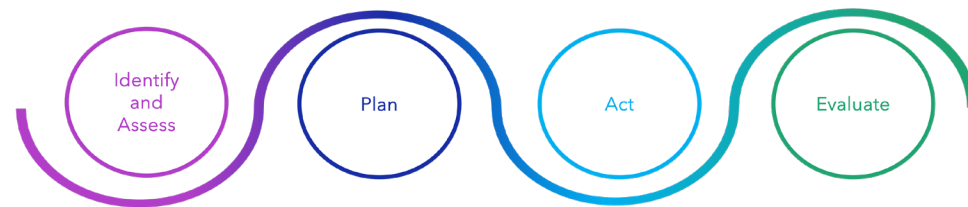
What are the goals that will prepare you for your desired career? How can you gain relevant experience?

## Evaluate:

Set regular deadlines to determine whether you are meeting your goals or whether adjustments need to be made

Start the IDP process early so that you stay on track.

# Roadmap to an Impactful IDP



## Steps in an IDP:

### Identify and Assess

**Identify** – What kind of career do you see for yourself? What inspires you? What knowledge, skills, and competencies are necessary for success in this career? An internet search can identify the skills required for a particular career. A quick perusal of job openings in the field or informational interviews with professionals in the career can provide an overview of what is needed. Select 2-3 options that are of interest to you.

**Assess** – How does your skill set match with the skills required for your ideal career? While skills can continue to be developed, determine whether you possess the skills to be successful at your current stage as well as the skills needed to move to the next level(s) and beyond. Review any feedback or performance appraisals that you have received to honestly assess your abilities and interests.

### Plan

With realistic career opportunities identified, it is time to set personal and professional goals. Create an IDP by following the step-by-step guidelines outlined in the resources section. What are the goals that will prepare you for your desired career? Once you have a draft of your IDP, schedule a meeting with your mentor or supervisor to get feedback on your plan.

### Act

Your IDP includes a timeline, so start working towards your goals! Gain relevant experiences that relate to your chosen career. Individual development includes changing behaviors as well as learning new ones. Effective change is more likely when:

- the desired competency is clearly defined. What do you want to be able to do?
- commitment and motivation lead to behavior change.
- your IDP is shared with your advisor or mentor.
- any lack of success is analyzed.
- others are engaged to support any behavior change.
- your behavioral outcomes are visible and measurable.



IDPs often need some adjustment after implementation. Goals in IDP's may be ignored because they are unrealistic or unmanageable. The IDP should be working for you, not you working for the IDP. Make modifications as needed so that you can be successful and make progress.

### Evaluate

Set regular meetings with your mentor to determine whether you are meeting your goals and or to make necessary adjustments. Meetings can be quarterly or once a semester depending on your schedule.

## IDP Tips

- **Focus your IDP** on how to meet specific goals within a defined timeframe.
- **Effective IDPs** are developed with the assistance of a mentor or advisor.
- **Start early** in your career so that you stay on track and adhere to a realistic timeline.

## Resources:

- [myIDP Science Careers](#):
- [You Need a Game Plan](#)
- [Career Resources for Postdocs](#) National Postdoctoral Association.
- [Guide to Using an Individual Development Plan \(My IDP & Me\)](#).
- [Your Guide to Individual Development Planning](#). UCSD
- [IDP for Graduate Students](#). BCM
- [IDP for Postdocs](#). BCM
- [GSBS INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN \(IDP\)](#) UTH/MDA
- [IDP for Postdocs](#). TAMU
- [IDP for Grad Students](#). TAMU