

Your Career: Psychology Can Take You Great Places

ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

Psychology touches every aspect of our lives.

Psychologists are scientists who use data collected both in the laboratory and in non-laboratory settings to find answers to complex individual and social issues. They study ways to help people overcome health and developmental challenges or circumstances, to understand how groups function, and to make technology and people work better together. They use their research to improve lives all around the world.

While they traditionally study and treat individuals with mental and emotional problems, psychologists also work with people to help them change behaviors that are having negative effects on their physical health. They work with business executives, performers and athletes to reduce stress and improve performance. They advise lawyers on jury selection and collaborate with educators on school reform. In the aftermath of a disaster such as a plane crash or bombing, psychologists help victims and bystanders recover from the trauma of the event. They team with law enforcement and public health officials, using a data-based approach to solve problems such as gun violence in communities.

Involved in all aspects of our fast-paced world, psychologists must keep up with what's happening. Psychologists never stop learning.

You don't have to look far to see the impact that psychologists make. They contribute in almost every profession, from health care and law enforcement to sport performance and space exploration.

MOVE UP WITH PSYCHOLOGY

Understanding psychological science and how to apply it is an asset in any career. A psychology degree, from the bachelor's to the master's and doctorate degree, helps employees perform in a wide variety of jobs both within and beyond the psychology discipline.

The Following are the most common psychology degrees and where they can lead:

- **Bachelor's degree** — Bachelor's degrees in psychology are offered at most colleges and universities and usually require four years of study. This degree can prepare students for the workforce or continued education. People with bachelor's degrees in psychology can work in many fields; many find jobs in public affairs, education, business, sales, service industries, health, the biological sciences and computer programming. They may also work as employment counselors, interviewers, personnel analysts, probation officers and writers.
- **Master's degree** — A master's degree takes an additional two years of graduate-level coursework and a thesis. While people with a master's degree can go on to earn a doctoral degree, those with several years of experience in business or industry can obtain jobs in consulting and market research, while others may find jobs in government, universities or in the private sector as counselors, researchers, data collectors and analysts. Most master's degrees in psychology are awarded in clinical, counseling and industrial and organizational psychology.
- **Doctoral degree** — Doctoral degrees in psychology include the PhD, the EdD and the PsyD. Each takes about five to seven years to earn. Anyone interested in earning a doctoral degree as a pathway for a career in health services should attend an accredited institution. The PhD tends to be more of a research-focused degree, while the PsyD is designed for those who want to do clinical work. These degrees often serve as stepping stones to a range of careers in research, justice, space and aeronautics, sports and much more.

Find out where psychology can take you at WWW.PSYCHSCIENCEACTION.ORG.

Your Career: Psychology Can Take You Great Places, continued

WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you are interested in the human mind and behavior and want to use science to solve problems, a degree in psychology is a good option. It can open the door to more education and many career opportunities.

BUSINESS

Many businesses use psychological testing to help determine which job candidates would be the best fit, and many offer access to psychologists through employee assistance services as part of their benefits packages.

Most workplaces have been shaped by someone with a psychology degree. People working in industrial and organizational psychology, for instance, use their expertise to increase productivity, test products and identify employees who are best suited to particular jobs and tasks within an organization.

This work touches on a range of other fields, including organizational development, human resources, training, marketing and sales.

EDUCATION

Psychologists specializing in education are indispensable to school systems. They provide a range of services, including assessing students' abilities as well as developing curriculum and guiding program evaluation. They consider a variety of factors, such as what motivates students as well as the effect of classroom diversity — racial, ethnic and cultural — on students.

School psychologists consult with teachers on the learning and behavior needs of students and develop educational environments to meet those needs. They also often work to support effective partnerships between parents and educators or other caretakers. People without doctorates may serve as administrators and guidance counselors, depending on the requirements of a school district.

HEALTH

Psychologists make a difference in people's health. The connections between physical health and mental health have been scientifically established, and many clinical psychologists and health psychologists work on integrated health care teams providing what has become known as patient-centered or whole-person health care.

Not only do psychologists provide direct services to people, they also conduct research to see how health and illness are affected by biology, relationships, behavior and other factors.

ENVIRONMENT

A majority of scientists agree that human behavior is the likely cause of global warming and declining biodiversity. Psychologists working on climate and environmental issues are researching ways to change behavior to lessen or reverse these effects. Their research explores how encouraging certain behaviors may restore and protect the environment.

This area of psychology has existed for about 40 years and is not limited to climate change. It touches on natural and human-made environments and includes the fields of urban planning, environmental design and environmental health.

PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY

Sport and performance psychologists work with athletes at all levels of amateur and professional play. They practice in areas related to motivation, injury and rehabilitation, athlete counseling, talent evaluations, adherence to training regimens, athlete self-perceptions and youth athletics. They also work with other professionals whose jobs demand a high level of performance — from corporate CEOs to artistic performers.

For those specializing in performance psychology, other possible fields include consulting, entertainment and space exploration.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

For those interested in public safety careers, forensic and public service psychology is an excellent choice. While criminal profiling is the best-known application of this skill set, there are numerous other roles.

Some forensic and public service psychologists work in child safety and custody, insurance, trial competence and more. They can work directly with law enforcement, trial witnesses, crime victims and criminal offenders of all ages with a wide range of needs.

Other areas related to public safety include trauma counseling, working with the military and emergency psychological services.

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

APA'S CENTER FOR WORKFORCE STUDIES

www.apa.org/workforce/index.aspx

APA's Center for Workforce Studies provides data on salaries, employment, sources of support and debt, and other topics of interest to those pursuing a career in psychology.

APA ON THE INTERNET

www.apa.org

APA offers information for psychologists, psychology students, the media and the general public, including a searchable database of grants and scholarships.

APA'S ONLINE CAREER CENTER

www.psyccareers.com

www.apa.org/careers/resources/guides/careers.aspx

PsycCareers, APA's online career resource, provides up-to-date career information and job listings for psychologists. APA's Careers in Psychology brochure details the opportunities and requirements to pursue psychology as a profession.

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