**Grad Student Individual Development Plan (IDP) Workshop** 5/28/2014

*UC San Diego*

Preparation

* Send email with “Comprehensive Skills Analysis Worksheet” and IDP form to participants at least a week in advance.

Sample email:

Hello!

Our records indicate that you have registered for the Grad Student Individual Plan (IDP) Workshop in [building, room] from [time - 2.5 – 3 hours] for [date].  A component of this workshop is to assess your skills. ***Please complete the attached Comprehensive Skill Analysis worksheet BEFORE the workshop and bring it with you***.  There is no time allotted in the workshop for completion, so not completing this short exercise (should take only 15 minutes) in advance will result in wasted time in the workshop.

We want to ensure that you have a successful IDP experience and a small amount of groundwork on your part goes a long way.

Also attached is the UC San Diego IDP form that you may use for your IDP.

A career objective is a part of your IDP. If you would like to explore some career options in the sciences, we encourage you to take the assessment on myIDP at Sciencecareers.org (<http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>­) before this workshop. Feel free to print out your Skills, Interests and Values assessments and bring with you to the workshop.

Thank you for your participation!

[Facilitator’s name and contact information]

* Secure group moderators for poster session - At least 1 per group (ideal number <7 people). Faculty participation as moderators is strongly encouraged. If only one faculty member is available for the session, suggest floating between groups rather than moderating a separate group.
* Procure poster materials
  + Poster size Post-It Tabletop Easel Pad (1/group): <http://www.amazon.com/Post--Tabletop-Easel-23-Inches-20-Sheets/dp/B00006IA99/ref=sr_1_3/179-1479207-5821047?ie=UTF8&qid=1387226988&sr=8-3&keywords=Poster+Size+Post+It+Notes>
  + Markers (at least one/person; different colors recommended)
  + Transparent tape (to secure paper to poster and/or Post-It poster to easel if necessary)

**Welcome!** (1 – 15 mins.)

Facilitator(s)’ introductions

* Be proactive about your career
* Respect other participants

***Goal****: To create an IDP during this workshop by considering your skills, career objective and generating goals to share with your mentors for a successful postdoc experience.*

Grad student introduction: Name, department and ice breaker (e.g. “What did you want to be when you grew up?”) (Time permitting for a 1 hour and 15 min. presentation)

**Presentation**

**Introduction**

1. Title slide
   1. Agenda
2. PhDs End Up in a Variety of Careers

I have found the most current statistics from the NIH’s Biomedical Workforce Group Report (<http://acd.od.nih.gov/biomedical_research_wgreport.pdf>) that came out June 2012.  There is more information in the report under “Career Outcomes,” but the following are highlights of that report in hopes to answer your questions.

Although the vast majority of people holding biomedical PhDs are employed (i.e. unemployment is very low), the proportion of PhDs that move into tenured or tenure-track faculty positions has declined from ~34 percent in 1993 to ~26 percent today. In contrast the proportion of non-tenured faculty has stayed relatively constant during the same period, while increasing in absolute numbers. The percentages of biomedical Ph.D.s in industry and government have remained relatively constant. The categories that have seen growth are science-related occupations that do not involve the conduct of research and occupations that do not require graduate training in science.

They also have a graph that categorizes the Post-Training Workforce (128,000 Biomedical US-trained PhDs) in the following:

Science related non-research – 18% (includes individuals employed by industry, government, or other who do not conduct research. However, many of the careers represented are closely related to the conduct of biomedical research and require graduate training in biomedical science. Examples of such careers include program and review officers at NIH and managers in many biotechnology companies. The 18% in this box is comprised of 13% PhDs employed by industry, 2.5% by government, and 2.5% other.)

Government research – 6%

Academic research or teaching – 43% (23% tenured)

Industrial research – 18%

Non-science related – 13%

Unemployed – 2%

Overall, approximately 30% of biomedical PhDs work in the biotech and pharmaceutical industries in research and non-research positions and all individuals

employed by government comprise ~9%.

2012 Biomedical Workforce Working Group Report recommends “NIH should require individual development plans (IDPs) for all NIH-supported postdoctoral ... this requirement should be included in the review criteria of training grants.”

1. Individual Development Plan (IDP)

What is an individual development plan? Has anyone ever heard of it before this workshop?

(Ask participants to explain & if they have used one before)

IDPs have been traditionally used in the business world for employees, but more and more universities are starting to establish them as a required tool for postdocs and graduate students. UC San Diego has joined the ranks of those universities.

IDPs are specific to each person, meaning he or she will design and implement the plan according to his or her career objectives.

(Go over what the plan entails as detailed on the slide)

Focus is on process of thinking, reckoning, discussing – NOT on filling out the form.

These plans are meant to be discussed with your faculty mentor to assist the development of long-term and short-term goals. You are also encouraged to have additional mentors, especially if your faculty mentor does not possess the insight into your career goal as others may.

IDPs benefit both the grad student and faculty mentor by providing a tool for communication.

Plus, this plan will help you keep your career goals in mind and motivate you as you progress towards the end of your training and transition into your career.

1. Benefits of an IDP

I want to stress how important thinking about your future is for a successful postdoc experience. A 2003 study found that only 2 elements had a correlation with a successful experience –attending career and professional development opportunities and having a structured postdoc plan, such as an IDP.

In addition, NIGMS put out a report in 2011 stating that one of the action plans for all their sponsored awards is to strongly encourage the use of an IDP.

Lastly, a notice from NIH in July 2013 stated that IDPs are encouraged for grad students and postdocs. Plus, they are expecting universities to report on this usage.

**What are NIH Policies for IDPs?**

1. In July of 2013, the NIH announced that it is asking all NIH-funded grad students and postdocs to have IDPs in place by October 1, 2014. If you have your own NIH award, such as an F31 or R36, you’ll be responsible for reporting your use of the IDP when you submit your own RPPR each year. If you’re funded on a faculty member’s award, such as a T32 or an R01, that faculty PI will need to report your IDP use on their RPPR each year, so be sure that they know that you have an IDP, even if they aren’t really one of your mentors.

You don’t have to submit your completed IDP to the NIH; they just want the RPPR to note that you have one. This is a personal and fairly private document, so they don’t want to force you to share it with strangers! Your academic department might or might not ask for a copy of the IDP.

For more information, I recommend that you check out the NIH notice announcing the IDP policy, which tells you where on the RPPR to include IDP information, and Sally Rockey’s Rock Talk blog on the subject. Sally Rockey is the NIH’s Deputy Director for Extramural Research, and her blog generally does an excellent job of putting things into human terms.

**Skills assessment** (~20 mins.; slides 5 - 6)

1. Skills Assessment (Animated – \*Press Enter Button - 5 mins.)

A skill is…

(\*Go over list)

Research Assistant skill exercise

Write out what the audience suggests are duties of a research assistant, such as “update protocols.” Next, write out what skills are needed to perform these duties, such as written and verbal communication skills. Try to get 6-7 duties to get the audience into the exercise then choose 2 or 3 duties to break into skills. Skills can range from communication skills to technical skills, problem solving, analytical. Have them look at their sheets for ideas as well to create a tie in with the exercise they did before coming in.

1. Skills Assessment: Worksheet

Find a partner. The person sitting next to you is fine. Ideally at least one of you (hopefully both!) will have filled out the skills assessment ahead of time. Each of you takes 5 minutes to discuss the following questions:

Was it easy for you to break down your skills with this assessment?

How did you think about your skills?

What experiences did you use when thinking about your skills?

(Pose each question to the group to discuss each in pairs; 5 mins./question)

If you did not complete the worksheet, look at one specific section such as communication or problem solving. Quickly fill out that section and then use that for the basis of your conversation. We will ask a few groups to share their observations at the end of the 10 minutes.

(Back to group)

What did you notice in your discussion? Did something jump out, any observations you or your partner made either now or while taking the assessment originally?

**Career Exploration**

1. Career Exploration: Personality

Something to consider for your profession is how your personality will fit into a career type. There are many ways to understand your personality type with various personality assessments. For example, there are books that you can check out from Geisel or the public library, such as the *Please Understand Me* book about Keirsey Temperament Sorter and the classic *What color is your parachute?*

*So What are you Going to Do with That?* can also be helpful for graduate students who are thinking about careers other than academia. For example, it teaches you about how to do informational interviews, which I’ll talk about shortly.

You have probably also heard about Myers Briggs classifications, the MBTI. If you make an appointment with Toni Mahoney in the Career Services Center, she can administer the MBTI to you for free.

You can also try the Keirsey Temperament Sorter online, which is free.

Lastly, you can pay a minimal fee online to use Clifton’s StrengthsFinder, which identifies natural talents that with a time investment can become strengths. The full 34 strengths version is $89.

1. Career Exploration: Options

Consider how to explore various careers. If you are interested or just heard about a new one that strikes your fancy, go on an informational interview. Does anyone not know what this is?

(Wait for audience to respond and if positive, ask him/her to describe this)

This is a short meeting with someone who has a particularly interesting job. In the interview, you ask a series of questions about that job. There are many question suggestions online as to what to ask, such as, “What is a typical day like? What is the career trajectory for this job, and what is the potential for career advancement?” etc. I suggest seeking those templates out and defining your own list.

[Personal Anecdote]

When I was considering a new job, I tried to go on as many of these as possible. Usually I contacted the person who was a friend of a friend or acquaintance and I either took him/her out for coffee or called if time and/or location were restricted. This is a great non-pressure situation because you are not asking for a job and it’s inherently flattering to be asked for your opinion. However, do be respectful of this person’s time. Keep the interview brief (~30 mins).

If you are a grad student in a scientific field, another way to consider different careers is by perusing Science Careers website. It has a lot of great articles and perspectives on varying career tracks.

In fact, Science Careers has designed a version of an IDP called myIDP. Has anyone used this before? It was sent out as a suggestion in the email with the Skills Assessment worksheet, so I hope that some of you have tried it. One of the features that I really like is the assessment tool. This allows you rate your interests, skills and values for the career prediction. You can use this summary as a guide to help you assess your skills.

1. Career Exploration: myIDP

Those of you that did take the opportunity to try myIDP online assessment tool may have seen something like this. One thing to note about the career prediction is that it is not prescriptive! Consider this a jumping off point to see if these careers are something you are interested in pursuing. Some may not interest you at all. You need to make the final decision about your career aspirations.

**Filling out IDP** Show where to find IDP online

1. Career Objectives

Let’s begin creating your IDP! This part of the presentation follows the IDP form that I emailed, and I have printed out copies if needed. This is the standard IDP form that UC San Diego created for postdocs and graduate students. There are many forms available. We suggest using this one, but find that suits your needs if this form does not.

First on the form is writing down your career objectives. Just a note: don’t worry about changing your mind with the IDP. You frequently will! This goes for all of your IDP. It is a living document.

OK, many of you probably have a career objective in mind. It is OK if your career objective is to learn more about a certain career. Go ahead and write that in your first choice. However, it is never a bad idea to have a back-up plan if you first choice does not work out. How many, by show of hands, have a back up plan? Again, a good strategy is to have a Plan B. Feel free to make up to a Plan Z or Worst Case Scenario.

1. Mentors

The next part of the IDP is to choose your mentors. Mentorship is critical not only for the IDP, but also for a successful postdoc experience. One of your mentors will be your faculty mentor, the person who is overseeing your research training. A positive mentorship should have the 6 Cs.

In addition, we recommend you have more than one mentor. This person or persons can be highly valuable, especially if your career objective is one where you faculty mentor might not have much insight. So how do you go about finding mentors?

1. How to Choose Mentors (Animated – \*Press Enter Button)

There are some mentor do’s and don’ts.

\*Make sure you know what you want in a mentor. You may already know this person, such as your PhD advisor. If you do not have any prospects or just met someone who you think would make an excellent mentor, you have some time to cultivate the relationship before you ask him/her for input on your IDP.

\*Show mentors how to help you. Even if they’re interested in helping, they may not know where to start. Come to them with a particular problem, like, “I would like help assessing my long-term goals on this IDP.” Or even phrase it as asking for career advice.

\*This is a relationship that requires attention and nurturing. Keep in mind how to make the relationship equally beneficial.

\* Lastly, a great way to be an excellent mentee is to be a mentor yourself. You will understand the dynamics that your mentor is facing and the differences that each mentor/mentee relationship has. You may already be a mentor and not realize it. For example, do you help a graduate student or undergrad in conducting research? You are most likely mentoring that person as well.

\*However, there are some don’t associated with mentoring.

\*If you are looking for a mentor, don’t call someone out of the blue and ask him/her to be your mentor. If formally cold call a person and ask “will you be mentor,” this puts people off because it seems like an enormous amount of time with little payoff for them. The beginning of this relationship needs a little finesse. Most mentors are not a formal arrangement (like your faculty mentor). It can simply be a person that you seek counsel from regularly or for major life decisions.

Personal Anecdote:

For example, when I was an undergrad I had a wonderful instructor that I ended up working for as a laboratory technician between undergrad and grad school. I consulted with him about where to go to grad school and even in grad school about how to pick my advisor. I even asked for his advice for transitioning from a postdoc to this position. He is a mentor to me. So, if you have a similar relationship, you may also have a mentor other than your faculty mentor.

\*Again, be respectful of everyone’s time. You are busy and so are your mentors. Plan ahead for these interactions. However, if your mentor keeps pushing your meeting times aside, you may want to consider replacing that mentor (or at least having an additional one).

\*This is a relationship that will take time and energy to flourish. Investing the time in getting to know mentors and potential mentors is necessary. For a prosperous mentor/mentee relationship, both of you will need to answer the question: Is this a person with whom I can establish a trusting relationship? And each needs to consider the ways in which the relationship might benefit both of them.

\*Lastly, the most important factor is that both mentor and mentee recognize and accept that an effective relationship is a “two-way street,” that both parties share responsibility for its success, and that clear, consistent, and open communication is essential.

1. A Secret IDP?

Let’s say that you’re considering an alt-ac career, but you aren’t ready to tell your advisor that yet. Now, first, let me say that I hope you all actually have advisors that are welcoming to alt-ac career paths. When I was in grad school and decided that I didn’t want to go into academia, my advisor was disappointed because she thought I’d be a good academic, but she was also supportive of my decision. That’s what I wish for you: an advisor who understands that people’s desires change and that some people won’t be happy in academia, and who supports and mentors you regardless of your career goals. I hope you never need to worry about whether you can tell your advisor your career plans.

But *if* you have an advisor who thinks that anyone who doesn’t go into academia is a failure, you might consider doing a secret IDP. That is, you can have your official IDP that you discuss with your advisor and that you report to the NIH, and that one would just say that you wanted to go into academia. But then on the side, you could also be doing another IDP in which you work toward becoming, say, a science journalist, and your advisor doesn’t have to know about that one.

Again, it’s always much better if you can discuss your plans openly with your faculty advisor, so I hope that’s the situation you’re in. But this is a backup idea just in case.

1. Skill Assessment: Grad Student

The next part of the IDP is to assess the skills that you have for your career objective and also those skills you want to develop. For example, you may be an excellent scientific writer, but you would like to increase your persuasive writing skills to convince funding agencies that your project is the one to fund!

The IDP form suggests characterizing your skills into areas of training.

(Go over each)

However, other than your technical skills, you may not have thought much about this before. This is why we spent time on skill assessment earlier, so you should have ample resources for this section.

1. Skills Assessment: Mentors (Animated – \*Press Enter Button)

Once you understand the skills that you have and also the skills that you lack for your career objective, set up meetings with your mentors to discuss your skills in regards to that career objective. Your mentors may have a better awareness about how your skills align with your career objectives.

\*In particular the IDP is a very helpful tool for communication with your faculty mentor. This allows you to:

(\*Go through the list)

1. Goal Setting (Animated – \*Press Enter Button)

The next part of the IDP is to set some goals. This is the ever evolving part of your IDP and also the most important to follow through on. Now that you know what skills you need to hone, you need to set goals to achieve those skills.

\*However, to give a little structure to this goal setting, try to create a SMART goal. What is a SMART goal?

\*It is a specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic and time-bound goal.

So what are some example goals? Practice presentation skills, schedule informational interview with science policy expert, learn new laboratory technique, etc.

Take a minute to think about a SMART goal.

(Allow 1 min.)

\*Now turn to your neighbor and both of you discuss either a goal you wrote down or a new one to determine if it is a SMART goal or not.

(Allow ~5 mins.)

1. Goal Example (Animated – \*Press Enter Button)

Let’s discuss an example goal. I have decided that I want to build my professional network. How do I do that? Any suggestions?

(Allow audience to make suggestions)

\*Here is what I decided on for some action steps. I have plans to attend a conference and give a poster presentation. This is a wonderful opportunity to network with potential future colleagues.

Also, I want to start attending some networking events in my area. I will sign up for different listservs to see what events are happening.

Lastly, I want to go on at least two informational interviews to meet people who hold the job that I want.

1. Goal Example (Animated – \*Press Enter Button)

Now I have to decide on the timing of these goals as these are for the entire year.

\*What is the frequency of these action steps? The conference is in August, so that one is easy.

From my listserv announcements, it seems that one networking event happens every month. However, with all my obligations, I really only have time to go to one every other month.

Finally, I’m not sure yet who my informational interviewees will be so, I can not schedule this in advance. Hopefully I will meet a few candidates during my networking events. However, as soon as I’ve found them, I will ask for an interview at their earliest convenience.

1. Goal Example (Animated – \*Press Enter Button)

\*Lastly, I want to keep on task, so I’ve set some target completion dates for these action steps. I will be finished with the conference in February, but I want to follow up with the people I met, so I’ll give myself a month leniency.

Both the other two action steps are ongoing, but I want to make sure I complete everything before the end of this year’s IDP, which will be June of next year.

You may also want to add in a reward column, particularly for the goals that you think will be hardest for

you to achieve. For example, if you know that talking with people at networking events will be really hard

for you, you might set a goal of talking to two new people at each networking event, and then give

yourself a reward of reading a novel without feeling guilty, or baking brownies, once you meet that goal.

1. Goal Example: Micro Goals (Animated – \*Press Enter Button)

However, even these larger action steps can be further broken down into micro goals.

\*Let’s take the last action step: Go on at least 2 informational interviews.

\*Micro goals for this action step can be...

(Go through list)

1. Long-term Goals

In addition to your annual plan, you need to consider your long-term goals for your entire graduate training.

In the form, this is termed your 5 year plan. Of course, this will vary according to how long your training at UC San Diego is. You might only do three years rather than five, depending on how much longer you’re going to be here.

One thing to keep in mind about your training is that certain goals may have to be met before you can advance to the next stage of your training. For example, if your career goal is to be an academic professor, you may want to apply for a K99 award from the NIH and have to do this in your last year of your graduate training.

1. Mentor Input (Animated – \*Press Enter Button)

Now that you have some goals in mind, you need to share them with your mentors. Ideally, this will be a face-to-face meeting with each mentor to discuss these short-term and long-term goals. Of course, everyone is busy and it can be difficult to make time for a face-to-face meeting. Therefore, you can have a discussion via email if necessary. Just make sure to capture the mentor’s input so you may keep a record of it on your IDP.

\*After this meeting you will take into account the comments of your mentors and add, revise and/or update your goals.

\*Final step – start working on achieving those goals!!

1. Professional Development Seminars & Workshops Available to Grad Students

Here are some – certainly not all – of the resources available to grad students here at UCSD. OGS offers the Wednesday Workshops series, which I encourage you to participate in. If you’re interested in becoming a better teacher, you should look into the offerings at the Center for Teaching Development, or CTD. The Career Services Center can also help you with more in-depth career exploration. Toni Mahoney’s job is specifically to help grad students, so you would want to make an appointment with her.

1. IDP Progress

Now looking forward, you have your IDP in place for the year. What else do you need to do?

You will continue to work towards your goals. Once you have completed one, check it off with a date. You may need to change these goals throughout the year. If so, don’t forget to consult your mentors.

1. Annual IDP Progress

For the remainder of the time that you are a grad student, you will continue to work on your IDP every year. So next year, you will set and hopefully complete a new set of goals and share with your mentors.

Of course, each year you’ll be updating your long-term as well as short-term plans. You might find that by next year, you have a completely different career goal in mind.

1. IDP Buddy?

You may also want to find someone in your department or program to be your IDP buddy. Some of you might have dissertation writing support groups where you meet every week to report on the progress you’ve made on your dissertations. Similarly, you might get an IDP buddy to meet with once a month to talk about which of your SMART goals you’ve made progress on.

1. Questions about Creating an IDP?

Any questions about the IDP creation process?

1. IDP Poster Session

Now we will move on to the poster session. You will take one of the large Post-it notes to use as a poster.

On the poster you will write your name, department and research project title to give the group a little background on you. Then you will write out your career objective. If you are uncertain about a particular career path, you can write that you are going to explore more about that profession. Remember this is not set in stone, but you need to start somewhere. Then you will write out 5 goals to accomplish for the year. Remember to make them SMART goals. You will have 30 mins. to complete this.

Next we will break into groups where you will present your poster to the group and moderator. The group will discuss your goals to ensure they are achievable and realistic in terms of your career objective. You will have up to 8 mins. to present. Please be willing to participate in the discussion when you are not presenting.

1. IDP Poster Example

Here is an example of a poster. Begin creating your poster!

**Poster Preparation** (30 mins.)

* Allow time for students to create a poster. Go around room to facilitate the poster making.
* Welcome faculty as they arrive and remind each about moderator role.
* Arrange the postdocs into groups depending on number. Group according to discipline if number and time permits. Ideally have postdocs grouped with a faculty moderator with a similar field of study.

**Poster Session** (60 - 90 mins.)

* Have postdocs place their posters on top of one another’s either on the wall or tabletop easel to expedite the switching between presenters. After a presenter finishes, he/she will take the poster off the wall or easel and then next person whose poster is visible will present.
* Assign a moderator to each group.
* Keep time for all the presenters by telling them to switch every 8 mins.
* Encourage group to make suggestions about presenter’s goals.
* Note that posters can be ordered for $15/2-pack via Marketplace.

**Closing remarks** (~5 mins.)

* Make sure everyone takes his or her materials (handouts, IDP form, poster).
* Thank everyone for his or her participation with a special thanks for the faculty moderators.
* Field any questions about IDP.
* Collect leftover forms and poster making items.