

Individual Development Plans

What is an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and why do I need one?

- Success does not just happen; it is achieved.
- An IDP activates your career goal by taking the first step on the path to success—planning for it!
- To identify and establish your career goals and to put strategies in place to achieve them.

Who can benefit from an IDP?

Graduate Students, Postdoctoral Fellows and Mentors

What are they designed to achieve?

To identify and structure:

- **Short-term** needs and strategies to improve your current performance;
- **Long-term** career options necessary to realize your clearly articulated goals set by you for you.

Resources

To learn more, visit CIHR's webpage on [Individual Career Development Plans](#), which provides access to IDP resources including CIHR's IDP Form.

Developing tomorrow's leaders



IDPs WORK!

Benefits of IDPs for Trainees

- **Better career outcomes and satisfaction** Intentional planning provides you with the opportunity to integrate your personal values and passions into your career plans, and these activities lead to higher career satisfaction. (Scaffidi, 2011; Davis, 2009)
- **Higher productivity and publication rate** Davis (2009) and Drucker (1999) found that trainees with a written plan submit papers to peer-reviewed journals at a 23 percent higher rate.
- **Best chances of prospering** IDPs give structure to strategic career planning and promote receiving helpful advice through networking. These activities in turn allow for improved opportunities to advance your career as approximately half of available jobs are not publicly advertised, and these opportunities result in improved chances of prospering in academia, industry or elsewhere. (Scaffidi, 2011)
- **Pro-actively manage expectations** Identifying short-term goals gives trainees a clearer sense of expectations and helps identify milestones in achieving long-term objectives. (Davis, 2009)
- **Better relationships and fewer conflicts** Trainees who report the highest levels of oversight and professional development report fewer conflicts with their advisors, give their advisors higher ratings and are more satisfied overall. (Davis, 2005)