

Instructions: Individual Development Plan (IDP)

An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a valuable tool designed to help you outline your personal and professional development goals, map out strategies to achieve them, and track your progress over time. Your IDP serves as a roadmap to guide your growth and enhance your skills.

Step 1: Self-Reflection.

Begin your journey by engaging in self-reflection. Take some time to think about your long-term career objectives and aspirations. Assess your current skills, strengths, and areas for improvement. During this phase, also consider skills and competencies you aim to enhance or acquire. Skills are specific abilities you can acquire or refine (e.g., programming language, presenting), while competencies encompass a broader set of qualities contributing to effective performance in a particular role or field (e.g., leadership, effective communication). This self-reflection will provide valuable insights to help you shape your development goals.

Step 2: Prioritize Your Goals.

Now that you have a clearer understanding of your strengths, areas for improvement, and career ambitions, it's time to formulate and prioritize your goals. Consider both personal and professional goals. As you develop your goals, use the SMART framework to ensure they are:

- **Specific:** Clearly define your goal so it is detailed and specific.
- **Measurable:** Ensure your goal is quantifiable and that you can track your progress.
- **Achievable:** Set goals that are realistic and attainable based on your capabilities.
- **Relevant:** Your goal should align with your values and long-term objectives.
- **Time-bound:** Include realistic time points and due dates in your plan to keep yourself accountable.

Step 3: Write an IDP.

Use the provided IDP template or one of your choosing to articulate your goals for the upcoming year. Consider the following:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define Goals: Define goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART).• Outline Action Steps: For each goal, outline the specific actions required to achieve it (e.g., attending workshops, enrolling in courses, seeking mentorship, reading relevant literature, or acquiring new skills).• Identify Resources: List the resources you'll need to support your development journey (e.g., | <ul style="list-style-type: none">books, courses, workshops, mentors, online resources, or travel funding).• Establish Timeline: Set specific deadlines, including dates, for completing action steps and accomplishing each goal. Ensure that these deadlines are realistic and congruent with the nature of each goal.• Track Progress: Update the IDP with any accomplishments made towards reaching your goal. |
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Step 4: Revise IDP

Regularly meet with your advisor and/or faculty mentor to discuss your IDP progress, set new goals, and ensure alignment with your academic journey. The IDP can be a valuable tool to guide these discussions and is recommended to be brought to your advisor/mentor meetings. Be proactive and establish a regular review schedule for your IDP. As a guideline, consider revising it annually each fall and reviewing it each spring, at a minimum. If you're a PhD student, we recommend uploading it to myVITA as part of the annual review process.

Template: Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Student Name: _____

Degree Program: _____

Advisor/Mentor: _____

Director of Graduate Studies (DGS): _____

Date IDP Created: _____

Date of Next Review: _____

Goal #1	
Define Goal.	<p><i>Define goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART).</i></p>
Outline Action Steps.	<p><i>Outline the specific actions you need to take to accomplish your goal.</i></p>
Identify Resources.	<p><i>List the resources you'll need to support your development journey.</i></p>
Establish Timeline.	<p><i>Set specific deadlines, including dates, for completing action steps and accomplishing each goal.</i></p>
Track Progress.	<p><i>Use this section to track any accomplishments made towards reaching your goal.</i></p>

Goal #2	
Define Goal.	<p><i>Define goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART).</i></p>
Outline Action Steps.	<p><i>Outline the specific actions you need to take to accomplish your goal.</i></p>
Identify Resources.	<p><i>List the resources you'll need to support your development journey.</i></p>
Establish Timeline.	<p><i>Set specific deadlines, including dates, for completing action steps and accomplishing each goal.</i></p>
Track Progress.	<p><i>Use this section to track any accomplishments made towards reaching your goal.</i></p>

Goal #3	
Define Goal.	<i>Define goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART).</i>
Outline Action Steps.	<i>Outline the specific actions you need to take to accomplish your goal.</i>
Identify Resources.	<i>List the resources you'll need to support your development journey.</i>
Establish Timeline.	<i>Set specific deadlines, including dates, for completing action steps and accomplishing each goal.</i>
Track Progress.	<i>Use this section to track any accomplishments made towards reaching your goal.</i>