



Virginia Tech Postdoc Essential Skills Series

Individual Development Plans

Wednesday, May 11th, 12-1 PM



RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
VIRGINIA TECH.

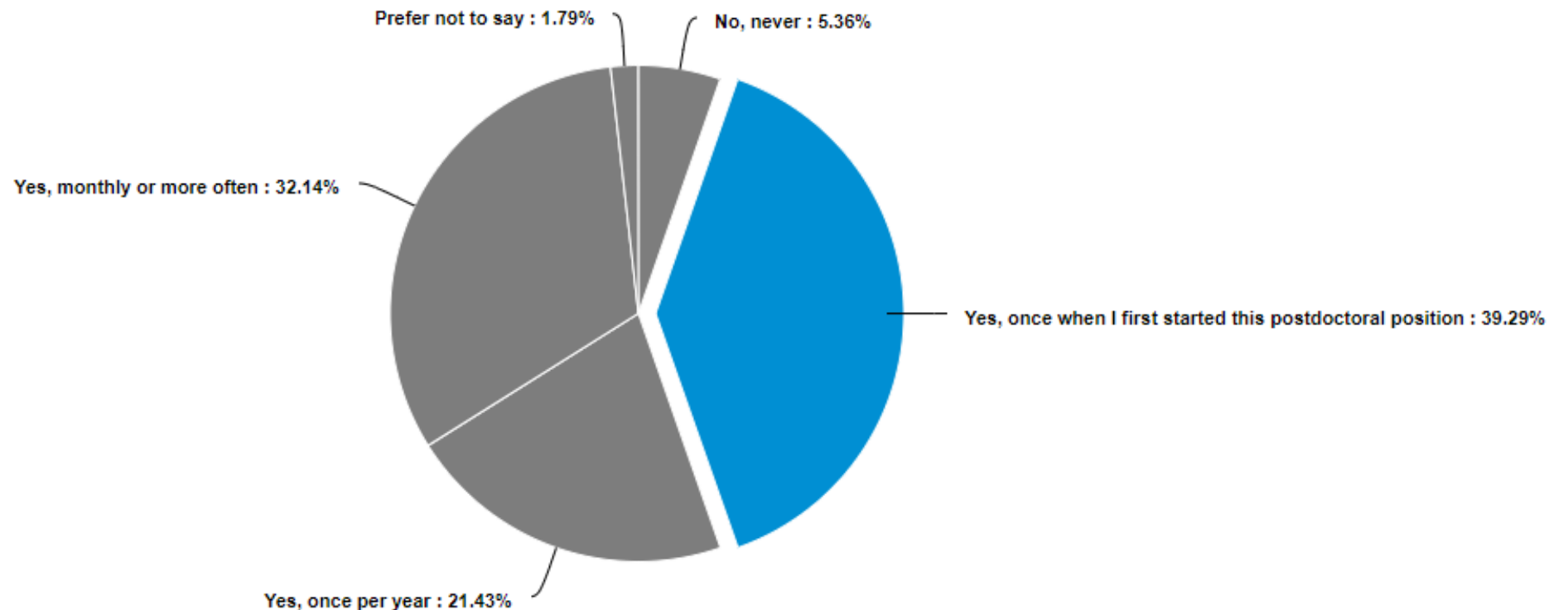
Virginia Tech Postdoc Awareness & Use of Written Career Plans

From April's VT Postdoc Climate Survey:

- 32% Have never heard of a written career plan for postdoctoral training
- 48% Know what a career plan is but have never written one
- 16% Have written a career plan

A discussion around a training & career plan can be a great way to engage with you supervisor around each of your goals and expectations for your time as a postdoc.

Have you discussed goals and expectations with your supervisor/PI?



What is an Individual Development Plan (IDP)?

An IDP is a *process and a product*.

An IDP is a dynamic self-evaluation and career exploration tool that can be used for setting goals for research projects, skills development, and career planning.

It is your private written list of objectives mapped to a timeline.

<https://grad.berkeley.edu/idp/>

An IDP or training plan is now required for [NSF grants supporting postdocs](#) and in progress reports submitted via RPPR to [NIH](#), respectively.

What comprises an IDP?

The 2 primary features of any IDP should be:

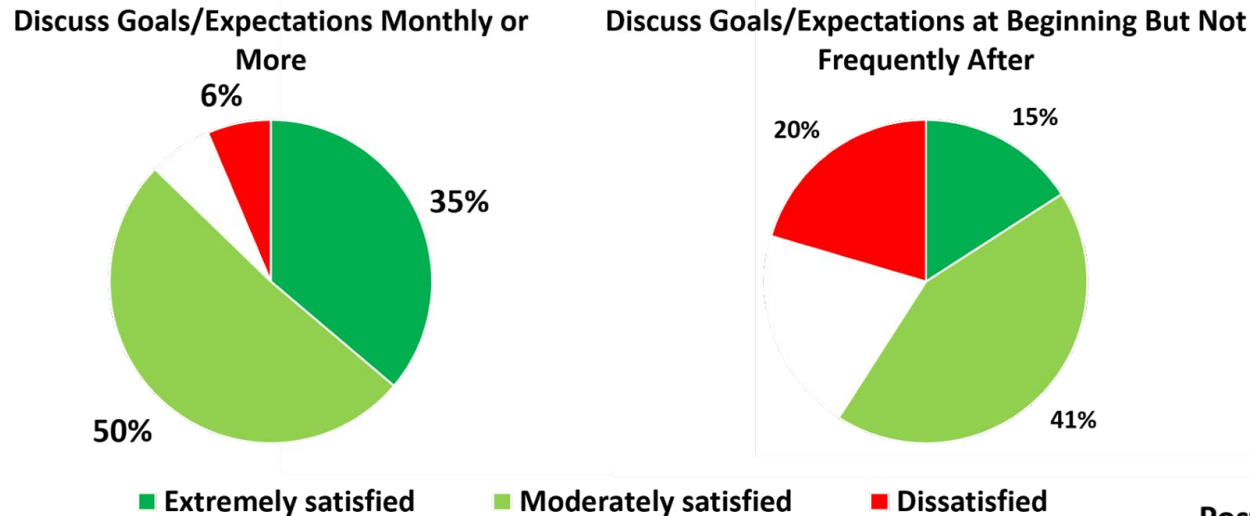
- (1) professional development, including research development, which helps the trainee become a productive and independent researcher
- (2) career development, which provides guidance and resources for identifying and achieving the *next career milestone*

According to myIDP from Science Careers, there are three types of goals you should be considering in your IDP:

- **Career advancement goals to help you move forward in your career**
- **Skills development goals to improve upon skill and knowledge areas in which you may be deficient**
- **Project completion goals to help you stay on top of the various projects you are working on**

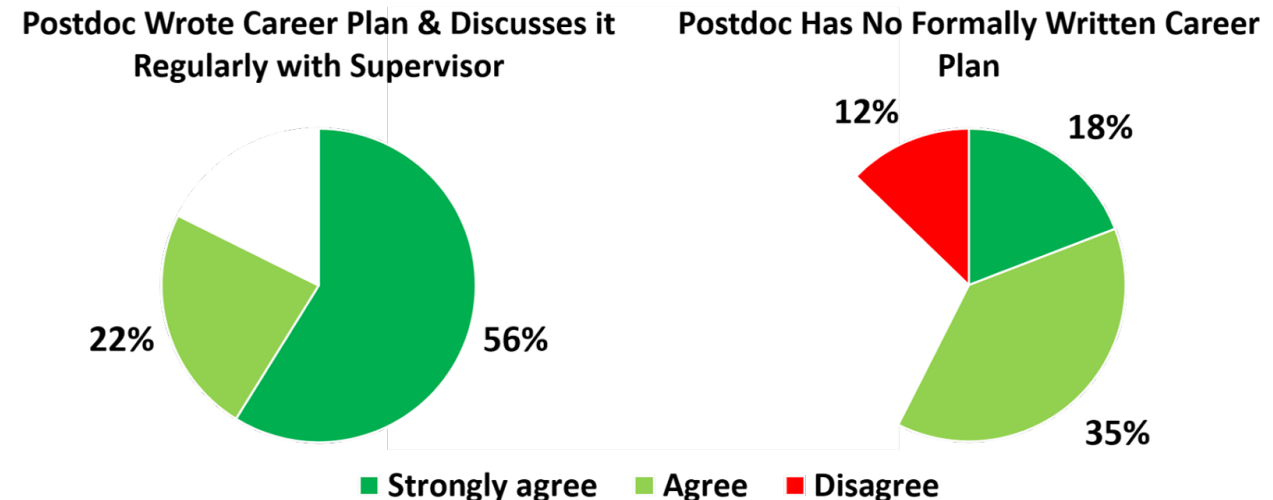
IDPs can facilitate conversations around expectations & goals

How satisfied are you with your overall work/professional experience at NC State?



Data from NC State University's postdoc climate survey showed postdocs who discuss goals and expectations frequently with their supervisor and have a formal career plan (IDP), are more satisfied and confident in their career prospects.

My current postdoctoral position is preparing me adequately for my future career.





myIDP Skills Assessment

Spend ~5 minutes completing the skills assessment or reviewing your results:

myidp.sciencecareers.org/Skills/Assessment

Identify Skill Gaps to Improve Upon (from myIDP)

1 <i>Highly deficient</i>	2	3	4	5 <i>Highly proficient</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to negotiate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navigating the peer review process Teaching in a classroom setting Negotiating difficult conversations Developing/managing budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experimental design Statistical analysis Creativity/innovative thinking Writing scientific publications Writing grant proposals Speaking clearly and effectively Seeking advice from advisors and mentors Contributing to institution (e.g. participate on committees) Dealing with conflict Planning and organizing projects Managing data and resources Delegating responsibilities Careful recordkeeping practices Demonstrating responsible conduct in animal research How to identify career options How to interview Technical skills related to my specific research area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad based knowledge of science Critical evaluation of scientific literature Interpretation of data Basic writing and editing Writing for nonscientists Presenting research to scientists Presenting to nonscientists Training and mentoring individuals Demonstrating workplace etiquette Complying with rules and regulations Contributing to discipline (e.g. member of professional society) Providing instruction and guidance Providing constructive feedback Time management Leading and motivating others Creating vision and goals Serving as a role model Understanding of data ownership/sharing issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upholding commitments and meeting deadlines Maintaining positive relationships with colleagues Demonstrating responsible authorship and publication practices Can identify and address research misconduct Can identify and manage conflict of interest

Based on career goals, need to develop:

- Teaching skills
- Grant writing skills
- Lab budgeting skills
- Interpersonal skills

Identify Skill Gaps to Improve Upon (from ImaginePhD)

Need to develop: Interpersonal skills

I HAVE NEVER DONE THIS	I HAVE DONE THIS IN LIMITED WAYS	I HAVE MORE EXPERIENCE WITH THIS, BUT STILL NEED GUIDANCE	I CAN DO THIS	I CAN DO THIS WELL
<div>Language translation</div> <div>Navigating difficult conversations</div> <div>Communicating in other languages</div>	<div>Being able to make persuasive arguments</div> <div>Teaching in a classroom setting</div> <div>Curating (objects information ideas)</div> <div>Using digital tools for communication</div> <div>Developing and managing budgets</div> <div>Negotiating</div> <div>Dealing with conflict</div>	<div>Quantitative research methods</div> <div>Broad based knowledge of Humanities or Social Sciences fields</div> <div>Statistical analysis</div> <div>Define a problem and identify possible causes</div> <div>Qualitative research methods</div> <div>Speaking clearly and effectively</div>	<div>Navigating the publication process</div> <div>Extensive knowledge of a specific research area</div> <div>Creativity and innovation</div> <div>Form and defend independent conclusions</div> <div>Comprehend large amounts of information</div> <div>Interpretation of data</div>	<div>Work effectively with limited supervision</div>

Transferrable Skills Utilized by Ph.D.s

- Ability to work on a team
- Ability to work with people outside the organization
- Ability to manage others
- Career planning & awareness skills
- Creativity/innovative thinking (research-intensive careers)
- Time management (esp for non-research-intensive careers)
- Ability to learn quickly (non-research-intensive careers)
- Ability to manage a project (non-research-intensive careers)

From *An evidence-based evaluation of transferrable skills and job satisfaction for science PhDs* (PLoS ONE)

Goal Setting

You can largely group your goals into one of three categories:

- 1. Career advancement goals** to help you move forward in your career
- 2. Skills development goals** to improve upon skill and knowledge areas in which you may be deficient
- 3. Project completion goals** to help you stay on top of the various projects you are working on

How to set a SMART goal

S - Specific - Is it focused and unambiguous?

M - Measureable - Could someone determine whether or not you achieved this goal?

A - Action-oriented - Did you specify the action you will take?

R - Realistic - Considering difficulty and timeframe, is this goal attainable?

T - Time-bound - Did you specify a deadline?

Take a few minutes to formulate a SMART goal. We'll then ask a few of you to share with the group.

Building Your Skillset – Breakout Room Discussion

- What skills are you looking to improve upon while you are a postdoc at Virginia Tech?
- Do you have ideas on where you can develop your skills further?
 - [LinkedIn Learning courses](#)
 - Workshops on campus?
 - [Virginia Tech Libraries workshops](#)
 - [TLOS: Professional Development Network](#)
 - Departmental, Institute, or College programs?
 - Professional societies or organizations?
- Volunteer work?
 - Professional societies or organizations?
 - Community organizations?
- Has anyone in your group participated in any of the above activities? What did they find helpful about them?



5 Minutes - self-reflect
10 Minutes - share with group

Access Additional Resources to Build Your Skills

See below links to resources to aid in your career & professional development, and more!

<https://bit.ly/VT-postdoc-resources>

Free online resources

Further Reading on the Value of IDPs

IDPs can allow you to have important career conversations with your supervisor

A cross-sectional study of the use and effectiveness of the IDP among doctoral students

Use and effectiveness of the IDP among postdoctoral researchers

Yearly Planning Meetings: Individualized Development Plans Aren't Just More Paperwork
(great to share with your supervisor!)



Additional IDP Resources

Link to drive with example IDP templates (blank and completed) and other resources:

<https://bit.ly/VT-postdoc-IDP-resources>

From University of Wisconsin, Madison:

<https://grad.wisc.edu/professional-development/individual-development-plan/>

From UCSF:

<https://career.ucsf.edu/IDP>

Academic Career Readiness Assessment

<https://career.ucsf.edu/phds/academic/acra>



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**REGISTER FOR OUR NEXT ESSENTIAL SKILLS
SERIES SESSION on Informational Interviews:**
<https://bit.ly/VT-postdoc-info-interview>

Wed, June 8th, 12-1 PM via ZOOM