



A Postdoctoral appointment is a training period, with the purpose of preparing you for whichever career path you choose. Your relationship with your advisor is a key aspect of a successful training period. The individual development plan (IDP) is a document designed to guide you toward your independent career. Completing and sharing your IDP with your advisor will allow you to discuss your goals, devise a plan for success, address challenges that arise, and revise your plans to help you achieve those goals.

Initial Meeting Form

Postdoctoral Fellow:

Advisor:

Date:

Career Goals

1. What are your first and second choices of long-term careers – i.e. what position do you hope to hold 5-7 years from now? Be as specific as you can, and indicate relative enthusiasm for each choice. Examples of careers include opportunities in: teaching, research (academia, government, industry), entrepreneurship, fundraising, publishing, communication, outreach, policy, and many others.

(If you are undecided, or would like to explore a wide range of career paths, visit <http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>, to explore possible paths that match your interests. Currently this tool is only available for STEM; a humanities and social sciences version is under development)

2. Describe the research goals you hope to achieve during your postdoctoral training. Are there specific techniques, methods, analyses or approaches that you would like to gain familiarity with and/or become an expert in? Teaching approaches you would like to implement? Other activities pertinent to your area of expertise that you would like to learn?

3. Describe your professional development goals. What professional skills would you like to acquire during your training? Examples include: public speaking, grant writing, manuscript preparation, team-work, personnel management, teaching, mentoring, etc.

Self Assessment

1. Which of your past accomplishments will contribute to the success of your postdoctoral training? What skills are you bringing? Include papers, presentations, techniques, etc. If you are changing fields, consider how your prior experience might be applied.

2. What areas of learning and growth would you like to develop in the next year? Which of these areas could be addressed in the next six months? Which would be better addressed in 6 months-1 year? Be as specific as possible, including how you would like to accomplish them.

Objectives

What are some activities that might help you achieve the research and professional development goals you outlined?

1. Research goals (list 1-3): For example, a course, a meeting or workshop attendance (specify if possible); fellowship or grant application; anticipated publication (list tentative title if appropriate); may include objectives in the coming year or longer-term objectives. Include a relative timeline for each objective (ie. Are these objectives dependent of each other? Do some make sense to approach immediately, while others make sense to delay?)

2. Professional Development Objectives (list 1-3): For example, courses, meeting or workshop attendance (specify if possible); teaching/mentoring; service opportunities; etc. Note that UNR hosts some of these opportunities (announced through the postdoc listserv and other venues).

Action Plan for Next Year

To be developed jointly by the postdoc and the advisor(s) during the discussion. You must submit this section—and only this section—electronically to the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs. (www.unr.edu/postdoc/idp)

Consider the following questions as you develop an action plan with your mentor:

- List any activities in which you and your advisor agree you should participate in to achieve your professional/career goals in the coming year.
- Do you have guaranteed funding for the next year? If not, what back-up plans are in place?
- How often will you be meeting with your advisor to discuss your research/career progress (eg. weekly, monthly, etc)?
- (International postdocs): Do you anticipate any upcoming visa issues that could impact your training?
- Are there specific actions that you and/or your advisor can undertake that will support your success (e.g., modify working styles, meetings with to discuss progress, networking opportunities)?
- How can your advisor help you achieve your goals?
- This IDP is a living document, and the goals within should be revisited throughout the year. Are there specific goals that you and your mentor should discuss before your next annual meeting?