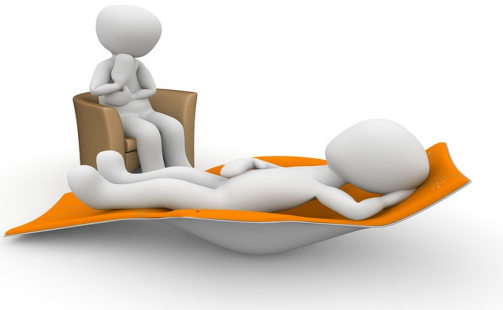


What is an Industrial Organizational Psychologist and What Can a Future Industrial-Organizational Psychologist Do For Your Organization?

When most people hear the term “psychologist,” they immediately think of a psychologist that performs therapy. That is understandable, given that Sigmund Freud is regarded as one of the most famous influential psychologists and he contributed immensely to the field of Clinical and Counseling Psychology through the development of psychoanalysis (Cherry, 2017).



However, psychology is a broad field with many divisions that have very little to do with therapy. The American Psychological Association has over 56 divisions (APA, 2017), and governs the activity of many different types of psychologists, including Experimental, Developmental, Sports, Educational, and Health Psychologists (just to name a few).

One type of psychologist, an **Industrial Organizational (IO) Psychologist**, focuses on the study of human behavior in work and organizational settings. IO Psychologists can work in academic settings, be employed in an organization, or address the needs of many organizations as a consultant.

What do IO Psychology Consultants Do?

IO Psychology consultants apply a strong foundation in theory with broad content knowledge and specialized skills in research methods and statistics to improve workplaces. A consulting project to improve the workplace can take many forms. Here are a few examples:

- Hiring the right person to perform a job (**Talent Acquisition**)
- Training an employee or team to do a job well (**Training and Development**)
- Helping organizations measure an employee’s job performance or telling an employee about their job performance (**Performance Management and Feedback**)
- Improving job attitudes and productivity (**Employee Engagement and Motivation**)
- Telling an organization whether or not a workplace program produced the desired results (**Program Evaluation**)
- Helping workplaces improve the quality of work-life for employees (**Safety, Health, and Well-being Management**)



The Next Generation of IO Psychology Consultants



IO Psychology Consultants are trained at the Masters or Doctoral Level in Industrial Organizational Psychology Programs. Most programs feature a scientist-practitioner focus, meaning that both theory-driven research and practical application are important. Most programs feature formalized opportunities to help graduate students acquire applied experiences, such as internships and practicum experiences. One type of formalized applied experience that is gaining popularity among graduate programs is an **internal applied research center**. These groups allow students to complete projects with local organizations under the supervision of university faculty. There are numerous benefits to working with these applied research groups:

- **Organizations** receive evidence-based solutions to workplace issues at a very reasonable price compared to most external consulting firms and develop relationships with qualified IO-Psychologists-in-training that will soon be on the job market.
- **Students** participate in valuable training and development opportunities, network with potential future employers, and in most applied research groups, are directly compensated for their work.
- **Universities** develop collaborative relationships with local organizations and can attract stronger applicants to their graduate program due to the presence of high-quality applied experiences.

How do I find an applied research group?

Several IO Psychology Graduate Programs have information on their applied research group on their program's website. You may or may not be geographically bound by the nature of your project. Performance Solutions, an applied research group in the IO Psychology Program at the University of Central Florida, is eager to address the needs of organizations in the Orlando Community and beyond for projects that can be completed remotely. To find out more information, visit sciences.ucf.edu/psychology/performancesolutions or email performancesolutions@ucf.edu.

References

American Psychological Association (2017). About APA. Retrieved December 21, 2017 from <http://www.apa.org/about/index.aspx>.

Cherry, K. (2017, December 5). 10 Most Influential Psychologists in History. Retrieved December 21, 2017, from <https://www.verywell.com/most-influential-psychologists-2795264>