



www.careersinghana.com

Email : info@careersinghana.com

Tel: +233 245649846

Psychology Careers, Jobs, and Employment Information

Psychology Career Overview

One motivating factor for being a psychologist is that over a quarter of psychologists are self-employed, which is four times the national average. Psychologists generally need a graduate level [psychology degree](#) to be successful. Medical school is required for many psychologists who specialize in clinical psychology or counseling, and a [master's degree](#) is minimum requirement for most educational facilities and organizations.

The work of psychologists is to examine human mental processes and how they affect behavior. Many psychologists are involved in research, where they explore the intellectual, physiological, emotional, or social facets of human conduct. Researchers hypothesize and then gather information; either by experiments performed in a lab or by dispensing tests, and then draw conclusions. Psychologists might also observe test subjects, study physiological effects of mental stimulation, or administer questionnaires and surveys as part of their research. Other psychologists provide health services at hospitals, schools, clinic, or private practices.

Psychologists not only collect data but find applications for it in almost every field, e.g. business, government, management, employee relations, law, and sports. Most psychologists have a firm grasp of general principles but specialize in one particular field where they help with training, counseling, or developing programs.

Types of Psychologists

- **Clinical Psychologists**

This is the largest area of practice. Clinical psychologists are generally employed at medical facilities like clinics or hospitals or group practices. Those who work at medical facilities might help patients deal with injuries or infirmities while others might help other people deal with emotional disorders or adjust to life changes. Many psychologists work at centers for physical rehabilitation where they work with patients with injuries, disabilities, strokes, or chronic problems. Still other psychologists might help people deal with trauma, such as the loss of a family member.

The work of clinical psychologists is varied. They spend a lot of their time in personal sessions with patients or administering tests. Aside from personal sessions, they may also involve patients in group therapy, family therapy, or develop and execute plans of action to help patients change behavior. Some work closely with other medical professionals to design treatment programs for specific issues. Others might work at institutions of higher learning where they train students or conduct research. Many work in programs designed to increase community health.

Because the work of clinical psychologists is so varied, many specialize in specific areas. Health psychologists help people maintain healthy lifestyles through counseling. They might help people quit smoking or maintain a healthy body weight. Neuropsychologists study the human brain's physical processes. They often work closely with patients with head injuries or strokes to determine how injuries to different areas of the brain affect behavior and mental health. Geropsychologists study the effects of aging. These fields demonstrate how psychologists are finding more specific applications to specific demographics.

Clinical psychologists often work with physicians or pharmacologists to determine the best treatment and to discuss medication options as they are not qualified to dispense medications unless they've completed medical school. However, this may change. New Mexico has pioneered a program that allows clinical psychologists to get extra training to allow them to dispense medication, and other states may soon follow suit.

- **Counselors**

They use many methods including personal consultations and examinations to help people deal with everyday pressures and find ways to live happy, productive lives. They generally work at group practices, career or educational counseling centers, or hospitals.

- **School Psychologists**

These psychologists work to maximize students' education and minimize behavioral problems at elementary or secondary schools or at the district level. They work with educators, administrators, and parents to deal with problems such as drug abuse or violence; improve learning through classroom techniques; help improve parenting; and find the best programs for disabled or gifted students. They may also work in assessing school programs, guidelines for dealing with behavioral problems, parent involvement, or other school programs.

- **Industrial-Organizational Psychologists**

They use their knowledge and training in the workplace. They have two goals: firstly to increase productivity for the company, and secondly to advance the quality of life of the workers. Often these two goals coincide. They often perform research about administration issues or effective advertising. Besides their research, they are often involved with people more directly, interviewing applicants, developing and running

training programs, providing advice for employees, or analyzing organization. Often companies don't employ in-house industrial psychologists and so they work as consultants.

- **Developmental Psychologists**

They study the changes in physiology, cognitive ability, and social interaction that occur throughout various life-stages. Many choose to specialize on a specific stage like early childhood, adolescence, or geriatrics. They might also look at the disabilities that occur in various stages, such as finding new ways to help the elderly remain autonomous and alert.

- **Social Psychologists**

These psychologists examine how individuals interface with society and trends in the society. The largest areas of work are group dynamics, nature of leadership, ways of thinking, and ways of perceiving the world. Social psychologists are helpful in a number of different fields including organizational management, marketing, and designing programs and systems.

- **Research/Experimental Psychologists**

They conduct research at centers, universities, corporations, non-profit organizations, or for the government. They look at patterns of behavior in humans or animals to learn about attention span, learning processes, effects of drugs, motivation, genetics, and neurology.

Psychology Training and Job Qualifications

Being a psychologist requires a quite a bit of schooling and an advanced [degree](#).

Having a [bachelor's degree](#) in psychology will enable an applicant to work as an assistant to other psychologists or other personnel at community medical centers, behavior modification programs, or programs for vocational rehabilitation. Some are employed in other fields, like market research, as consultants or specialists. Others might work as administrative assistants, help with research, or train for managerial positions in corporations.

A [master's degree](#) will qualify individuals to work as school psychologists or industrial-organizational psychologists. They might also help with research or be an assistant of someone with a doctorate. A master's degree in psychology takes two years to complete, and generally includes some hands-on experience in a professional setting and original research in the form of a written thesis. Not all schools require an undergraduate psychology for admission, but all are competitive and will require understanding basic concepts in the social sciences and statistical skills.

A PhD will qualify people to be licensed as a clinical psychologist or counselor. It will also qualify them to teach at a university, work at a research group, be employed by the government,

work at a medical facility, or work as a school psychologist. The majority of PhD holders work as clinical psychologists at private practices.

Earning a PhD generally requires five to seven years of post-graduate work. It involves courses in research, using computers for analysis, psychological theory, and practices. Also, earning your degree involves either original research in the form of a written dissertation or examinations. Many [degrees](#) in clinical or counseling psychology involve a practical internship as well.

Working for the federal government requires 24 credit hours in psychology at statistical experience for entry-level jobs. However, since this is one of the few opportunities available to those without higher degree, competition is fierce.

There are a number of national organizations that provide accreditation for psychologists and psychological programs. One of the largest is the American Psychological Association (APA) which certifies PhD programs for clinical, school, and counseling psychologists. They also help students find internships and supply their own internships in those areas. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) certify doctoral programs in school psychology.

Most psychologists, meaning all those in independent practice or who work with patients, must be certified according to their state laws. These laws often differ from state to state and vary according to position. This certification has other implications in that it limits the work the psychologist can do according to what they're certified in. Certification for clinical psychologists or counselors generally involves a PhD, internship, and at least a year of clinical experience. Certification for school psychologists usually requires a master's degree, an internship, and often involves periodic continuing professional education in order to retain certification. In addition, almost all licensures require some sort of examination.

Not all certification is done at the state level, however. School psychologists can receive the Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) license issued by the NASP, which is a national organization. Almost half of all states recognize the NCSP and allow holders to practice in the state without additional certification. The requirements for the NCSP are similar to those of most states, including 60 hours of graduate work in school psychology, an internship of 1200 hours including at least 600 hours of work in a school, and an acceptable grade on an examination.

Another national organization is the American Board of Professional Psychology. The ABPP issues certification in one of the specific areas of psychology. Licenses from the ABPP are granted to applicants with a PhD, instruction in their chosen field beyond their schoolwork, five years of experience, recommendations from professionals in the field, and an acceptable grade on an examination.

Aside from formal schooling, there are some personal attributes that are necessary to being a psychologist. Psychologists interested primarily in research need to be self-motivated and self-disciplined workers, but also need to be able to work on a team. They also need to be persistent and patient as research is often extremely long-term. Psychologists who want to work directly with

patients need to be responsible, mature, and secure. Psychologists have to approach their patients non-judgmentally, insightfully, and with compassion. They need to have excellent communication skills, being able to both express ideas clearly and listen.

Job Outlook for Psychologists

More schools, medical facilities, consulting firms, nonprofit organizations, and government organizations are demanding the skills of psychologists. Consequently, employment is projected to increase faster than the average for clinical, counseling, and school psychologists while it increases at the average rate for industrial-organizational psychologists.

Potential may be strongest for school psychologists. Demand is rising for their services as more people recognize their effectiveness in dealing with behavioral problems, maximizing learning, and contributing to the mental health of students.

There are also many new opportunities for clinical psychologists and counselors. New expenses in healthcare associated with harmful habits like smoking and alcoholism are motivating people to seek help from psychologists in avoidance and treatment. Other issues like depression, divorce, abuse, stress, and eating disorders provide opportunities for psychologists to help. Job growth in this area is increasing further as more corporations and organizations are implemented programs to provide counseling services for their employees.

Industrial-Organizational psychologists have many opportunities to help corporations become more efficient, increase productivity, increase employee longevity, increase diversity, and avoid discrimination. They will also help companies by providing consultation on marketing techniques by developing surveys and researching customer demands.

Despite projected industry growth, prospective psychologists should be aware that positions will have stiff competition and should be prepared with appropriate graduate degrees, experience, and competence.