

Florida Institute of Technology– Career Management Services

Career Profile: Psychology

Psychologists study the human mind and human behavior. Psychologists apply their knowledge to a wide range of endeavors, including health and human services, management, education, law, and sports.

Clinical psychologists, the largest occupation within psychology, work most often in counseling centers, independent or group practices, hospitals, or clinics. They help mentally and emotionally distressed clients adjust to life. Counseling psychologists use various techniques to advise people on how to deal with problems of everyday living. School psychologists address students' learning and behavioral problems; suggest improvements to classroom management strategies or parenting techniques. Industrial-organizational psychologists apply psychological principles and research methods to the workplace in the interest of improving productivity and the quality of work life. Developmental psychologists study the physiological, cognitive, and social development that takes place throughout life. Social psychologists examine people's interactions with others and with the social environment. Experimental or research psychologists work in university and private research centers and in business. Forensic psychologists use psychological principles in the legal and criminal justice system to help judges, attorneys, and other legal professionals understand the psychological findings of a particular case. They are usually designated as an expert witness and typically specialize in one of three areas: family court, civil court, and criminal court. Forensic psychologists who work in family court may offer psychotherapy services, perform child custody evaluations, or investigate reports of child abuse. Those working in civil courts may assess competency, provide second opinions, and provide psychotherapy to crime victims. Criminal court forensic psychologists often conduct evaluations of mental competency, work with child witnesses, and provide assessment of juvenile or adult offenders.



Psychologists' work environments vary by subfield and place of employment. Those employed in hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care facilities may work shifts that include evenings and weekends, and those who work in schools and clinics generally work regular daytime hours.

A doctoral degree usually is required for independent practice as a psychologist. Psychologists in independent practice or those who offer patient care must meet certification or licensing requirements in all States and the District of Columbia. A specialist degree (Ed.S.) or its equivalent is required in most States to work as a school psychologist. People with a master's degree in psychology may work as industrial-organizational psychologists and may work as psychological assistants under the supervision of doctoral-level psychologists and may conduct research or psychological evaluations. A bachelor's degree in psychology qualifies a person to assist psychologists and other professionals.

The average annual starting salary for a bachelor's degree in psychology is \$37,714. The average starting salary for a master's degree in psychology is \$52,000 and the doctoral degree starting average is \$62,000.

For more information on a career in the field of Psychology contact the Career Management Services Office or your academic advisor.

Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics www.bls.gov/oco
National Association of Colleges and Employers Salary Survey: Winter 2011



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