Individual Development Plan (IDP) for Postdoctoral Fellows at Vanderbilt University

This Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a valuable communication and planning tool which encourages collaboration between postdoctoral fellows and their research advisors. Each postdoctoral fellow must complete and submit an IDP within two months of her or his initial appointment, as soon as the postdoctoral project(s) are identified. Having a clear project vision and consensus between postdoc and advisor at the beginning of the postdoctoral appointment prevents later misunderstanding.

Goals of the IDP
An annual IDP is one component of a broader professional development strategy and mentoring strategy. Specifically, it helps postdoctoral fellows:

- Identify progress in training and document accomplishments to date.
- Set goals for the upcoming year, including discussing how to spend time to maximize progress toward career, professional development, and project goals.
- Identify short-term needs for improving performance.
- Define ways to develop specific skills and experience needed to prepare for long-term career goals and complete research training.

Benefits of the IDP
The IDP facilitates conversations between research advisors (PI) and postdoctoral fellows about the fellow’s career development. It is an opportunity to discuss the fellow’s long-term career goals, and identify short-term objectives that will help the fellow achieve career success. These short-term goals should include goals for the fellow’s career and professional development (e.g. developing contacts and skills pertinent to the field they hope to pursue) as well as goals for the research project.

Overview of the IDP Process
The development, implementation, and revision of the IDP require a series of steps to be conducted by the postdoctoral fellow and the research mentor. These steps are an interactive effort, beginning with the postdoctoral fellow, and both the postdoc and the research advisor must participate fully in the process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>For Trainee</th>
<th>For Research Advisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review expectations for training</td>
<td>Review expectations and responsibilities for postdoctoral training (see pages 9-13)</td>
<td>Define additional expectations you have for your trainee that aren’t listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1:</strong> Evaluate progress and skills</td>
<td>Evaluate your progress this year; assess your skills as they relate to seven core competency areas for research scientists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2:</strong> Set goals and write IDP</td>
<td>Set specific goals for your research project and professional development.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3:</strong> Discuss and submit IDP</td>
<td>Discuss your IDP with your research advisor. Obtain signatures and submit IDP to the BRET Office of Postdoctoral Affairs.</td>
<td>Review the IDP with your trainee and provide feedback. Sign the IDP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 4:</strong> Implement IDP and revise as needed</td>
<td>Implement your IDP. Periodically review your progress with your mentor. Survey opportunities to further your career and professional development. Revise your IDP as needed.</td>
<td>Establish a regular review process and regularly discuss career and professional development opportunities with postdoc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acknowledgments: This IDP is adapted from resources developed by ScienceCareers, Scripps Research Institute, and the National Postdoctoral Association
Individual Development Plan (IDP)

A. Information/Signatures

Name of postdoctoral fellow:

Department or program:

Year in postdoctoral training:

Current source of funding for postdoctoral training:

Postdoctoral fellow signature: Date:

PI name:

PI signature: Date:

Department chair signature: Date:

B. Annual Research Progress Report

1. Research Project(s): Describe the aims and experimental approaches of your current research project(s)

2. What were your main research goals for the past year?
3. Which goals did you meet? If you did not meet a goal, why not?

4. List all major accomplishments this year in your research, including:
   a. new techniques/expertise acquired
   b. references for publications submitted or published; underline your name in the author list
   c. references for abstracts presented at meetings; underline your name in the author list
   d. grants or fellowships applied for this year
   e. *ad hoc* review of manuscripts
C. Career Development Progress Report

List all major accomplishments this year in your career development, including such things as:

1. Mentoring or teaching activities
2. Career workshops at professional conferences
3. ASPIRE Postdoc Café orientation session
4. ASPIRE Postdoc Café topic sessions
5. ASPIRE modules
6. Monthly PhD Career Connections seminars
7. Annual Career Symposium
8. Leadership in organizations such as the Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association
9. Workshops by the Center for Teaching or other groups pertinent to your long-term career goals
10. Externships (job shadowing), company site visits, or internships
D. Describe your level of satisfaction with your research progress and your career development in the past year using a scale of 1-5 with 1 being highly satisfied. Provide a rationale for your choices.

1 – Highly satisfied
2 – Somewhat satisfied
3 – Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4 – Somewhat dissatisfied
5 – Highly dissatisfied

E. Self-Assessment of Competencies

Using the table on Page 4, reflect on your level of development in seven competency areas important for success in research: 1) Scientific Knowledge; 2) Research Skills; 3) Communication; 4) Professionalism; 5) Management and Leadership Skills; 6) Responsible Conduct of Research; 7) Career Advancement.

For each competency area, put an “x” in the column that most accurately describes your current level of expertise. Mark only one column per competency.

Always consider your career stage when assessing your competencies. Avoid comparing yourself to colleagues who are significantly more junior or senior than you.

Ask your research advisor to review your answers with you.

Pay close attention to the skills for which you and/or your mentor answered, “No basis to evaluate” or “Needs development.” Are these skills you need to hone for your anticipated career path? Similarly, review skills that you identify as “strengths.” You may wish to consider career paths that capitalize on these skills.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Competencies</th>
<th>No basis to evaluate</th>
<th>Needs development</th>
<th>Appropriate to career stage</th>
<th>Strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scientific Knowledge</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad based knowledge of science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep knowledge of specific research area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical evaluation of scientific literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical skills related to my specific research area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation of data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity/innovative thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigating the peer review process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic writing and editing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing scientific publications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing grant proposals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing for nonscientists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking clearly and effectively</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulating and asking sound questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenting research to scientists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenting to nonscientists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching in a classroom setting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and mentoring individuals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking advice from advisors and mentors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating difficult conversations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professionalism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating workplace etiquette</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complying with rules and regulations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upholding commitments and meeting deadlines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining positive relationships with colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to discipline (e.g. professional society member)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to institution (e.g. committee participation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Management and Leadership Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing instruction and guidance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing constructive feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with conflict</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and organizing projects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing/managing budgets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing data and research resources responsibly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading and motivating others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating vision and goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving as a role model</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsible Conduct of Research</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careful recordkeeping practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of data ownership/sharing issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating responsible authorship/publication practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating responsible conduct in human/animal research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to identify and address research misconduct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to identify and manage conflict of interest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Career Advancement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating and maintaining a professional network</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying career options</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing application materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from ScienceCareers MyIDP, which is based on the National Postdoctoral Association’s Core Competencies for Postdoctoral Scholars
F. Goals for the Upcoming Year
   1. Briefly describe your research project goals for the upcoming year.

   In the upcoming year, what:
   a. Publications do you plan to submit?
   b. Meetings, conferences, and workshops do you plan to attend?
   c. Grant or fellowship applications do you plan to submit?
   d. Collaborations do you plan to establish?

   2. Briefly describe your career advancement goals for the upcoming year (e.g. building your professional network, conducting informational interviews with professionals in the field you want to pursue). What professional development training or activities do you plan to participate in (e.g. ASPIRE Postdoc Café, teaching, university service, courses, internships, etc.)?

   3. Briefly describe your skill development goals for the upcoming year (e.g. technical skills you want to learn, gaining teaching experience, improving your writing skills)
G. Long-term career goals

1. What is your long-term career goal (e.g. biotech scientist, medical writer, professor at a research university, professor at an undergraduate institution)?

2. Approximately when do you hope to finish your postdoctoral training?

3. If you plan to finish within 12-18 months, estimate when you will begin a job search.

4. What further training or accomplishments are required before it is appropriate to start a job search?

5. How can your PI help you achieve your goals? What do you need from your PI?

6. [Question for Mentor] How can I, as Mentor, assist the postdoctoral to develop and achieve his or her specific career goals?
Long-Term Goal Setting (Optional)
This section of the IDP is optional. It will be useful for trainees who seek additional structure and strategies for long-term career planning. We encourage trainees to discuss these goals with their research mentor; the BRET Office of Career Development is also available for confidential career advising appointments.

For each of the competencies evaluated in Part D (Self-Assessment), put an asterisk next to those items marked “needs development” or “no basis to evaluate” which are also critical for your long-term career development (i.e. beyond your postdoctoral training). Then, use the table below to set S.M.A.R.T. goals to develop your skills in these areas. S.M.A.R.T. stands for:

- S = Specific
- M = Measurable
- A = Action-oriented
- R = Realistic
- T = Time-bound

Some examples are provided in italics. Add as many rows as needed to address the items with an asterisk. Remember, though, that it may not be realistic to work on every goal at once! Prioritize the most important goals work on them first. Adjust the timelines to avoid burnout.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Specific plan for improvement that is action-oriented and realistic</th>
<th>How will you measure success?</th>
<th>Timeline (could be a self-imposed deadline, or an event like an upcoming conference)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeking advice from advisors &amp; mentors</td>
<td>Ask my PI and collaborator to meet monthly to discuss project progress; schedule meeting times and locations for next 6 months</td>
<td>We meet at least 5 times and develop a concrete plan to publish our project results</td>
<td>Schedule meeting times by the end of next week; develop publication plan by end of semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying career options</td>
<td>Attend monthly PhD Career Connections seminars this academic year</td>
<td>Attend 80% of seminars; Network with speakers; for those whose career interests me, ask them for contact info and follow up</td>
<td>By the end of the academic year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Postdoctoral Training Year 1: Trainee Expectations and Responsibilities

The first year of postdoctoral training represents a transition from student to a more collegial/professional role within the research group. Beginning a postdoctoral position often comes with adjusting to a new research institution and sometimes a new field of study. During this year, you will need to rapidly and efficiently become acquainted with a new research environment, navigate new professional relationships, familiarize yourself with field-specific literature and learn new skills and techniques. It is also important to consider applying for funding from one or more sources, as some fellowship opportunities are limited to individuals who are in their first three years of postdoctoral training. Begin working toward your long term career goal by mapping out your 3-4 year professional plan.

General:
- Have I established a clear set of goals that I wish to accomplish this year and next?
- Have I discussed these goals with my research advisor?

Scientific Knowledge, Research Skills, and Responsible Conduct of Research:
- What are the aims of my project?
- What primary literature should I be reading? Which review articles?
- What new skills and techniques do I need to learn to carry out my project?
- Am I lacking any specific training which would facilitate my experimental goals?
- Have I identified resources at Vanderbilt for participating in responsible conduct of research programs?
- Am I knowledgeable about policies regarding human subjects, live vertebrate animal subjects in research, and safe laboratory practices?

Communication:
- Have I identified fellowship/grant opportunities and mapped out a plan for applying (project and timeline)?
- Have I identified opportunities to practice communicating my research—poster and podium opportunities both within and outside of my institution?
- Have I taken the initiative to request opportunities to review journal articles on behalf of, or in conjunction with, my mentor?

Professionalism and Management and Leadership Skills:
- Have I identified mentors outside of my research advisor who can help guide me and support me in my career goals and professional development?
- Am I actively participating in departmental or program activities such as journal clubs, seminars, retreats and works-in-progress programs?
- Are there local associations or groups (i.e. Post-Doctoral Association, industry groups) or national professional societies that I could become involved in?
- Am I developing project management skills? (e.g. establishing priorities, time management, short and long-term planning, delegating responsibilities)

Career Advancement:
- Am I exploring career options?
- Am I tracking my professional development and accomplishments (i.e. maintaining my CV and/or resume)?
- Have I identified career and professional development resources available to me at Vanderbilt?
Postdoctoral Training Year 2: Trainee Expectations and Responsibilities

As you begin the second year of postdoctoral training, you should be solidly advancing your research project(s) and making progress toward a peer-reviewed publication. You should have acquired considerable expertise in your field now, and be exhibiting your knowledge through mentoring newer lab members and contributing to the scholarly environment through meaningful discussions with others in your scientific community. If you have not already obtained external funding for your work, it should be a priority this year to identify and apply for funding for your research project in order to optimize eligibility requirements from the various funding mechanisms available to you. This is also an important year to attend and present your work at a national meeting.

General:
- Have I established a clear set of research project goals, career advancement goals, and skill development goals that I wish to accomplish this year and next?
- Have I discussed these goals with my mentor?
- Have I thought about my next career stage in light of my skills, interests and values?
- Have I developed a focused set of research goals and outlined how that will lead to publication of a manuscript?

Scientific Knowledge, Research Skills, and Responsible Conduct of Research:
- Am I establishing and demonstrating expertise in my chosen area of study?
- Am I keeping up with current literature in my research area?
- Am I asking important questions and designing experiments to answer these questions?
- Am I thinking creatively?
- If I want an independent research career, am I developing a project that will help me launch my own lab?
- Am I knowledgeable about the people and resources available to me at Vanderbilt to help me advance my research and longer term career goals?
- Have I discussed expectations for publication and authorship with my research mentor and collaborators?

Communication:
- Can I effectively write an original and competitive research proposal?
- Have I identified and taken advantage of opportunities to practice communicating my research—poster and podium opportunities, both within and outside of my institution?
- Have I requested opportunities to review journal articles on behalf of or in conjunction with my mentor?
- Have I expressed interest to my mentor in writing a review article for publication?
- Am I maintaining good communication with mentors, peers, mentees, and administrative staff?

Professionalism and Management and Leadership Skills:
- Have I identified other mentors outside of my immediate research team who can help guide me and support me in my career goals and professional development?
- Do I ask questions and enter into discussions in seminars, conferences, and journal clubs?
- Have I expressed interest to my mentor in mentoring graduate students in the lab?
- Am I actively participating in departmental or program activities such as journal clubs, seminars, retreats and works-in-progress programs?
- Am I becoming involved in other activities outside of my immediate research, such as joining a professional society or association, serving on a committee, or volunteering my time?

Career Advancement:
- Am I exploring career options and identifying likely trajectories that fit my skills, interests and values?
- Am I taking advantage of opportunities to position myself for success?
- Am I actively working to build my professional network and seeking mentors both within and outside of my institution?
- Are there gaps in my knowledge of experience that I should aim to fill to prepare for my career? Have I set goals for filling these gaps?
Postdoctoral Training Year 3: Trainee Expectations and Responsibilities

By the third year of postdoctoral training, you should have completed sufficient research to prepare at least one first-author, peer-reviewed publication. You should also be thinking very critically about what your next career steps will be. If you plan to pursue a research-intensive, tenure-track faculty position, then you should be focusing on publishing more papers and developing an independent line of investigation over the next 1-2 years. If you plan to apply for an NIH Pathway to Independence Award (K99/R00), you cannot have more than four years of postdoctoral experience at the time of application; eligibility for many other fellowships also phases out after Year 3 of postdoctoral training. If you have other career goals in mind, then a clear set of objectives and a timeline should be outlined, as appropriate to the selected career path. (See page 13).

General:
- Have I established a career trajectory and set clear goals that will help me to accomplish this?
- Have I discussed these goals with my mentor?

Scientific Knowledge, Research Skills, and Responsible Conduct of Research:
- Can I articulate how my work contributes to the knowledge in my field?
- Have I established myself as an expert in my field?
- Do I think creatively about the implications of my research on other work in the field?
- Do I have any specialized skills, knowledge or talents that distinguish me from others?
- Am I continuously educating myself and meeting national requirements with regard to responsible conduct in research?

Communication:
- Have I identified fellowship/grant opportunities and mapped out a plan for applying (project and timeline)?
- Have I served as a peer-reviewer for journal articles in my field?
- Have I taken advantage of opportunities to teach? (classroom setting, informal setting)
- For individuals seeking a position outside of a research-intensive academic environment: Have I developed and practiced a research presentation that can be understood by a diverse audience?

Professionalism and Management and Leadership Skills:
- Am I educating myself in laboratory management such as developing a budget, managing personnel, interviewing job candidates, and working with various campus partners such as the grants management office?
- Have I taken on leadership roles in any of the organizations I participate in?
- Have I mentored and taught junior lab members?
- Have I nurtured important relationships with senior researchers outside of my institution who could write a letter of recommendation/support on my behalf?

Career Advancement:
- Do I understand how my skills and experiences may translate to a variety of professional roles?
- Can I clearly articulate my career goals?
- Is my CV or resume up to date and tailored to my career area of interest? Does my CV or resume specifically highlight my skills and accomplishments that relate to that career path and omit irrelevant information?
- Have I reviewed and polished my online presence?
- Are there courses or activities I could participate in that would augment my skills in preparation for my future career goals?
Postdoctoral Training Year 4+: Trainee Expectations and Responsibilities

By your fourth year of postdoctoral training, you should know the direction you would like to take your career and you should be making significant strides in that direction. You should continue to be highly productive in the lab, taking on increasingly independent activities, initiating new collaborations, be solidly progressing in your research project(s) and making progress toward additional peer-reviewed publications. You should be knowledgeable about the resources available to you to help you advance your research and longer term career goals. If you have not already obtained external funding for your work, it should be a priority this year to identify and apply for funding for your research project in order to optimize eligibility requirements for the various funding mechanisms available to you. This is also an important year to be sure to attend and present your work at a national meeting and further develop connections with prominent scientists in your field.

General:
- Have I established a clear set of research goals that I wish to accomplish this year?
- Have I identified my career goal and planned a trajectory for exiting my postdoctoral training period?
- Have I discussed these goals with my mentor and engaged him/her in assisting me in achieving these goals?

Scientific Knowledge, Research Skills, and Responsible Conduct of Research:
- Am I moving my research project forward independently and drawing my own conclusions?
- Am I designing my own scientifically testable hypotheses?
- Am I continuing to build my reputation as an expert in my field of study through publications and presenting at national meetings?
- Am I reading literature beyond my immediate field as a means to stay abreast of interdisciplinary trends and important findings and as a way to expand my research project in new directions?
- Am I taking advantage of opportunities to establish my scientific independence from my mentor?
- Have I generated a novel line(s) of research?
- Have I established new techniques in the lab?

Communication:
- Can I articulate the importance of my research and discoveries in the larger context?
- Have I developed an elevator-style pitch to briefly introduce myself, my research and my career goals to a wide variety of individuals?
- Have I developed a presentation (or several) which could be adapted for a job talk? (expert/non-expert audience)
- Do I have a well-written cover letter(s) which could be quickly adapted for specific job opportunities?

Professionalism and Management and Leadership Skills:
- Am I continuing to nurture my professional relationships and grow my network?
- Can I confidently discuss the literature in my area of expertise?
- Have I effectively built and maintained new and ongoing collaborations?
- Am I serving as a role model for others in the laboratory?
- Have I taken the lead in coordinating or directing large team-projects or collaborations?

Career Advancement:
- Have I established a timetable for my job search and identified where I will look to find opportunities?
- Am I practicing and preparing for job interviews by taking advantage of the Office of Career Development, books, online resources, and mentors who are willing to support me?
- Am I taking advantage of opportunities to network with seminar speakers and at professional conferences?
Details to consider for specific career paths:

Research-Intensive Tenure-Track Position in Academia, Government, or a Research Institute
- Do I understand the timeline for the application process? My job search should begin at least one year before the projected start date and start dates are generally the fall of a given year.
- Have I developed a 3-5 page research statement which articulates my vision for my independent line of research?
- Have I developed a teaching statement? (May be necessary depending on institution where applying)
- Have I prepared and practiced both a job talk and a chalk talk to give at an interview?
- Have I outlined my future research goals and can I clearly articulate and defend them?
- Have I identified at least three individuals who can provide letters of recommendation that speak to my high potential for a successful career in research?

Teaching-Intensive Academic Position
- Do I understand the timeline for the application process? My job search should begin at least one year before the projected start date and start dates are generally the fall of a given year.
- Have I developed a teaching statement/philosophy?
- Have I acquired teaching experience in the classroom?
- Have I prepared and practiced a presentation that demonstrates my teaching abilities?
- Have I prepared other documents that may be required for applications, such as a research statement that is appropriate for a primarily undergraduate institution? Other commonly requested documents are a statement of faith (for faith-based universities) and a statement of commitment to diversity.
- Have I identified at least three individuals who can provide a letter of recommendation which speaks to my high potential for a successful career in teaching?

Industry Research
- Have I demonstrated participation and/or leadership in interdisciplinary team projects?
- Have I shown that I have strong interpersonal skills? Do I have examples to illustrate this which highlight my involvement in team-based projects and effective communication with colleagues?
- Can I articulate content-driven and technical expertise in my field?
- Am I able to communicate the broad implications of my work to scientists from diverse disciplines?
- Can I explain how my postdoctoral research relates to human disease, and if possible, to the context of current drug therapies?

Other Career Paths
Scientists pursue diverse careers! PhD scientists are employed in a variety of roles in business, academia, government, and nonprofits. It is critical that you identify the key elements required for success in the field you seek to enter. Attend events sponsored by the BRET Office of Career Development and conduct informational interviews with professionals to identify these elements and ways to prepare yourself for these careers.