

Worksheet 1.1: My goals for this book or class

Take some time to consider your goals for this book or class. What is it that you want to know when you are done? How will you know that you succeeded? For now don't worry about making specific, measurable, action-oriented goals with deadlines. We just want your goals as raw as they come out of your head.

My Goals are:

Worksheet 1.2: My questions that need answered

Take some time to list the questions that you need answered for your specific situation. As you progress through the book (or course), look for the answers to these questions. When you think of more questions, record them here or use extra paper if necessary. Check them off when they are answered, and perhaps make a notation of where you found the answer.

Answered	My Questions

Worksheet 1.3: How to use this workbook

Think about this workbook as a lasting record that you can use as a reference when you are ready to apply to graduate school or find a job. The margins are wide—write in them! If you’re reading this on an e-reader, get some actual pieces of paper to use as worksheets (they don’t translate to e-books very well) and a good pen or pencil. Create your own notebook or folder of materials. If you are taking the accompanying classes, the quizzes will have items asking if you’ve filled out the worksheets instead of having you submit entries online, so we’re using the honor system (although this is *your* career, so I would be astonished if you aren’t taking it seriously).

Commit to filling out all the worksheets that apply to you, but ignore chapters and worksheets that you don’t need. Physically writing out your answers helps you to process and remember the key points and action items, so this workbook cannot be completed online. If you use a computer to create digital versions of your planning documents, use the workbook first to firmly fix things in your mind. For example, you might write the file names of the documents you create and where they are located (e.g., “Psychology Programs.xls” in the “Applications for 2019 folder,” or “Personal Statement Draft.docx”).

Furthermore, use whatever systems you want to organize your campaign for admission to graduate school or to launch your career. Any organizational system you actually use is better than one that you don’t use.

Finally, the research shows that your odds of following through on your intentions are increased by writing down a day and time that you will do the next tasks. This is called an “implementation intention.” So make an appointment with yourself for when you will read the next chapter, fill out worksheets, surf the web for information, or complete your next action items.

When I will read the next chapter: _____

Action items: Next steps	Date and time

Worksheet 2.1: My Risks and Vulnerabilities

Take some time to consider any barriers and struggles you have that could limit your success or send you down a dead-end path. What is the next step you need to take to start addressing this problem?

My Risks:	My Next Steps:
I am prone to depression.	I am getting help at the counseling center, and will start exercising.
I already have a lot of student loans.	I'm trying not to change majors any more, and will avoid adding credit card debt..
My GPA is too low.	I will read Appendix B on how to study, and will actually do the things recommended.
I don't really know how to become a zoologist.	I need to find a zoologist to talk to about how this works.

Worksheet 2.2: My current “What” and “How.”

Write down your *current* plans for your first post-college job or graduate program. Write down the action you are taking that corresponds to these plans. You will revisit this worksheet after reading **Chapter 3**.

My plans:	My corresponding activities: Curriculum, experience, and networking.
Neuroscientist.	Psychology major. Working in an animal research laboratory. Meeting with the graduate student who runs the lab.
Computer programmer.	Computer science minor. Learning programming languages. On-campus job in desktop computer support.
I have no idea what I want to do.	Majoring in Psychology. Need to find a research lab experience or internship opportunity. Need to find a faculty advisor. Need to join the peer mentor program and network with other students.

Worksheet 3.1: My passion, my purpose

Many students had a “dream job” or “passion” that they were pursuing when they got to college. What was yours? Take some time to reflect on what that says about your purpose?

My Passion:	What this says about my Purpose:
Marine biologist.	Go exploring, and bring back discoveries that help solve the problems of society. Work outside a building, willing to be uncomfortable if it gets me into the field.
Sports psychologist.	Help people become excellent and overcome limitations. Help people compete to win.

My Purpose Statement: Take a moment to reflect on the purpose you are discovering from listing the values that guide your interests and occupational dreams. Can you articulate a *purpose statement*? Many students take a whole semester (or longer!) to discover their purpose, so don't worry if you don't have anything solid yet. One example of a purpose might be “I want to work in a field that allows me to help people live their full potential despite limitations.” If that were your purpose, it might point toward fields like occupational therapy, counseling, education, coaching, and so on. Notice how a clear purpose implies a wide variety of potential career options?

My purpose is to: _____.

Worksheet 4.1: Starting out, redux.

Consider your purpose you articulated in the last module. Consider your *mindset* as you start this process. Are you becoming more flexible? Are you becoming more realistic about how graduate school and careers work (vs. stereotypes)?

Remind yourself, my purpose is to: _____.

In light of this mindset and focus on purpose, what are your next steps? Take a minute to write down some steps with dates and times to schedule them. Examples could include:

- Reflect more on my purpose, or calling, for a career (long-term).
- Talk to people who know me about my plans and get feedback on how realistic they are.
- Explore some websites that list the typical exam scores and grades of students admitted to those programs, and compare to my situation. Do I have a good chance?
- Find 5 *new* graduate degrees that I hadn't thought of yet, but which would allow me to pursue my purpose (e.g., public health, other fields of psychology, other fields of study outside psychology).
- Meet with a faculty advisor to ask about options outside my initial vision for my career (e.g., "what is there besides a Ph.D. in clinical psychology)."

The point is to start taking action to adopt the right mindset as you become more sophisticated and proactive.

My Next Steps	Schedule

Worksheet 5.1: Getting Organized

It's time to get organized. Use this checklist.

- I have a physical (paper), academic planner.
- I have a file structure on my computer with a top level for my admissions campaign.
- Inside the top-level, I have a file folder for each program to which I'm applying.
- I'm working from a storage space that is secure, so I don't lose anything (server, DropBox, Google Drive, etc.).
- I have a database file (like MS Excel) where I am listing all the programs I'm considering, with due dates, etc.
- I have started my timeline, and am planning ahead for:
 - Recommendation letters.
 - Admissions tests like the GRE or MCAT.
 - Personal statement, including time to have other people review it, revisions, and tailoring it to each program.
 - I'm checking to see if the faculty member I want to work with is taking students (advanced technique; applies mostly to doctoral-level science programs).
- I'm planning ahead to cover the costs of entrance exams, applications, and travel to interviews.

Worksheet 6.1: Finding Options

You've been considering options. Start the list! Use this checklist.

- I started my database of programs, with addresses, websites, emails, etc.
- I have honestly considered my chances and spoken with an advisor to get feedback.
- I have considered alternatives to my initial choice of graduate program (e.g., public health instead of psychology).
- I have obtained handouts from my university on graduate school options.
- I have conducted a website exploration of the national professional association website for my field to see what options are listed (e.g., www.apa.org or the *Graduate Programs in Psychology* book-see **Appendix A**).
- I have conducted a “deep dive” into the internet to look at specific graduate programs.
 - I have verified that I am eligible to apply.
 - I have verified that the program has the degree and area of study that I want.
 - I'm brainstorming ways to get “inside information” about these programs (e.g., maybe a friend of a friend knows somebody?).
- I'm filling out my initial list of programs (next page).
- I'll start narrowing my options based on what I discover.
 - I'll aim for 1/3 “reach” schools, 1/3 “safety” schools, and 1/3 in between.

Worksheet 7.1: Entrance Exams

Take a deep breath. It's time to get ready for the Graduate Record Exam or similar.

Action item #1: The entrance exam I need is: _____

(e.g., GRE, MCAT, LSAT)

Action item #2: Get the resources available from the test company (e.g., <https://www.ets.org/gre>, <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/taking-mcat-exam/>, <https://www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/about-the-lsat>)

Action item #3: Work backward from the application due dates to create a timeline. Use the timeline to determine when you need to take the exam. The exam dates that work for my timeline are: _____

Action item #4: Get some test prep materials as necessary. This could include The Princeton Review (www.princetonreview.com), the Kaplan Test Prep (www.kaptest.com), Magoosh Test Prep (<https://magoosh.com>), or other. Decide if you want tutoring or a test prep course.

Action item #5: Learn the instructions and format of the test so that you don't need to spend any time reading instructions when you take the test.

Action item #6: Treat your math anxiety, learning disability, or attention deficit (e.g., have your medication ready, get an accommodation for extended time if applicable). For math anxiety, the treatments are "guided mastery" (*aka* tutoring by someone who is not anxious), exposure and avoidance prevention (*aka* working example problem sets until the anxiety fades), stress management (*aka* learning relaxation techniques or similar), improving competence and confidence (*aka* choking down the anxiety and just getting reacquainted with the math you need for the test), and cognitive reframing (*aka* anxiety is just focus...you're not scared, you're pumped up).

Action item #7: Create your exam prep schedule and add it to your timeline. Stick to the schedule. Take a full practice test to start. Consider taking the practice test at the same time of day that you will take the entrance exam, for maximum realism. How many study sessions do you need? Missed practice sessions are your avoidance behavior acting up, so they must be replaced, not skipped.

Worksheet 8.1: Letters of Recommendation

Action item #1: Identify your letter writers.

How many letters of recommendation do you need? _____

I will ask these individuals to write a letter of recommendation:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Action item #2: Create a document that reminds them of 1) how they know you 2) how long they've known you 3) in what capacity they know you.

Action item #3: Create a document that describes what you've done with them and includes your "talking points." Highlight anything they need to know.

Action item #4: Create a document *for each letter writer* (sometimes there are different lists of programs for different recommendation writers) that lists every program for which you need their letter of recommendation. Include ALL necessary information (e.g., website, due date, email).

Action item #5: Have your Curriculum Vitae or resume and your personal statement ready for your letter writers.

Action item #6: Contact the individuals you've identified as potential writers of your recommendation letters. Meet with them if possible. Make it *easy* for them.

Action item #7: Ask politely if they can write *a strong letter* for you. If anyone "sends out the vibe" that their letter will be unflattering, find an alternative letter writer. You cannot afford a negative recommendation letter.

Worksheet 9.1: Personal Statement and Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Action item #1: Download a CV template or compare your current CV to a template. Create your CV and clean it up. Get feedback. Revise.

Action item #2: Determine what written documents your graduate programs require. They differ. Usually, there is a “personal statement,” but for medicine, it’s the “15 experiences” document and some other things.

Action item #3: Write from a template (formatting) and outline (content). Get feedback from *qualified* individuals (remember—you want *inside information*). Revise. Polish. Perfect. This is one part of the application over which you have control.

Action item #4: Compare your final draft to this checklist:

- My written documents make me look impressive, but not narcissistic.
- My documents have a clear “ask” if appropriate (e.g., the correct goals such as “obtain a Ph.D. in Psychology by working with Dr. Smith at the University of State in the Psychological Science Laboratory.”)
- My written materials are personalized, or tailored, for each program (unless it is a “common application” that only allows one version).
- My statement is not overly personal about things that would be a “red flag” (e.g., my criminal record).
- The material in my written materials supports the *thesis* or “ask” and is not tangential or meandering.
- My documents are not too long or too boring. A long story about yourself is probably boring (a short anecdote is fascinating).
- If my materials include essays that pull for the “right answer,” I am more thoughtful than the typical student. Example: a diversity essay pulls for “I love diversity and am very diverse myself.” Everyone writes that. You should write about how you have interacted with multiculturalism and diversity in your education and how that has changed you in some way. Take it up a level.
- If my materials give me an opportunity to highlight my knowledge of the field, I have woven that in. Example: when applying to a clinical psychology program that is very science-focused, have you read the last few years of *Psychological Science* (https://www.psychologicalscience.org/publications/psychological_science)? What is happening in your field right now? What are the “big questions” everyone is asking? What has your future advisor been doing? Do you know about that area of inquiry? If you can pull this off without looking patronizing (e.g., citing all their recent work) or narcissistic, that is a very sophisticated personal statement.

For applicants to medical school: Your new best friend is www.aamc.org/students. This book and course will not *duplicate* everything found there, but rather is a “high level” overview of how to get into graduate school, with tips, tricks, and suggestions. Go there and read everything. For example, there are 15 core competencies that medical schools are looking for in applicants. Your application should match them as much as possible. Also, there are Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR). If you don’t have them, you need not apply. I have advised students who want to become physicians, but who did not know that there are minimum requirements. If you didn’t take the required coursework, you aren’t getting in. It’s that simple.

Worksheet 10.1: Interviewing

It is time to start preparing for interviews if you haven't already.

Action item #1: Write 3-5 talking points that you intend to cover when interviewing for a graduate school.

Action item #2: Prepare a list of likely questions that you will be asked during the interview, along with sample answers.

Action item #3: Prepare a *long* list of questions *you* will ask at the interview. What if the interviewer is tired and just stares at you repeating "what other questions do you have?" Can you fill 20-30 minutes?

Action item #4: Schedule a "mock interview" with a friend, peer mentor, or anyone willing to take it seriously.

Action item #5: Create a checklist for follow-up materials, including sample thank you letters, voicemails, emails, and templates of any other communications you will need to have handy.

Worksheet 10.2: Fielding Offers

You won't need this worksheet until you are actually applying to graduate school, but keep it handy! The day will come that you need to respond appropriately to emails, phone calls, and/or letters that offer you admission to graduate school.

Action item #1: Write 3-5 talking points that you intend to cover when you receive a verbal offer. What are the *most important* things you need to know to make a decision?

- Are the terms of the offer what you expected?
- Is there any paperwork you'll need to do to formally accept an offer of admission?
- What are the next steps if you receive an offer that you intend to accept?

Action item #2: Create a checklist for fielding offers. Here are some probable elements of your checklist.

- I know the timeline for each program to which I have applied (e.g., when they should notify applicants who receive an offer of admission).
- Who will I notify when I get an offer? (Who are the best people to help you celebrate or to give you advice?)
- I know the "rules" for my graduate program (e.g., clinical psychology follows the rules of the Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology: CUDCP).
- I will get verbal offers confirmed *in writing* before I make any commitments.
- Start a table of "details" like whether or not you will get a graduate assistantship, how much tuition and living expenses would cost, etc. Use this to compare and contrast offers.

Worksheet 11.1: Resilience and next steps

If you did not get into graduate school, *don't panic*. Many students, including myself, take a couple or three years to get admitted to graduate school. There is a lot of random variability built into the system. University budgets, admissions priorities, whose "turn" it is, etc. You cannot control these things. That said, consider debriefing with your advisor. Get an honest appraisal of why you didn't get in. Sometimes it's dumb luck. Sometimes it's obvious; low test scores, lack of experience, etc. Take some time to soak it all in, then get moving again. Now it's time to make some decisions.

Action item #1: Can you identify any weaknesses in your application? Can you remediate these weaknesses? What can you do to fix your test scores, experience, personal statement, and/or interviewing performance? Do you need to get someone else to replace a letter of recommendation that may not have been as glowing as you would have liked? Another year *should* improve your application in some way, even if it only affords more time to get additional experience.

Action item #2: Decide: will you reapply next year? Will you pivot in a new direction? Maybe you can broaden your scope of potential graduate programs. Remember that there is not a close correspondence between your graduate degree and your long-term work activity, although it is much better than the correspondence between the undergraduate degree and careers. That is, people who complete a Ph.D. in clinical psychology become psychologists, but they may work primarily as clinicians, researchers, teachers, consultants, or some mix of these. This is true for most graduate degrees. Therefore, if you are working toward your *purpose* and not your *passion* (dream job-as we have been using passion in this workbook), ultimately it won't matter if you don't get your top choice.

Action item #3: How will you spend the next year? Now you need a job. Make a plan to start reading **Section 3** of the workbook. You already have all of the chapters and worksheets.

Worksheet 12.1: Winning Graduate School

Action item #1: Inventory your graduation requirements

Action item #2: What roles will you play?

Action item #3: Do you have systems in place?

Action item #4: Plan several “experiments” to see what attempts to “sharpen the ax” work well for you.

Worksheet 13.1: “Know yourself:” My interests, abilities, and personality.

Consider taking a vocational interests inventory (e.g., O*Net) or other assessment that provides you with some feedback about yourself (e.g., the Clifton Strengths Finder 2.0 by Gallup). Also, consider interviewing some close friends or relatives. What do you do best? What interests you to the point that you will try hard to succeed at it? Which of these might be rare and valuable?

My Interests, abilities, and personality	Rare and valuable

I will interview these people to ask for honest feedback on my most valuable skills and abilities:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Summary of self-awareness insights. Summarize what you are learning about yourself. What kinds of opportunities might be suggested by my skills, interests, and personality?

Worksheet 13.2: My personal situation

Take a fearless inventory of your personal situation, as it relates to the opportunities you can pursue. Can you move anywhere? Do you need to keep working full-time? Do you have good health? Do you have some weaknesses you need to cope with? Keep in mind that people have *poor insight* when they are overconfident or discouraged. You probably need some feedback from trusted friends and advisors on whether or not your conclusions about how your situation affects your opportunities are valid, naively optimistic, or too pessimistic.

My Personal Situation:	What this means for my plans:
I need to work full time to pay for my life.	My time for internships and research is limited.
I can move anywhere.	I should investigate which cities have the best job market in careers that interest me.
I'm bad at English grammar	I need to practice writing or consider starting in a career that doesn't require a high level of writing skill.

Worksheet 14.1: My Psychology Major

Action item #1: Are you in the right degree program? Complete the “which psychology major/concentration should I choose” quiz. Many students are in the BS program when they should be in the BA program. Many students are not in the counseling careers concentration when they should be.

Action item #2: Consider this list of strengths of the Psychology Major. Place an X next to those strengths at which you excel. How can you “add fuel to the fire” in your areas of strength? This is not an exhaustive list.

Strengths:	I'm good at this	I can improve this skill:
Science	X	Read the research literature related to my career interests, to find out what the science says.
Writing		
Speaking		
Administration		
Service		
People skills		
Data analysis		
Other:		
Other:		

Action item #3: What steps will you take to start finding “insiders” who can give you information about your psychology major and/or career interests?

I will:

1. Example: I will find out how to join the Peer Mentor Program
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Worksheet 15.1: Know my career options

There was no video lecture on “knowing what careers are available to psychology majors” because you can read.

Action item #1: Read the handouts on career options.

Action item #2: Check out some of the useful career resources listed in the handouts.

Action item #3: Do the Indeed.com assignment.

Action item #4: Summary of career option insights. Summarize what you are learning about career opportunities. Marvel at how nice it is not to have to write a 2-page reflection paper to turn in online. This is *your* career, so you write whatever insights help you the most.

Action item #5: Share your career option insights. Share your insights with a friend or relative. Do they agree? Did they have more ideas? What were you missing?

Worksheet 16.1: Plan for experience

Experience is mandatory, and usually that means research experience, internships, work in a related field, or some other experiential learning activity. It is probably better to go *deep* than *broad* with your experience. That is, you don't need to work in 5 different research labs or do 4 internships. Instead, plan for some quality experience that lasts at least one semester or longer.

Action item #1: If you have not already become familiar with the Undergraduate Programs webpage, go explore now. Take an hour to become completely familiar with the opportunities, download necessary forms, and take notes.

Action item #2: If you have not already started getting experience, commit now to which semester you will start.

Starting in _____(Fall/Spring/Summer) of _____(year) I will:

_____ (concrete plan).

Worksheet 17.1: Start Networking

Action item #1: Create a LinkedIn profile (see handout in Module 3).

Action item #2: Start lining up “Informational Interviews.” In Module 4, you can conduct these interviews using the information on how to present yourself well in an interview.

People I could interview:

Name:	Email:	Telephone:
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Note: This assignment lasts until you have started your career. The wise student is always on the lookout for another informational interview opportunity.

Worksheet 18.1: Start preparing my paper portfolio

It is time to start the paper trail if you haven't already. Practice crafting professional emails, polish the resume, and template out a cover letter that can be customized as necessary. Practice by presenting yourself well when applying for your next job, or start a file where you gather templates to use for the future. You can explore the Career Services webpage for information on cover letters and resumes.

Action item #1: Write a template of a cover letter to use when applying for a job.

Action item #2: Write or update your resume. Consider making an appointment with a professional advisor or Career Services to have them review your resume.

Action item #3: Write a template of an email inquiring about a job opportunity.

Action item #4: Consider making an appointment with a professional advisor or Career Services to have them review your resume.

Worksheet 18.2: Interviewing

It is time to start preparing for interviews if you haven't already.

Action item #1: Write 3-5 talking points that you intend to cover when interviewing for a job.

Action item #2: Prepare a list of likely questions that you will be asked during the interview, along with sample answers.

Action item #3: Prepare a list of questions *you* will ask at the interview.

Action item #4: Schedule a "mock interview" with a friend.

Action item #5: Create a checklist for follow-up materials, including sample thank you letters, voicemails, emails, and templates of any other communications you will need to have handy.

Worksheet 20.1: Pivot to Graduate School

If you're certain that you do not want to attend graduate school, congratulations! You can skip this worksheet. However, if you discover that you need a *credential* (such as a license) or *qualification* (such as a master's degree) for the career you want, then you may start to consider options for graduate school.

Action item #1: Why do you need to go to graduate school? Check your reasoning with someone in a position to know if you are right (e.g., career counselor, professional advisor, faculty advisor).

Action item #2: Make a plan to start reading Section 2 of the workbook. You already have all of the chapters and worksheets, but this will take longer than the time allotted for Module 5.