

# **The Portable Mentor**

## **Expert Guide to a Successful Career in Psychology**

Edited by

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and

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**Kluwer Academic / Plenum Publishers**  
New York Boston Dordrecht London Moscow

*To teachers and trainees in psychology,  
and to all who inspire us to keep learning.  
—mjp*

*To my Grandfather, Donald Manlove,  
my mentor in life.  
—mdp*

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# Preface

Although graduate training in psychology typically offers students opportunities to develop an extraordinary number of skills and to be exposed to the enormous breadth and history of our field, training on how to develop a successful career in psychology is sometimes more difficult to obtain. The idea for this volume was born from each of our experiences as Chair of the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS). Through interactions with psychology departments across the nation, and with over 60,000 APAGS constituents, we learned that students and early career psychologists often express a need for additional information on practical career issues, such as how to write a grant, teach a class, publish a research manuscript, apply for a postdoctoral fellowship, or acquire skills necessary to begin a clinical practice, for instance. Students might acquire some of these skills through interactions with their mentor, however not all mentors have had experiences with each of these professional tasks.

The aim of this book is to provide graduate students and early career psychologists with a comprehensive and practical resource text on professional development issues in psychology. To accomplish this task, we have selected “expert” contributors who have demonstrated a strong commitment to training in psychology each to serve as the “field’s mentor” in a particular domain of professional development. Thus, with this volume, it was our goal to offer students the best possible professional development training from the most successful leaders in psychology.

In designing this volume, we wished to create a resource that would be comprehensive in scope, and practical in use. The book is divided into five sections that cover professional development issues relevant to each stage of early career development in psychology. Chapters review topics relevant to both science- and practice-oriented psychologists, with a specific focus on universal hurdles and professional tasks that are not ordinarily included in typical graduate curricula. We requested that authors provide bullet-pointed lists, and illustrative examples whenever possible, as well as lists of additional resources for each topic. We also asked that each contributor provide the kind of specific instruction and suggestions that they would offer their own mentees.

Section One of the book reviews general, overarching issues that apply to graduate students and to young professionals beginning their careers. The book begins with a discussion of the scientist-practitioner model and guiding principles for developing a career that will have maximal impact on our evolving field. Chapters on cultural competence and ethics offer excellent discussions of topics that can serve as a foundation for decisions made throughout a career in psychology. Each of these chapters reviews issues specifically relevant to students and early career psychologists. This section concludes with a review of difficult challenges and helpful suggestions relevant to the balance between personal and professional lives.

Section Two includes chapters pertaining to career development in research and academic domains. Each chapter addresses a task that is crucial to a successful scientific career, but often not discussed explicitly during graduate training. Chapters on research offer specific steps for reviewing scientific literature and disseminating research findings, in both presentation or publication formats. This section also includes a chapter outlining the tasks involved in completing the dissertation, and a chapter with recommendations for preparing and teaching a course on psychology.

Section Three addresses professional development in the practice domain. An introductory chapter reviews opportunities to gain clinical experience at each stage of training, and offers ideas for the competencies that should be obtained following the completion of each clinical experience. This section also includes a chapter with specific strategies for beginning a successful private practice, including considerations for selecting a specific type of practice and business skills that are needed to manage it. In our experience, students most frequently have questions regarding application processes relevant to training hurdles in professional psychology. Four chapters are therefore included with concrete suggestions regarding the internship and licensure application processes, and information regarding board certification (ABPP) in psychology. Because many early career psychologists are also clinical supervisors, this section offers a useful discussion of models to guide the development of clinical supervision skills.

Not all psychologists are involved in professional service, but those who are often cite strong mentorship and excellent role models as leading reasons for their involvement. For this reason, Section Four is dedicated to the development of a professional service career, with chapters that help to explain the importance of professional service within psychology. This section begins with a chapter on the roles served by professional organizations in psychology, and the range of options for students and early career psychologists to become active in these groups, either as members or governance leaders. This section also includes a discussion of advocacy in psychology with specific ideas on how students and young psychologists can become involved with efforts to solicit support for the needs of our field. Two chapters address the promotion of psychology in the media, offering a vision and example for the successful public education of psychology, and specific guidelines to follow when interacting with a media source.

Section Five addresses professional development issues that are most relevant to the end of formal graduate training. This section begins with a comprehensive discussion of postdoctoral fellowships in psychology, including different types of positions and practical strategies for the post-doc application process. This section also includes a review of the NIH grant application process and funding mechanisms most relevant to early career psychologists. Two chapters addressing employment issues in psychology are also included in this section. One of these chapters reviews the application process for academic positions, and the other reviews recent data regarding employment trends in psychology and among graduates in psychology.

Overall, we hope that this volume will serve as a helpful resource for students, early career psychologists, and teachers of psychology. We have structured the book so that it might be used as a text in a professional development workshop series and/or a resource volume that psychologists can refer to throughout their careers. To all who are beginning their careers in psychology, we wish you luck and success.

**Mitchell J. Prinstein**  
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## Acknowledgements

With a special debt of gratitude, I wish to acknowledge the hard work, cooperation, and generosity of the contributors to this volume, all of whom are devoted and deeply committed to the training of psychologists.

Thanks to Peter Salovey, Kelly Brownell, and Alan Kazdin for their support and guidance with this project. Also, thanks to Sharon Panulla and Sarah Williams at Kluwer for their assistance in the preparation of this volume, and to Erica Foster and Carrie Hommel for their clerical assistance.

Most importantly, thanks to my mentors, Annette La Greca and Tony Spirito, whose dedicated and selfless mentorship throughout my training served as inspirational examples, and helped me earn the opportunity to share just a little of what I learned from them in this volume.

Thanks to my family and friends for everything, always.

—**Mitch Prinstein**

This book would not have been conceivable without the influence, support and encouragement of my own mentors, supervisors, colleagues, and trainers. I want to thank the faculty and my colleagues in training at Boston University, within APA, and at the Boston Consortium. In particular, I would like to thank Bob Harrison and Dave Barlow for their personal and professional support around this project. Also, I would like to express my gratitude to Jessica Henderson Daniel, Kamala Greene, Liz Donovan, Wanda Grant-Knight, Terry Cline, Jerry Koocher, Marty Seligman, Jeanne Fama, and Kathie Malley-Morrison for their advice and support concerning this undertaking. The book would also not have been possible without the Job-like patience of my parents, Judith Hazelton and Trent Patterson, and stepparents, Phillip Hazelton and Mary-Beth Patterson, during this process and throughout my graduate career.

—**Marcus Patterson**

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