

Industrial-Organizational Psychology: A Brief Description

Source: <http://www.siop.org/history/crsppp.htm>

Industrial-Organizational (I-O) psychology is both the study of behavior in organizational and work settings and the application of the methods, facts, and principles of psychology to individuals and groups in organizational and work settings. I-O psychologists are versatile behavioral scientists specializing in human behavior in the workplace. I-O psychologists recognize the interdependence of individuals, organizations, and society, and they recognize the impact of factors such as increasing government influences, growing consumer awareness, skill shortages, and the changing nature of the workforce. I-O psychologists facilitate responses to issues and problems involving people at work by serving as advisors and catalysts for business, industry, labor, public, academic, community, and health organizations. They are:

- Scientists who derive principles of individual, group, and organizational behavior through research;
- Consultants and staff psychologists who develop scientific knowledge and apply it to the solution of problems at work; and
- Teachers who train students in the research and application of Industrial-Organizational Psychology

The following parameters differentiate the IO specialty from others.

- a. **Populations:** The distinct focus of I/O psychology is on human behavior in work settings. Therefore, the populations affected by the practice of I/O psychology include individuals in and applicants to business, industry, labor, public (including non-profit), academic, community, and health organizations.
- b. **Problems:** I/O psychologists deal with problems or issues that can be classified as both applied and basic in nature. Basic problems are quite variable, following the investigator's interests. Examples include research on methods of behavioral measurement, communication, motivation, social interaction, and leadership. Applied problems and activities are oriented around scientific solutions to human problems at work. These latter problems and activities include but are not limited to:
 - Recruitment, Selection and Placement: Analyzing jobs and work, developing recruitment procedures, developing selection procedures, validating tests, optimizing placement of personnel, and identifying management potential
 - Training and Development: Identifying training and development needs, formulating and implementing training programs, coaching employees, evaluating the effectiveness of training and development programs, and planning careers.
 - Performance Measurement: Developing criteria, determining the economic utility of performance, and evaluating organizational effectiveness.

- Motivation and Reward Systems: Developing, implementing, and evaluating motivation and reward programs such as goal setting programs or pay-for-performance plans.
- Organizational Development: Analyzing organizational structures and climates, maximizing the satisfaction and effectiveness of individuals and work groups, and facilitating organizational change.
- Quality of Work Life: Identifying factors associated with job attitudes, designing and implementing programs to reduce work stress and strain, developing programs that promote safe work behavior and the prevention of accidents, illnesses, and injuries, and designing programs that enhance work/family life.
- Consumer Behavior: Assessing consumer preferences, evaluating customer satisfaction with products and services, and developing market segmentation strategies.
- The Structure of Work and Human Factors: Designing jobs and work, optimizing person-machine effectiveness, and developing systems technologies.

Example Job Titles of CSULB MAIO Graduates

- Personnel Analyst
- Performance Assessment Services Consultant
- Compensation Analyst
- Human Resources Manager
- Special Projects Coordinator
- Consultant for Strategic Resources
- Director of Marketing
- Organizational Effectiveness Consultant
- Organizational Development Specialist
- Training & Development Manager
- Strategic Research Analyst
- Research Analyst
- Testing & Assessment Specialist

Example Organizations for which CSULB MAIO Graduates Work

Los Angeles USD, Strategic Business Solutions - Rite Aid, Andersen Worldwide, Ford Motor Company, Ernst & Young, Pacific Bell, Hay Group Consulting, Toyota Motor Credit Corporation, Universal Studios, J.D. Power & Associates, City of Long Angeles, City of Santa Monica, City of Huntington Beach, City of Long Beach, County of Los Angeles, County of Orange, Boeing, TRW, Southern California Edison, The Gas Company, Jack-in-the-Box (Corporate), TransAmerica, CSU Dominguez Hills, California State University Chancellor's Office