

The 5 Top Reasons to Study Psychology

Psychology is a useful and employable degree

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Psychology is one of the most popular undergraduate majors, and applications to graduate programs in Psychology continue to be strong. Over the years I have heard many people criticize Psychology as a college major and as a [career](#) path, citing reasons ranging from low pay and few jobs, to “it’s not useful” to “it’s just an easy and fun” college major.

But there are many positive reasons to study Psychology that go beyond career possibilities (although those are not nearly as bleak as some suggest).

[Understanding Basic Psychological & Scientific Principles.](#) Psychology as a social science relies on the scientific method. Although Psychology’s emphasis on research methods and statistics turns many Psych majors off (these are the least popular courses in surveys of psychology graduates), years later, Psych graduates say that research methods and ability to interpret statistical results are the biggest contributors to their career success, regardless of whether they pursued a career in psychology or elsewhere.

Critical thinking. A great deal of psychological content, and the methods taught and used by psychologists, focus on how to think critically. Critical thinking is considered to be essential to being an educated person, and is often a general [education](#) requirement in colleges. Psychology courses develop the critical thinking skills that are important in business, law, and other professions.

More Effective in the Workplace. Industrial-Organizational Psychology (one of the [top-10 highest paying professions](#)) focuses on understanding human dynamics in the workplace. A knowledge of human behavior is one of the ‘selling points’ for Psych majors when it comes to gaining employment, and a knowledge of basic psychology makes you a more effective supervisor/manager.

Understanding of Relationships and Well-Being. Although studying psychology doesn’t necessarily make you psychologically healthier (any more than studying medicine makes you physically healthy), Psych majors do have this knowledge at their fingertips and should be more aware of the fact that good interpersonal and family relationships require attention and work. Psych majors should, at least, know where to go when they need counseling or [psychotherapy](#).

Improves Employability. Contrary to popular belief, Psychology is a very good, general major for careers in law, social services, education, business, and many other occupations. The trick is knowing how to “sell” your Psychology degree and background to a potential employer (the employer may hold to [stereotypes](#) that Psychology is an ‘empty’ major without real skills). However, savvy employers (and savvy job applicants) know that an understanding of human behavior is essential to success in the workplace, and this needs to be emphasized as an important, and employable, competency.

Graduates with psychology degrees end up in a wide array of occupations, and most are quite successful because of what they learned in college.