What does it take to transition to a career in science policy? SCI interviewed individuals working in various science policy sectors to skills, traits, and experiences that led to successful careers in science policy. Benefits and gaps of an academic training were also identified.

**PROFILE OF A SCIENCE POLICY EXPERT**

Virtually all respondents actively participated in extracurricular activities during their time in graduate school. They identified these activities, especially internships and fellowships outside of academia, as important elements for a successful transition to a career in Science Policy.

Among respondents, the most important skills needed for career success in science policy were communication abilities, both oral and written. Humility and respect were often cited as relevant personality traits by study participants.

**PERFECT FIT BETWEEN SCIENCE AND POLICY SKILLS AND TRAITS**

Interviews for this report found that the skills and personality traits developed through scientific training (blue) complement those provided in a policy background (lime) and that a successful career in science policy needs a combination of both.

### Benefits of science training
- ✔ Resilience and persistence
- ✔ Analytical skills and curiosity
- ✔ Familiarity with uncertainty and nuance
- ✔ Knowledge of the scientific process

### Benefits of policy training
- ✔ Understanding how the government works
- ✔ Interpersonal skills training (e.g. persuasion)
- ✔ Broad exposure to policy issues
- ✔ Practical policy skills (e.g. memo writing)

### Gaps in science training
- ❌ Unfamiliarity with how the government works
- ❌ Insufficient communication skills training
- ❌ Reduced interpersonal skills practice
- ❌ Misunderstanding of policy inputs

### Gaps in policy training
- ❌ Partial topic-area expertise
- ❌ Unfamiliarity with the scientific method
- ❌ Poor knowledge of the university research system
- ❌ Limited exposure to science policy

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