

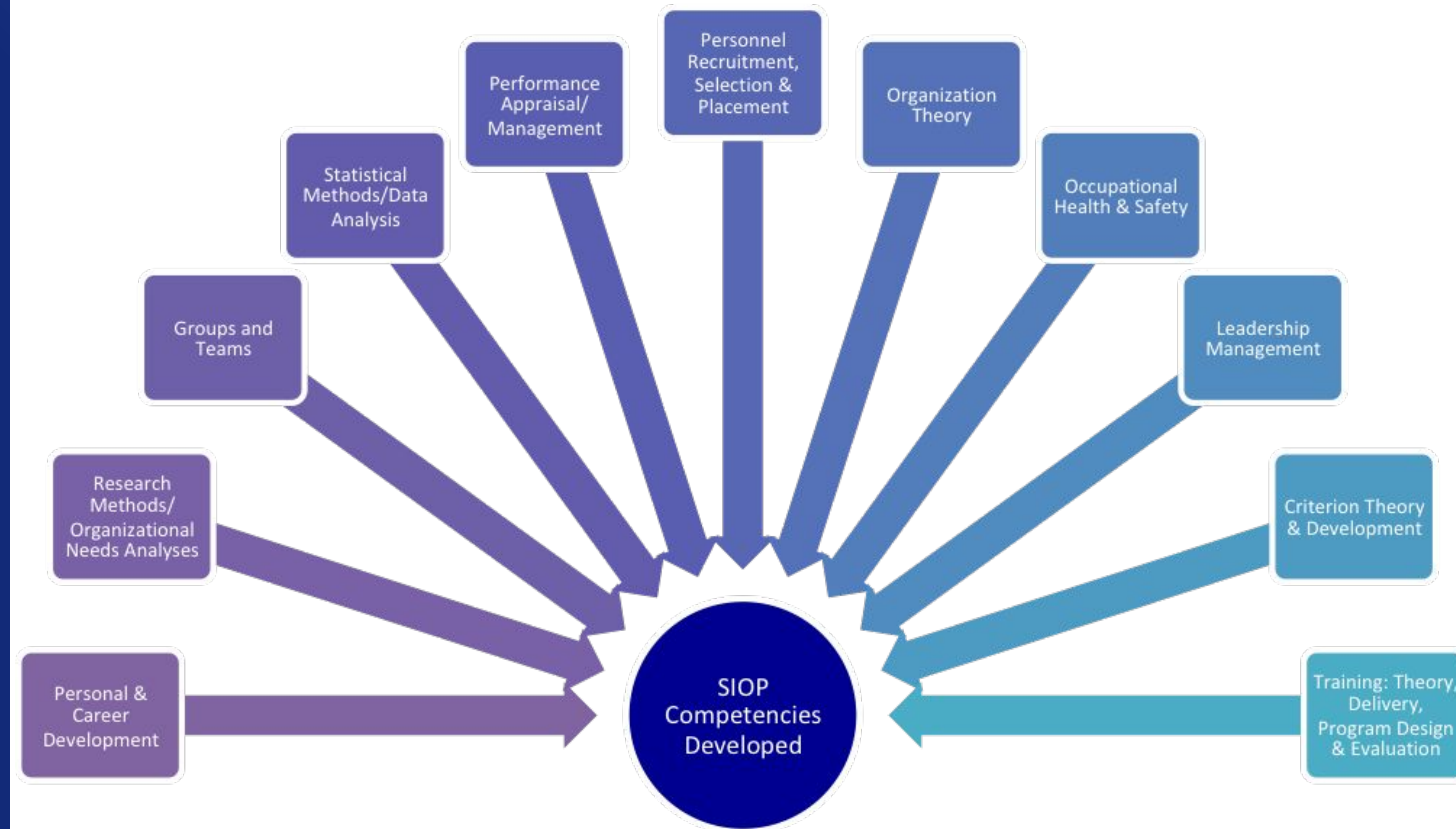
# Serving the People of the Tennessee Valley: Perspectives on Learning, Growth & Management Internships

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## Abstract

The purpose of this project was to examine three students' different paths and perspectives of internships at the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in the Learning, Growth and Management department (LG&M). This poster first examines the different teams and functions of those teams that the interns were a part of during their internships at TVA. Then, the project identifies SIOP competencies developed through involvement in key projects. Next, types of jobs that I-O Psychology Masters candidates can expect to be qualified and/or recruited for within the constraints of TVA and the LG&M department are discussed. Finally, recommendations for students seeking internships and organizations seeking to recruit and develop top quality I-O students are given. In summary, while this project only examines three students' paths at one company and in one department, we believe this information will help I-O psychology students make the most of their internships for their personal development into I-O practitioners. Additionally, helpful recommendations are provided for students and organizations.



## Leveraging Internships for Future Careers

- Caitlin:** My internship experiences have prepared me to take on roles around different facets of training and leadership development. I am now comfortable applying for roles involving program management, assessment and data analysis, coaching and feedback interventions, training course and materials creation, program evaluation and consultation and class facilitation. I am comfortable stepping into roles in these areas, because of my ownership of the following key projects: Creation and facilitation of a coaching and feedback intervention rolled-out to executive/senior level leaders, data mining and organizational needs analyses/recommendations completed for all of TVAs leadership development programs and the creation of training materials for the formal Respectful Workplace training initiative.
- Lydia:** Through my experience at TVA I stepped into roles that involve employee insights and analytics, owning analysis of and action planning around employee engagement data, supporting business and organizational development planning, and program creation and evaluation. Key projects I led include analyzing employee engagement data and delivering custom insights and action plans/initiatives to business units, analyzing talent and workforce planning data for trends, writing white papers describing themes in our data, assisting with organizational development planning, and succession management at the Director and Executive level.
- Sofia:** My experiences as an intern at TVA involved succession management at the Director and Executive level, performance management, and development of our employment value exchange (also called employee value proposition) prepared me to take on my current role as a HR Generalist Developmental on the LG&M team. From this role, I will be prepared to step into a variety of roles including assessment creation, assessment deployment, data analysis, and consultation; holistic talent management (performance and succession management, knowledge transfer and retention, workforce business planning); program creation and change management; and training facilitation and evaluation.

## Recommendations

Students	Organizations
Take every opportunity to grow and develop	Invest in developing your interns
Give feedback and vocalize your thoughts	Arrange meet-and-greets for interns
Treat every interaction as a valuable networking opportunity	Ensure interns are involved in strategic work
Go beyond simple data	Attend research conferences and career fairs to identify potential interns

Students should be proactive in applying the skills they learn, at UTC and other schools, in their internships. We recommend students propose their own projects or ways to expand existing projects to their supervisor. This is a way to offer insights and initiatives that may be new to the company and to leverage their education. Students should also go beyond simple data—instead of simply reporting data they can provide insights, key takeaways, and recommendations. Student interns offer their organization a new perspective and ideas.

For organizations we recommend recruiting and developing student interns, because having interns that can apply theory and recent research to practice is extremely beneficial. Maximize intern's development and their contribution by giving them meaningful and challenging work combined with the autonomy to bring innovative ideas and insights to the table.

## Conclusion

Collectively, our internship experiences were opportunities to develop in the SIOP competencies they identify as critical for becoming an I-O practitioner. Additionally, our practicum experiences prepared us for roles in numerous areas of I-O psychology. We each had the opportunity to work closely within our teams in TVAs LG&M department and with other project teams across the enterprise. Students need to be proactive in translating the skills and knowledge they gained in the classroom to the opportunities that organizations provide.

## Our Teams

