**Industrial and Organizational Psychology Degree Options**

The difference between Master’s and PhD training is not in the specific career options you will have once graduating, rather, it is in the approach to training.

* I/O PhD’s are trained to advance science in the field AND help organizations solve problems (Scientist-Practitioner Model).  Master’s students are trained to practice I/O psychology. PhD students are also trained to conduct research in the field.

**PhD in I/O Psychology**

* In a PhD program, you are training to become a scholar.  An I/O scholar will do the same tasks as the I/O professional, but will also use those experiences to advance the field through research.
* An I/O psychology Ph.D. will typically have more responsibility than an I/O Master’s recipient.
* If you want to become a professor, the only option for a degree is a Ph.D.

**MA/MS in I/O Psychology**

* In a Master’s program, you are training to become professional in I/O.  An I/O professional will apply the principles of I/O psychology to solve specific organizational problems.
* Thus, I/O professionals (Master’s) are trained specifically to help organizations.
* The I/O professional with a Master’s will assist in the implementation of or conduct background research.  Since many organizational problems are at the forefront of our current understanding of organizations, a person with Master’s level training will generally not be prepared to conduct research within the organization to help answer these questions.  There are many I/O professionals with Master’s degrees that start their own consulting agencies or work as the only I/O psychologist in an organization – but this is based on experience and personal drive.

**Alternatives to Graduate Training in I/O Psychology**

**MBA in Human Resources**

All I/O training, regardless of level, centers on the **scientist-practitioner model**.

* A major differences between an MBA in Human Resources and a degree in I/O Psychology is that, while the MBA will make informed decisions, they usually base it on reasoning from case studies and their own experience as managers (e.g., anecdotal evidence and recommendations from experienced businesspeople). I/O psychologists, however, will reference the current research literature and use scientific evidence to make this same judgment.