

Speech-Language Pathologists

SOC: 29-1127 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$95,410

Median Salary

187,400

Employment

+15.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Master's degree

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 8.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■ Work-Life Balance

6.7/10 - Good work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	5.4/10	Investigative	8.6/10
Artistic	4.8/10	Social	9.0/10
Enterprising	5.4/10	Conventional	6.2/10

■ Top Skills Required

Analytical skills, Communication skills, Compassion, Critical-thinking skills, Detail oriented, Listening skills

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Speech-Language Pathologists diagnose and treat **speech, language, voice, and swallowing disorders**. They work with individuals of all ages to improve communication skills and quality of life. Their work is critical in healthcare, education, and rehabilitation settings.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy healthcare, communication, and helping people overcome challenges.

What Do Speech-Language Pathologists Do?

These professionals assess, diagnose, and provide therapy for communication and swallowing disorders.

Common responsibilities include:

- Conducting evaluations and assessments of speech, language, and swallowing
- Developing individualized treatment plans and therapy goals
- Providing therapy sessions and interventions
- Monitoring and documenting patient progress
- Collaborating with healthcare providers, educators, and families
- Educating patients and caregivers on strategies to improve communication
- Staying current with research and therapy techniques

Key Areas of Speech-Language Pathology

Pathologists may specialize in specific populations or disorders:

- Pediatric Speech and Language: Working with children with developmental or congenital disorders
- Adult Communication Disorders: Treating stroke, brain injury, or neurological-related speech issues
- Voice and Resonance Therapy: Helping individuals improve vocal quality and projection
- Swallowing and Feeding Therapy: Assisting patients with dysphagia or feeding difficulties
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC): Using devices or systems to support communication

Skills and Abilities Needed

Speech-language pathologists combine clinical knowledge with communication and interpersonal skills.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

This role typically requires formal education and professional licensure:

- Master's Degree: Speech-language pathology or related field
- Clinical Fellowship: Supervised practical experience
- State Licensure: Required to practice independently
- Continuing Education: Staying current with therapy methods, research, and technology

Where Do Speech-Language Pathologists Work?

They are employed in settings that provide therapy and communication support:

- Hospitals and Rehabilitation Centers
- Schools and Educational Institutions
- Private Clinics and Practices
- Home Health Services
- Research and Academic Settings

Work environments include offices, classrooms, therapy rooms, and patient homes.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career requires clinical knowledge, patience, and communication skills. Pathologists must adapt therapy plans to individual needs and work with diverse patient populations.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy working with people to improve communication and quality of life
- Have strong interpersonal and observational skills
- Are patient, empathetic, and detail-oriented
- Are interested in healthcare, language, and therapy
- Want a career that makes a meaningful impact on individuals' lives

How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in biology, psychology, and communication sciences
- Volunteer or intern in healthcare or educational settings
- Develop strong listening, communication, and interpersonal skills
- Explore speech-language pathology programs and clinical experiences
- Stay informed on therapy techniques, research, and augmentative communication technology

Speech-language pathologists help individuals overcome communication and swallowing challenges, improving interaction, confidence, and quality of life.