

14th Institute of Rehabilitation Issues (IRI): The Use of Vocational Evaluation in VR

The primary purpose of the Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI) was to develop publications for use in training and technical assistance for vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselors, consumers, administrators, and other partners in the VR process. IRI publications provide a unique perspective on emerging issues in vocational rehabilitation as both the topics and the content are developed by practitioners. For more than sixty-five years, the IRI was a national forum for discussing the important challenges facing the State VR Services Program. It is the longest running event of its kind in the rehabilitation field, and one of the longest in the human services profession. The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) sponsored the IRI in collaboration with representatives from the State VR agencies, consumer groups, and other stakeholders in the VR program, in order to develop a connection between knowledge development and practitioner utilization. An index of the IRIs with links to the documents is available at the following link: <https://ncrtm.ed.gov/SearchResults.aspx?st=Index+of+publications>

Brief History

- **Guidance, Training, and Placement (GTP) Workshop.** From 1947 to 1962, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation instituted the GTP Workshop to address the needs of the emerging disability populations and other issues facing the VR program. It became an annual meeting that focused on providing technical assistance to State VR agency personnel on issues they faced in providing services to individuals with disabilities. The "GTP meetings", as they were commonly called, covered a range of rehabilitation interests and issues and served as a catalytic agent to bring new ideas, techniques, and challenges to the attention of rehabilitation professionals.
- **Institute on Rehabilitation Services (IRS).** In 1963, the IRS was renamed and focused on in-service training of VR personnel, particularly in areas emphasized in Federal rehabilitation legislation. Universities became involved by convening study groups and coordinating the review, printing, and distributions of the IRS publications.
- **Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI).** The RSA rehabilitation research program assumed financial support for the renamed IRI in 1974. In 1978, funding for the IRI moved to the Research and Training Center Program in the newly created National Institute on Handicapped Research (NIHR), now called the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). From 1996-2015, RSA again assumed full financial support for the IRI through its training program.

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FOURTEENTH INSTITUTE ON REHABILITATION ISSUES

**THE USE OF VOCATIONAL
EVALUATION
IN VR**



**RESEARCH AND
TRAINING CENTER**

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1972 the Tenth Institute on Rehabilitation Studies published Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Services in Vocational Rehabilitation. This document was published at a time when vocational evaluation was becoming a professional service and therefore, presented the concepts, philosophies, and methodologies of a discipline in its infancy. Since 1972 the field of vocational evaluation has evolved with the changing field of vocational rehabilitation, the emergence of private rehabilitation and the maturing of educational programs for the handicapped. In the last 16 years, there have been substantial changes in the populations served, the methodologies used and the processes of vocational evaluation. Many of the changes in methodology and processes have come about as the profession of vocational evaluation has sought to meet the needs of changing populations and new philosophies. Today along with vocational rehabilitation, vocational evaluation faces new challenges brought about by such philosophies and programs as "place and train," "zero reject," transition and supported employment. It should be clearly recognized that in the midst of these forces of change that the goal of vocational rehabilitation (employment) and in-turn, the goal of vocational evaluation (development of employability related information for the purpose of vocational decision making) have not changed. What has changed and will continue to change are the methods and strategies for making employment a reality for people with disabilities. New strategies make it possible to meet the needs of individuals within the context of current philosophies and populations served. As a concept, vocational evaluation is a valid, viable, and needed service but with the new challenges, new strategies need to be developed.

With all of the changes that have taken place and the emergence of new challenges, the field of vocational evaluation must again be examined to determine the state of the art of the practice and profession. It was decided by the prime study group that work adjustment, which has been closely associated with vocational evaluation for many years, would not be addressed in this document but should be recommended as a separate IRI topic.

Based on the foregoing background it was determined that the purpose of this IRI publication was to provide information that will assist vocational rehabilitation personnel, related personnel and individuals receiving rehabilitation services in improving the decision making process through effective use of vocational evaluation.

HISTORY OF VOCATIONAL EVALUATION

History to 1972

The process of vocational evaluation grew up in the rehabilitation facility "movement" in this country in the 1950's and 1960's. To get a clear picture of the evolutionary process of vocational evaluation, several developmental processes need to be addressed. The greatest of these forces in the early years was the federal government. Public Law (P.L.) 565 in 1954 provided funding for the establishment of rehabilitation facilities and greatly enhanced the growth of vocational evaluation. Subsequent legislation provided funding for rehabilitation training in vocational evaluation and work adjustment. Legislation in 1965, 1967, and 1968 increased the funding for the development of rehabilitation facility programs, thus increasing the demand for vocational evaluation and work adjustment services (Wright, 1980).

Concurrent with the legislative changes and mandates came the development of tools and methodologies for the vocational evaluation of people with disabilities. Beginning with The Institute for the Crippled and Disabled's (now called the International Center for Disability) TOWER vocational evaluation system, a plethora of systems, components, and work samples have been developed for use by vocational evaluators. Vocational evaluation as a profession and as a process has been molded to a great extent by the developers of vocational evaluation equipment. Presently, vocational evaluators are depending more and more on computers to assist in not only the synthesis of vocational evaluation data, but also in the actual collection of the data. In short, as the technology developed, the procedures used in vocational evaluation have also changed.

Consumers of rehabilitation services constitute a third factor affecting the growth and development of vocational evaluation services. As vocational rehabilitation agencies expanded services to individuals with developmental disabilities, vocational evaluation services, particularly the methods used, began to change. As the legislature enacted laws opening the doors to rehabilitation services for individuals with various disabilities, developers of vocational evaluation tools responded to meet the needs of the service providers. In the early years methodologies were geared toward determining the training needs of individuals with physical disabilities. Later the primary population being served by vocational evaluators were individuals with developmental disabilities, and the methods reflected that emphasis. The Vocational Research Institute (VRI) developed specialized systems to meet the needs of socially disadvantaged individuals during the 1970's. Further, the rapid growth of "private practice rehabilitation" has added another major emphasis. They often need an evaluation of physical capacities for workers injured on the job. Attorneys are requesting similar evaluation in determining long term costs in workers compensation and personal liability cases involving compensable injuries.

In summary, the historical development of vocational evaluation during this period may be traced along three lines: federal legisla-

tion, product development, and individuals being served. The inter-relationship of the three is indisputable. As the legislature mandated services to a group of individuals, product manufacturers responded to meet the need, and service providers quickly learned about the newest tools and methods to serve these new populations.

Factors Influencing Vocational Evaluation Since 1972

In 1972, the Tenth Institute on Rehabilitation Services published a document entitled, Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Services in Vocational Rehabilitation. This document was a "state of the art" publication and has served the field well for many years. However, in the sixteen years since that publication, there have been many factors that have influenced the development of and practice of vocational evaluation. Changes in philosophy, medical advances, legislation, technological developments, new methodologies, shifts in public and employer attitudes towards the disabled, parent empowerment, client empowerment, legal issues and the economy have influenced who vocational rehabilitation serves and the types of services provided. Some of these factors which influenced vocational evaluation were:

1. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which required states to place a priority on serving "those individuals with the most severe handicaps" and to describe "the methods to be used to expand and improve services" to this population. This provision of the law began the push for a higher level of vocational rehabilitation services directed towards individuals with severe handicaps that has resulted in more than 50% of those currently served meeting the severely disabled definition.
2. The Education for all Handicapped Act of 1975 (94-142) mandated educational services for all students with handicaps. The Act also required processes to implement such far reaching concepts as identifying, locating, and evaluating children in need of special education; individualized educational program planning with the individual and parents; education in the least restrictive environment; and coordination with other programs that provide services to handicapped individuals. This law, although developed for children, has set the stage for individuals with handicaps who are moving into adult services. Because of 94-142, vocational rehabilitation is seeing more referrals from schools, serving more severely disabled individuals, and experiencing a higher level of parent involvement and advocacy. In addition, 94-142 established new philosophies, such as providing services in the least restrictive environment, that have influenced all services for the handicapped.
3. The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1978 expanded on the priority of providing services to the severely disabled by adding the independent living program. Although not directly part of vocational rehabilitation, this program

has set new philosophies on client self-direction and assisted individuals with severe disabilities to prepare for vocational rehabilitation services.

4. In the last 16 years major progress has been made towards deinstitutionalization and providing community-based programs. Individuals with severe disabilities that have traditionally been served in institutions are now integrated into the community and require such services as vocational rehabilitation.
5. Protective and advocacy services have been mandated by law, including the Client Assistance Program established for the rehabilitation program. Along with this advocacy has come an increased level of administrative reviews, legal processes and suits.
6. Technological developments have provided assistive and adaptive devices that have enabled individuals with severe disabilities to become more independent and in many cases become employed (Corthell & Thayer, 1986). These developments have enabled vocational rehabilitation to successfully serve more severely disabled individuals but have also required the development of rehabilitation engineering services.
7. Medical advances have assisted individuals with disabilities to obtain higher functional levels. Consequently, the vocational rehabilitation program is serving more individuals with severe disabilities. In addition, these advances have increased the number of individuals with certain types of disabilities (such as the traumatically brain injured) that are seeking services.
8. Philosophies with regards to the handicapped and how they are served have changed substantially. These new philosophies include the belief that:
 - a. Individuals with disabilities should be served in the most enabling environment.
 - b. Individuals with disabilities should be integrated into the community.
 - c. Individuals with severe disabilities can be employed in the community given appropriate support services.
 - d. The system must change to meet the needs of the individual.
 - e. The individual has the right to guide and direct their own lives.

9. The Rehabilitation Act Amendment of 1986 again strengthened services to the severely disabled by adding the supported employment program. This program mandated a new philosophy, new methodologies and a new population for vocational rehabilitation.
10. Transition from school to work has been an initiative of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services that is now finding its way into various laws. Transition is a process that requires; interagency cooperation and planning and as such, requires the sharing or development of vocational assessment information.

The foregoing items represent the major factors that have influenced vocational rehabilitation and vocational evaluation. In summary these factors indicate that vocational rehabilitation and consequently, vocational evaluation:

1. Is serving a more severely disabled population.
2. Is serving a wider variety of disabilities.
3. Is embracing new philosophies yet, maintaining the foundation and mission traditionally established for vocational rehabilitation.
4. Is developing and utilizing new service strategies and methodologies.

ISSUES IN VOCATIONAL EVALUATION

Rehabilitation professionals see themselves in the role of "helping the handicapped" and it may be difficult for them to perceive "the handicapped" as the ones to whom they should be primarily accountable. The most important lesson they should learn is that it is the client to whom they are responsible. It is the future of the client that is at stake. Their first concern should always be with what is best for the client, not what is most convenient for the contracting referring agency. The needs of the client must always take precedence over the organizational needs of the evaluation center. This has not always been the case. Too often, in spite of the diversity of their disabilities, each client received more or less the same vocational evaluation. Vocational evaluators must keep firmly in mind that it is as a result of how well the needs of "the handicapped" are met during vocational evaluation that this rehabilitation practice is improved, that their rehabilitation careers are advanced and that the justification for vocational evaluation continues to be valid (Client-Advocate, 1987).

One of the stimuli for this document arose from the concerns advocates, clients, and professionals have expressed regarding the

appropriate use of vocational evaluation. These criticisms are presented here with the recognition that all programs have problems and that it is through the identification and resolution of these problems that a program can grow and improve. It should also be recognized that a specific criticism may or may not apply to a specific program or programs in your location. This document has been designed in such a way as to present the best practices of the field but does not attempt to respond to each criticism. The following are the criticisms that the prime study group identified as concerns of clients, client advocates, and other professionals:

- Every client receives the same standard evaluation, regardless of their disability or situations.
- Evaluators and counselors see themselves as accountable to the system and not to the individual.
- Evaluation results are sometimes used to screen individuals out rather than determine what support services and resources are needed in order for them to succeed.
- Managers and supervisors of vocational evaluation programs often come from other disciplines or specialties and don't have the knowledge necessary for proper program management.
- There are too many untrained, inexperienced and unskilled vocational evaluators practicing as professionals.
- Clients are not involved in the decision to participate in an evaluation or oriented to the process.
- There is not enough research information available on effective and efficient applications of vocational evaluation.
- Vocational evaluation, as it is currently practiced by some programs, isn't a viable option in light of today's zero reject, and place and train philosophy.
- Vocational evaluation programs lack administrative and fiscal support that is needed to provide a quality service.
- Communication about what the purpose of the evaluation is to be and the results of the evaluation is lacking between the client, counselor and evaluator.
- Vocational evaluation is used by the counselor to avoid making decisions or at best, put them off.
- Vocational evaluators do not have an adequate knowledge of the local job market.

- Vocational evaluation relies too heavily on simulated rather than real work as a means of predicting job success.

VOCATIONAL EVALUATION IN SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Introduction

It is necessary to consider the nature of accomplishment-based vocational evaluation in the context of recent changes in vocational rehabilitation service delivery and the related changes in the employment options available to persons with severe disabilities. People with disabilities and their advocates are depending on regular jobs in their communities. Yet the unemployment and underemployment rates for people with disabilities exceeds 65% in much of the country (Kiernan & Bruinicks, 1986). For people with the most severe disabilities, lack of employment in the community is even more pronounced (Buckley & Bellamy, 1986). More than ever before, employment is known to be both desirable and possible for all members of our society given proper support.

The success of recent demonstrations of supported employment is shifting the issue and discussion from what to do about the employment problems of the severely disabled to "how to do it." The issue to resolve through evaluation in supported employment is: "What will it take to support the integrated employment of each individual regardless of their medical label?"

Significance for Vocational Evaluation

Historically, the purpose of vocational evaluation has been to determine the potential of an individual for specific occupations or groups of occupations in competitive employment. Under supported employment, the fundamental question becomes "what supports are needed for this individual to be successful in the job of choice?" For people considered to have more severe disabilities, the decision process must be to analyze and identify the job environment and the supports that will result in employment success. One implication of the emphasis on supported employment is the greater use of methods for gathering information about strengths and needs that can be translated into supports that produce competitive employment outcomes.

The Impact of Supported Employment

Supported employment has emerged in recent months as a redefined employment service outcome. Supported employment is paid employment, in regular, integrated work settings for persons with severe disabilities who require ongoing support in order to maintain employment success (DD Act, 1984, Amendments to VR Act 1986). Supported employment presents a significant alternative to sheltered workshops, adult day programs, and work activity centers. Rather than providing support in segregated settings, supported employment focuses on providing supervision, training, and other assistance in integrated jobs.

Supported employment changes the location for the delivery of assistance of support from segregated settings to integrated work places. Thus, the focus of assessment and vocational evaluation is on providing an estimate of the nature of supports needed for successful employment with time limited or ongoing supports.

It is important to note that while initial decisions about supports needed will often rest with the vocational rehabilitation agency the long-term delivery of needed supports must be the responsibility of the long-term funding agency (e.g., mental health, mental retardation/developmental disability agency).

Factors for Consideration in Vocational Evaluation for Supported Employment

As with any vocational evaluation, there are several factors about an individual that should be considered related to supported employment. Establishing "job readiness" is not the issue in the sense it is for other individuals referred for vocational evaluation. This is true if supported employment, with its focus on long-term support, is a viable option for the client within a specific job environment. As such, vocational evaluation or assessment must consider both the individual and specific job setting.

Important factors for consideration in vocational evaluation include familiar areas such as:

- Assessment history (for example school records and reports).
- Medical history and secondary disabilities.
- Work history and opportunities (including jobs at home or for neighbors).
- Successful past training and methods that were successful.
- Skills previously assessed.
- Job performance skills.
- Goals and job interests.
- Family or significant others support and situation.
- Transportation accessibility and reliability.

While these considerations are not novel, supported employment suggests the information be used somewhat differently. That is, the purpose of gathering such information is to establish what supports will be needed for career success. The emphasis is not on what the individual should learn in order to succeed in independent employment without long-term support.

Environment Considerations and Methods

For persons with more severe disabilities it is often unlikely that standardized testing will yield information useful for designing supports. Instead, methods of evaluation will be needed which focus on direct observation in job settings. This calls for greater use of situational assessment and careful job analysis of specific jobs in order to create a good job match.

A job analysis of potential employment settings provides for two functions. First, to understand a specific job well enough to decide if it is likely to fit the interests, strengths, and supports needed for the individual with severe disabilities (note: reading the job description and analysis in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles is not sufficient). Second, once a specific job is targeted for an individual, a thorough job analysis allows the evaluator, trainer or job coach to build a plan to teach and support the individual given the requirements of a specific job. In this way training and support resources focus on skills and behaviors that will be immediately useful to the individual. Sample formats for gathering information about both individuals and specific jobs have been developed by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center at Virginia Commonwealth University and the Rehabilitation Administration program at the University of San Francisco.

Summary

The focus of vocational evaluation for supported employment is not really different from that of conventional evaluation. The focus for both is developing information to help individual's careers. What differs in evaluation for supported employment are:

1. The methods of evaluation (focused on structural assessment, job analysis, and job matching).
2. Designing supports that will be needed for long-term intervention and support rather than time-limited support.

CHAPTER II

HOW IT IS: DEFINITIONS

VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT AS FOUND IN LEGAL MANDATES

The value of using vocational assessment and vocational evaluation information, for improving decision-making and planning in the vocational development of individuals with disabilities, has been recognized and accepted by consumers and professionals in many service delivery systems. To underscore this, vocational assessment and evaluation data, as the foundation for decision-making and planning has been included in several legislative mandates. Thus, vocational assessment, and in some cases vocational evaluation, is occurring or can now be expected to occur in vocational rehabilitation, vocational education and in job training programs (JTPA).

Under the Vocational Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 (P.L. 99-506), a preliminary diagnostic study is required. For those who need a more in-depth appraisal, a thorough diagnostic study is used in determining eligibility and for planning services (see Figure 1 and 2). These amendments serve to continue the role of vocational assessment and planning which were in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the subsequent amendments in 1978. What has changed in the latest statutes is the increased emphasis on the goal of community integration or reintegration and employment. The emphasis on community based employment is reflected in the need of basing vocational assessment and evaluation practices on real work.

The Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142) set the stage for requiring assessment. The Act stressed the use of assessment findings in planning and then using the plans to direct educational programming and services for students with handicapping conditions. Although initially the career and vocational development of these students was not emphasized, assessment and planning requirements have fostered and supported the inclusion of vocational assessment and vocational planning for special education students.

In 1984, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Educational Act (P.L. 98-524) provided a set of assurances which were consistent with vocational assessment requirements in special education and vocational rehabilitation. Specifically, the Perkins Act represents one of four assurances and is expected to provide the information which will facilitate implementation of the other three. Briefly, these assurances encompass:

1. Assessment of abilities, interest and special needs.
2. Identification and provision of necessary supplemental services.

3. Career counseling and career development activities.
4. Planning for transition from school to work.

In addition to assuring vocational assessment services and uses of assessment outcomes in the vocational education and occupational preparation of individuals with disabilities, the laws have indirectly impacted on the professional field of vocational assessment and evaluation. Such parallel policy directives have sent the message that vocational assessment is necessary for employment preparation regardless of setting, service delivery system, or timing within the vocational development process. Timing of assessment within an individual's vocational development process must be compatible with his or her level of career development. As an individual proceeds through the awareness, orientation, exploration, and preparation stages of career development, he/she should gain an increased knowledge of self as a worker. Likewise, the individual should acquire and apply information about work, careers, and jobs to this self-knowledge. Vocational assessment and, if appropriate, vocational evaluation, contribute to this knowledge base and assist in further empowering the individual to direct and control his/her vocational destiny or outcome.

DEFINITION OF VOCATIONAL EVALUATION

According to the Tenth Institute on Rehabilitation Studies (1972), vocational evaluation is:

...a comprehensive process that systematically utilizes work, real or simulated, as the focal point for assessment and vocational exploration, the purpose of which is to assist individuals in vocational development. Vocational (work) evaluation incorporates medical, psychological, social, vocational, educational, cultural, and economic data in the attainment of the goals of the evaluation process.

The VEWA Project (1975) adopted the Tenth Institute definition and added:

A specialized form of clinical assessment requiring a specialized technology and environment, requiring a period of several days or even weeks of close observation and judgment, characterized by the use of real or simulated work tasks and activities in a situation which simulates some of the demands of work environments.

Presently, as defined by the VEWA Glossary (1983), vocational assessment is:

A comprehensive process conducted over a period of time, involving a multi-disciplinary team... with the purpose of identifying individual characteristics, education, training, and placement needs, which provides educators the basis for

planning an individual's program and which provides the individual with insight into his or her vocational potential.

VEWAA adopted the Tenth Institute's definition of vocational evaluation for incorporation into the VEWAA Glossary (1983). It is the authors understanding that VEWAA is currently working to update their definition. However, it was not available for incorporation in this document.

The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), defines vocational evaluation as:

... a program or service which is provided on a systematic, organized basis for the purpose of determining individual vocational objective(s): assets, limitations, and behaviors in the context of work environments in which the individual might function, and specific recommendations which may be used in the development of the individual's program plan (CARF, 1987).

These definitions are all quite similar. The most significant part of each of these definitions is that vocational evaluation is an individualized process that utilizes work as the primary focus of the assessment to measure an individual's potential to perform work. It is the use of work, real or simulated, that separates vocational evaluation from all other types of assessment.

PURPOSE OF VOCATIONAL EVALUATION

The purpose of vocational evaluation is to gather employability related information about an individual that will assist/empower that individual in making decisions and reaching their maximum vocational development. This purpose becomes more specific when consideration is given as to how the information that is gathered is used. In general, information gathered during the vocational evaluation process is used in three ways:

1. To determine eligibility.
2. To plan for services or activities that are needed to assist the individual to become employed.
3. To increase the individual's knowledge of their capabilities and jobs so appropriate occupational choices can be made.

Under the law (1986 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, Section 7(5) and 103(a)(1) and as implemented by the State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation Services (7.4(a)), a preliminary diagnostic study must be completed in determination of eligibility. In part it states, in order to determine whether any individual is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, there is a preliminary diagnostic study sufficient to determine:

1. Whether the individual has a physical or mental disability which for such individual constitutes or results in a substantial handicap to employment.
2. Whether vocational rehabilitation services may reasonably be expected to benefit the individual in terms of employability or whether an extended evaluation of rehabilitation potential is necessary to make such a determination.

In determining eligibility, the vocational rehabilitation counselor must answer the questions raised in the foregoing quote. To answer these questions, employability related information may be gathered through a vocational evaluation. The information gathered during this vocational evaluation is then used in making and documenting the eligibility decision. Very closely related, to the use of this information for eligibility determination, is the use of the same information in selecting individuals for specific training programs or referral to specific job openings. In these cases and many others, individuals are selected (eligibility determined) based on information gathered during the vocational evaluation process. In this situation, the purpose of vocational evaluation is to gather employability related information used in determining eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services or for other types of training, services, or jobs.

Once eligibility for services is established, the vocational rehabilitation counselor must either, through the information they have already gathered or through a thorough diagnostic study, (State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation, 7.4(b))..."determine the nature and scope of services needed..." The thorough diagnostic study is described as a "...comprehensive evaluation of pertinent medical, psychological, vocational, educational, and other factors relating to the individual's handicap to employment and rehabilitation needs" or, in other words, a vocational assessment as defined in this document, one part of which may be a vocational evaluation. The purpose of vocational evaluation, as used here, is to gather employability related information that can be used to plan and implement services and activities that will assist the individual in reaching the goal of employment. This is the most common purpose of vocational evaluation. This purpose is not only relevant to vocational rehabilitation, but also to many other professionals, paraprofessionals, and consumers who make use of the results in planning for and providing a wide variety of services and activities.

If handled appropriately, the process of vocational evaluation can become a valuable learning experience for the individual (Pruitt, 1986). Active participation in the vocational evaluation helps individuals gain a better understanding of their abilities as a worker and of occupations that may be appropriate for them to pursue. Frequently, referrals to vocational evaluation programs are made because the individual does not know what they want to do or can do with respect to employment. The purpose of vocational evaluation under these conditions is to provide the individual with the opportunity to explore occupations and gather employability related information that

will assist them and the counselor in understanding their abilities as a worker and making career choices.

In addition to the aforementioned general purposes of vocational evaluation, there are other purposes that are specific to an individual. These purposes come about as questions are raised concerning an individual's employability. The purpose of an evaluation may become as specific as determining the manual dexterity of an individual to see if they could perform selected tasks or determining whether an individual could work as or be trained to work as an electronics repair technician. In these types of situations, the nature of the employability related information needed dictates the specific purpose and may be as varied as there are individuals, jobs, tasks, or specific abilities.

Under any circumstances, vocational rehabilitation counselors or others making referrals to vocational evaluation services must delineate the purpose(s) of the evaluation. It is the identification of the specific purpose of a vocational evaluation that determines what kind of information will be gathered and dictates the process to be used.

OUTCOME OF VOCATIONAL EVALUATION

The goal of vocational rehabilitation is to assist eligible individuals with disabilities to prepare for, secure, and maintain employment. Every activity that vocational rehabilitation engages in (including vocational evaluation) has to be focused toward this goal. Because of this focus, the outcome of a service has to be evaluated in terms of what difference the service makes. The question to be answered with respect to the outcomes of vocational evaluation, is whether the employability related information (gathered as a result of the vocational evaluation process) made a difference or had an impact with respect to the individual's employment.

From this perspective, outcomes of vocational evaluation may include:

1. An individual that has a more realistic understanding of themselves as a worker.
2. An individual that has a greater understanding of the employment market.
3. An individual that used information from the vocational evaluation to assist them in selecting a vocational goal.
4. A counselor that can make a more informed judgement about eligibility/feasibility.
5. A counselor that has a better understanding of the client as a worker (abilities and limitations) and what type of services, support and/or job placement would be appropriate.

6. The development of a more appropriate Individualized Written Rehabilitation Program (plan).
7. Cost and time savings due to better planning.
8. Improved the likelihood of employment.

THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROCESS AND THE ROLE OF VOCATIONAL EVALUATION

Figure 1 was designed to illustrate the inter-relationships between the vocational rehabilitation process, vocational assessment, and vocational evaluation. An examination of these relationships is essential to understand how vocational evaluation ties into the vocational rehabilitation process and why.

The figure presents the vocational rehabilitation process from a general perspective. There are five main segments of the process: a diagnostic study; planning; services; placement; and post-employment services. Cutting across all segments of the process are counseling and guidance and vocational assessment. The counseling and guidance and vocational assessment, as illustrated here, are part of the services that the vocational rehabilitation counselor provides or coordinates. In completing the vocational assessment, the counselor may call on other disciplines, such as vocational evaluation, for development of more specific information. It is generally given that counseling and guidance permeates the entire process. It is also generally accepted that the majority of vocational assessment, as used here, takes place during the initial segments of the rehabilitation process. The theory being that the information generated from a vocational assessment is useful in planning and providing services. However, it should be pointed out that the counselor continues to get, analyze, plan for, and modify services with vocational assessment information from all segments of the process.

As the diagram depicts, the counselor, after initial screening, may decide to utilize other experts, such as psychologists, medical doctors, social workers, and vocational evaluators to provide more in-depth information in a specific area. The information generated from these specialists is utilized by the rehabilitation counselor and the client in developing and/or modifying a rehabilitation plan. In this scheme of things, vocational evaluation is one expert service that a rehabilitation counselor, client, professionals, or parents can utilize in gathering employability related information.

Figure 2 further delineates the differences between vocational assessment and vocational evaluation.

FIGURE 1

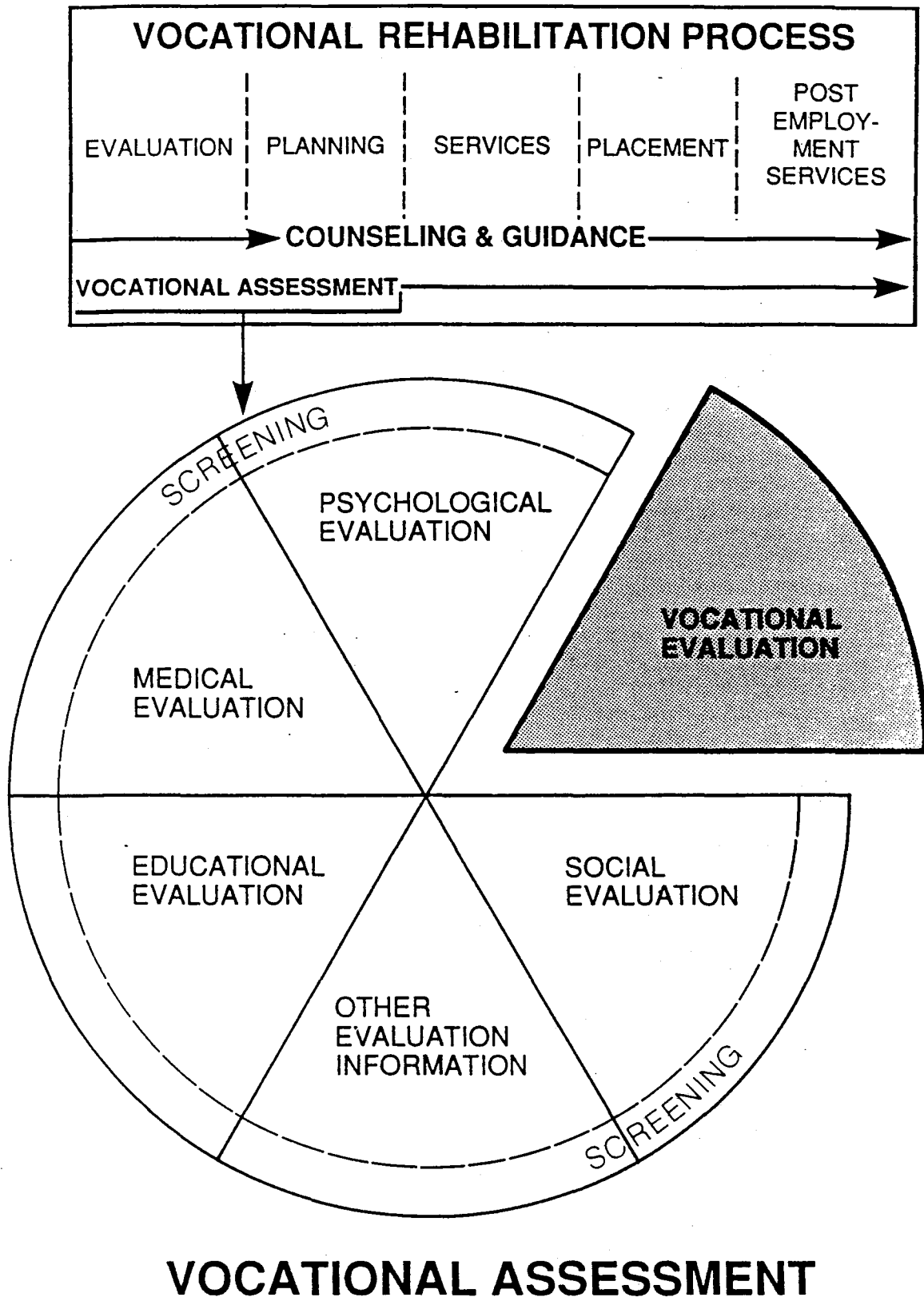


Figure 2

COMPARISON:
VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND VOCATIONAL EVALUATION

VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT	VOCATIONAL EVALUATION
* Coordinated by: Rehabilitation counselor in vocational rehabilitation Special ed teacher in school	* Coordinated vocational evaluator
* Conducted by: Rehabilitation counselors Teachers Counselors Parents Vocational instructors Job coaches/employment specialists Job developers/placement specialists Work adjustment specialists Vocational evaluators	* Conducted by trained (certified) vocational evaluator
* Conducted in "Natural Environments," such as home vocational training programs, job site, the community, leisure activities	* Conducted in simulated or real work setting
* Primarily uses informal assessment techniques instruments	* Primarily uses formal assessment instruments, techniques and methods
* For individuals where general planning information is adequate	* For individuals where more speci- fic information is required, before vocational planning can proceed
* Ongoing, periodic, extensive	* Time-limited, once or twice, intensive
* Develops general vocational profile	* Develops comprehensive, in-depth vocational profile
* Systematic, informal process	* Systematic, formal process
* Leads to recommend actions for individual planning, programming and placement	* Leads to recommend actions for individual planning, placement and programming

Figure 2 (Continued)

VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

VOCATIONAL EVALUATION

- * Broad assessment utilizing information from various sources or disciplines
- * Answers general planning and programmatic questions
- * Provides information about life skills as well as vocational ones

- * Specific evaluation focusing on employability
- * Answers specific referral questions
- * Provides information about vocational skills and secondarily about life skills

In summary, the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation process is to assist individuals with disabilities to prepare for, secure, and maintain employment. In the initial stages of this process, employability related information must be gathered to determine eligibility and plan for the provision of services. The diagnostic study segment of the process is often referred to as a vocational assessment. It is the rehabilitation counselor's responsibility to perform the vocational assessment or access expert services that will provide the needed information. Vocational evaluation is one of many expert services the rehabilitation counselors may decide to access in completing a vocational assessment.

CHAPTER III

WHO DOES IT: THE PEOPLE

The ability to provide complete and meaningful information regarding the vocational needs of individual consumers is dependent upon the use of a variety of assessment and evaluation alternatives. In this section, we will review and discuss the various alternatives that are available for completing meaningful assessments and evaluations.

Selecting the types of assessment strategies to use is dependent upon the purpose of the assessment and the types of disabilities exhibited by the consumer. As discussed previously, vocational assessment should be employed to address three issues regarding rehabilitation:

1. Is the consumer eligible to receive services?
2. What specific services does the consumer need to become employed?
3. What outcomes or impacts has the services had upon the consumer and what additional services does the consumer continue to require?

Vocational assessment, as conceptualized here, is a dynamic and integral aspect of the rehabilitation process. The specific type of evaluation or assessment strategy selected is dependent upon the question that one wishes to address. For example, the types of activities used to determine eligibility will be different from those used to determine why a vocational assessment is needed and what questions need to be answered before determining the assessment strategies to use.

Vocational evaluation historically has emphasized the assessment of aptitudes, personality characteristics, or other constructs thought to be relevant to rehabilitation potential or vocational success (Wright, 1980). Assessment of these constructs requires the vocational evaluator to infer or predict future service needs and occupational abilities based upon information collected from a variety of sources. Medical examinations, psychological test batteries, interviews with the client and his/her family, and review of past records are but a few of the sources traditionally relied upon to evaluate vocational abilities. Additionally, direct assessment of work-related traits utilizing commercially available assessment systems and/or simulated work samples performed within sheltered workshops or evaluation facilities have traditionally been employed as part of the assessment process. In addition, situational assessments on-the-job evaluations and job try-outs have been employed to determine through experiential methods the vocational interests, behaviors, and strengths of an individual. These traditional strategies had been applied as a planning and determination

process, basically addressing only the first two purposes that we have identified for vocational assessment. Recently, the importance of assessing the outcomes of the rehabilitation process and the continuing service needs of some rehabilitation consumers has extended the methods and purpose of vocational assessment.

Prior to initiation of services, vocational assessment may be used to identify general strengths and weaknesses that are displayed by consumers. This identification will assist in choosing the type of services needed and the most appropriate employment settings. Rehabilitation counselors or school personnel are responsible for this phase of the assessment process. Once rehabilitation services have been initiated, vocational assessment may serve to assist the service provider in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of these services. For example, the development of an observational strategy to assure that consumers are properly performing all critical aspects of their jobs may be one aspect of assessment. Once active rehabilitation services have been terminated or reduced, long-term assessment of consumers may be warranted, assuring continued performance of those skills found to be most critical for continued employment. At that time, the vocational rehabilitation counselors serve as the case managers in organizing and planning these services.

The following sections will discuss the principal players in the vocational assessment and vocational evaluation processes, their roles, and the expertise they are uniquely qualified to bring to the individual client's rehabilitation. Specifically addressed are the roles and unique qualifications of the individual involved, the rehabilitation counselor, the vocational evaluator along with examples of other persons and professionals who may variously be part of the vocational assessment team.

THE INDIVIDUALS SERVED

The active participation of the individual and/or their advocate is paramount to provide direction in the vocational assessment and vocational evaluation processes. The decision to participate and the decision to select among options in the evaluation or as a result of the evaluation should be placed as much as possible in the hands of the individual consumer. On every occasion, the intent of the rehabilitation process is working with and on-behalf of the interests of the individual consumer.

Under most circumstances, parents/guardians may be able to contribute information related to the client's interests, various achievements, experiences, and strengths and vocational needs that might not otherwise be captured but which are vocationally significant. Interviews with parents can also reveal their attitudes toward their child working, the cultural environment, and the stability or supports that can be expected from the home environment.

Both consumers and their parents/guardians or personal advocates should be involved in every phase of the assessment and vocational

decision-making process. Without such consistent inclusion and involvement, rehabilitation professionals are guilty of undermining the dignity and empowerment of the consumer.

The Rehabilitation Counselor

The rehabilitation counselor represents the coordinating professional for the vocational assessment process. Distinct professional standards for practice and degree granting programs have been established for rehabilitation counselors. These standards and degree programs delineate clear roles and responsibilities for the rehabilitation counselor in the assessment and evaluation process.

Skills and Competencies. The Commission on Certification of Rehabilitation Counselors has established skill and competency standards for professionals. Certification is by application, is voluntary and though not universally required by vocational rehabilitation programs in the 50 states, does provide a common basis and set of expectations for personnel managing the vocational assessment and planning with individuals. The Council on Rehabilitation Education has established criteria for awarding accreditation for graduate degree granting programs in vocational rehabilitation based on these standards. These are general requisites, it is incumbent upon individual counselors to define their roles and responsibilities in actual practice.

Role and Responsibilities. Rehabilitation counselors are traditionally assigned the lead role in the vocational assessment process. In most state programs, they are assigned responsibilities for conducting the diagnostic studies mandated by law and for managing the rehabilitation plan developed with eligible clients. Rehabilitation counselors play particularly catalytic roles in effecting an appropriate use of vocational evaluation.

The counselor's role is to assess the potential for rehabilitation and make a decision regarding acceptance for services, develop with the client an individualized written rehabilitation program (IWRP), arrange for the provision of services, and monitor the case until all services are completed.

The counselor is expected to confer with the client, or the client's advocate, parent or guardian, and participate in all planning/decision-making. They ensure that the client understands his/her rights and responsibilities throughout the rehabilitation process. The counselor is also responsible for setting realistic goals consistent with the labor market opportunities.

The first step for the counselor in the rehabilitation process is to make a decision regarding eligibility. This is based on a determination that the disability poses a substantial handicap to employment. The counselor then makes a professional judgement that the client will be employable after services (counseling, physical restoration, and/or job training) are rendered.

The vocational rehabilitation counselor determines the nature and scope of studies and evaluations to be done. The goal is to gather as much information as is needed for good decision-making, develop the rehabilitation plan with the client, and attempts to ensure that the client benefits from the rehabilitation process. The counselor must document assessments which are sufficient in determining that the applicant has a physical or mental disability severe enough to affect employment. Additional assessments may be necessary in vocational, educational and other related areas. Some of these assessments are done by the counselor, others may require outside professionals, such as vocational evaluators, psychologists, occupational or physical therapists. If the counselor needs additional information to answer questions regarding the client's ability to work and where and what he/she can do, a vocational evaluation may be needed.

If a decision is made to secure a vocational evaluation, it is the counselor's responsibility to prepare the client prior to the evaluation. The counselor should explain the reason for the decision, what information is being sought, what the information will be used for, how it will aid the client, and what to expect both during and as an outcome of the process. Preparation would include the provision of any needed support services such as transportation, diagnostic maintenance and interpreter or reader services; consideration of the need for child care, glasses or other assistive devices; and making sure the client understands where and when the evaluation will occur.

A formal referral by the counselor for evaluation should state the extent of evaluation being requested, outcomes desired, and list specific questions to be answered. In addition to the information given on the referral form, the counselor may wish to attach copies of pertinent medical or psychological reports and copies of the counselor progress notes that include personal and vocational information, counselor impressions, client expectations, etc. The goal would be to give as complete a picture of the client and the handicapping condition(s) as possible.

During the evaluation, the counselor needs to be available to answer questions either from the evaluator or client, provide any additional services that may become necessary, and attend staffings/conferences. If the evaluation is extended, the counselor needs to maintain contact with the client and the facility to monitor activities.

If possible, it is preferred that the counselor make at least one visit to the evaluation program during the client's participation. When necessary the counselor arranges for simultaneous services or prerequisite assessment which should occur at the same time or precede the vocational evaluation. For instance, a client may require a preliminary assessment by a rehabilitation technologist to allow for an equitable vocational evaluation; or, rehabilitation technology may need to be coordinated with the vocational evaluation and incorporated into specific tasks (e.g., adapting a work sample or situational assessment situation).

Upon completion of the evaluation, the counselor meets with the client (and/or other responsible parties) to review the results and recommendations. Frequently, this is the time when the counselor makes a decision regarding eligibility for the vocational rehabilitation program.

Once a decision is made to accept a client for services, a mutually agreed upon IWRP is completed by the counselor and client. The plan is time-limited and goal oriented; describes functional limitations and how they can be corrected, ameliorated or accommodated; and describes the services to be provided. The vocational evaluation results can help the counselor deal with specific problems hindering employment and can provide the basis for the vocational goal and services to be provided.

When the client is ready to begin the plan for services, the counselor, where appropriate, should share with providers vocational evaluation data pertinent to the provision of services and to the potential success of the client. The counselor is responsible for monitoring progress during the rehabilitation process, providing support, and amending the plan as needed.

Once the provision of services leading to readiness for employment are completed, the counselor provides any needed assistance with job placement and monitors the placement for suitability and stability for a minimum of sixty (60) days before closing the case. Post employment services may be planned and provided by the counselor to assist certain clients, whose case was closed, to maintain employment.

The Vocational Evaluator

The vocational evaluator plays a central role in the vocational assessment portion of the rehabilitation process by using work, real or simulated, as the focal point for assessment and vocational exploration. The primary role of the evaluator is to assess the vocational potential of an individual, determine the scope of rehabilitative services required by the individual, and determine appropriate vocational choices for the client based upon client preferences and functional limitations. As such, the evaluator must be knowledgeable of three varying issues: people, jobs, and services. By knowing people, evaluators must be competent in observing and analyzing human behavior, effective in interviewing individuals, and proficient in administering and interpreting psychometric examinations. By knowing jobs and addressing the performance patterns displayed by the client, they are able to recommend the types and intensity of services that need to be provided. As a result of specific training and experience in assessment techniques, vocational evaluators may provide consultative and educative services to rehabilitation counselors, vocational educators, and other rehabilitative service providers.

Increasingly, vocational rehabilitation agencies are serving individuals with severe disabilities and are having a significant impact on their capacities to function vocationally. Traumatic brain injury and mental retardation are examples of disabilities which will

affect an individual's service needs and functional limitations differently over time given proper services and environmental accommodations. Due to frequent improvement seen in people with such disabilities vocational evaluation should be an ongoing, proactive process rather than a predictive, single determination point of entry.

Skills and Competencies. The Commission on Certification of Work Adjustment and Vocational Evaluation Specialists (CCWAVES) was formed in 1980 to set standards and qualifications and to put in place a method for certification of Vocational Evaluation Specialists and Work Adjustment Specialists. The Commission is not a regulatory or licensing body, but rather a standards-setting body. The Commission is composed of delegated representatives of major professional and consumer organizations. CCWAVES states that:

The purpose of certification is to recognize the professional qualifications of Vocational Evaluation Specialists, and likewise, of Work Adjustment Specialists, thereby assuring individuals who receive such services that they are being served by qualified professionals (CCWAVES, 1986).

Certification is initially awarded for five years, after application and examination requirements are met. Application procedures require the applicant for certification to demonstrate, through credentials and transcripts, that they have sufficient, recent and successful training in several areas and work experience in vocational evaluation or related fields before being certified. For both training and experience, minima are established by the Commission. Beginning in October 1987, applicants for certification are required to pass the Certification Examination assessing their ability to apply knowledges and skills (See Appendix A for a listing of the knowledges and performance areas for certification in vocational evaluation).

The skill and competencies identified by this professional body should be the basis for reviewing whether noncertified persons are competent to conduct vocational evaluation. Course work in bachelor and master's degree programs in vocational evaluation and content of short-term training should be based upon these domains in order for a vocational evaluator to become certified and/or recertified.

During the five year intervals between certification and recertification, the specialist must obtain a prescribed minimum of six university credits or eight continuing education units of additional training in areas listed on the table from recognized training sources (universities, professional development programs providing training by professional associations, short-term and inservice training from Research and Training Centers and Rehabilitation Continuing Education Programs). If sufficient continuing education or credits are not accrued, they may apply for reexamination. As a certification body the Commission is empowered to review and respond to complaints. Certification may be retracted in certain cases of documented misuse or unprofessional behavior.

Roles and Responsibilities

Evaluators have distinct roles and responsibilities, some of which are described in Chapter IV. Primarily, the vocational evaluator plans, coordinates, and conducts the formal vocational evaluation process. They are responsible also for monitoring the program and conducting follow-up with evaluatees who have completed the program.

The evaluator serves as a consultant to the rehabilitation counselor and other members of the rehabilitation (and assessment) team. They work collaboratively with occupational therapists, rehabilitation counselors, speech therapists, vocational instructors, job coaches (employment specialists), job placement specialists, and others. Most importantly the evaluator develops and maintains, for the duration of the evaluation period, a positive working and collaborative relationship with the individual participating in the vocational evaluation.

A great deal of the vocational evaluators time should be spent on communication with potential and current referral agents. It is important for these professionals to keep referral agents informed about their services; what the services can and can not provide. Further communication is required during, but, most importantly, after the vocational evaluation is completed. This communication can involve training to interpret evaluation results properly, assistance in interpreting results to others (employers, teachers, work adjustment specialists, parents, etc.) and collaboration to develop realistic recommendations and/or goals for the IWRP's.

Finally, vocational evaluators must have current knowledge of the local labor market and accompanying demands. Without such specific knowledge, vocational evaluation becomes sterile and invalid.

Others Involved in the Vocational Assessment

The rehabilitation counselor, vocational evaluator, and consumer are not the only participants who make substantial contributions in the vocational assessment process in rehabilitation. These professionals interact with each other in the vocational rehabilitation process and provide significant information relevant to vocational assessment and decision-making process. These are important in achieving the necessary supports, environmental modification, or assistive devices that make long-term employment a reality. These may include various rehabilitation or related personnel: (a) educational personnel involved in a transition team, as guidance counselors or teachers from special education, industrial and vocational education; (b) other assessment personnel specializing in the appraisal of cognitive, physical, psychological and social impacts and capacities associated with specific impairments on the individual's potential employment, as psychologists, occupational and physical therapists, independent living specialist, community development specialist; (c) technical personnel with skills in adaptation and modification of personal and occupational environments and the development of specific assistive devices for removing barriers imposed by a complex or disabling condition, as

rehabilitation engineers, rehabilitation technologists, work modification specialists; (d) personnel with specific knowledge of the local labor market, the requirements for employment, the economic and career potential of occupations and careers, and the social and economic supports needed in community and supported employment, as job development specialists, employers and job coaches, training specialists; and (e) persons with specific information about the ongoing daily impact, changes and needs of the individual, as parents, guardians, advocates, independent living, residential care supervisors.

The decision to initiate or refer a person with a handicap for vocational rehabilitation programming involves a basic, although oft-times unstructured, assessment of the person's ability to work. This process may be called "screening," but it nonetheless involves judgments by someone as to what a person can do and where he/she can do it. This judgement can be and is usually supported by either the professional's personal knowledge of a client's abilities or interests or by medical, social, psychological, academic, or other records.

Similarly, professionals other than the evaluator continuously assess a person's level of functioning while in the rehabilitation program. As interdisciplinary rehabilitation teams imply, all those involved in a person's rehabilitation program have some input into most aspects of that program. Since each discipline has its subset of goals and objectives as part of the total rehabilitation program, each profession must evaluate their client's response in the context of eventual job placement.

For these reasons, it is worth reviewing and discussing those professionals who are part of either the formal or informal evaluation of a client. In examining these other disciplines, a review of those disciplines' formal training curriculums/requirements is omitted due to limitations of space. Certainly then, the interdisciplinary team can be aware of its own strengths to assure considered and complete input into a person's total rehabilitation program or, in particular, into their evaluation/assessment process.

The identification of all the professions participating in a rehabilitation program is too difficult to review since rehabilitation encompasses a holistic review of a person's life. Professionals such as physicians, psychiatrists, driving instructors, attendants, and/or social workers may play a role in the program.

Five other groups of people were chosen for examination and review: occupational therapist, teacher (special education), psychologist, job coach, and parent/guardian. As will be seen, each of these people have some very important information to contribute to the evaluation process, but all of them also lack a background in an equally important piece of the process. Again, these professionals may or may not be involved in the assessment or evaluation process, depending on specific needs of the individual consumer.

Occupational Therapist

The occupational therapist's primary responsibility is to help the disabled person achieve a maximum level of independent functioning in self-care, work, and leisure activities. These professionals may be employed in a variety of settings, but usually practice in rehabilitation centers, psychiatric or mental retardation centers, hospitals, or nursing homes. They often are part of a comprehensive treatment team, but also can function independently especially in an evaluative role. Occupational therapists are trained in most physical aspects of the human anatomy and study human functions and dysfunctions, kinesiology, motion and movement, physiology, and anatomy. Occupational therapists are usually licensed by the state in which they practice, although the American Occupational Therapists' Association is the certifying body for these professions.

The profession of occupational therapist seems to be becoming more integrated into the vocational rehabilitation system with the development of many centers for the traumatically brain injured. As this population seeks more advanced and effective services, review of the person's physical and cognitive deficits becomes more important. Physical capacity studies, motion/movement reviews, work tolerance evaluations, and therapeutic plan development are all areas in which an occupational therapist can provide valuable insight, diagnoses, and input. Mobility, job-site modifications, transportation considerations, and structural design also can be examined by the occupational therapist to assist in the vocational rehabilitation planning.

Educators

Section 311 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1983 created a mandate from Congress and the U. S. Department of Education to develop transitional services for handicapped youth to move from school to work and helped local institutions and schools develop effective bridges for those students to move smoothly into appropriate employment immediately after completion of school. This has often meant an earlier and more visible relationship between special education and vocational education personnel in schools, vocational rehabilitation counselors and vocational evaluation. This early involvement requires the special education teacher to address not only academic issues, but also vocational issues. They must work jointly with vocational education programs to initiate job acquisition skill and with the vocational rehabilitation system to obtain a continuing thrust toward achievement of an occupational goal. The teacher may represent the first step in the vocational rehabilitation decision-making process for many handicapped persons. While such a shift does now require greater knowledge of vocational assessment, vocational evaluation, vocational rehabilitation and counseling, the main emphasis in their training are on instructions models, planning and curriculum development, personal interaction skills, and courses related to the exceptionalities and disabilities. States determine their own teacher certification standards and certify professional preparation programs at the colleges and universities within their borders.

Teachers have knowledge of a student's work habits, attention span, attendance to task, comprehension skills, and socialization skills, for instance, provide valuable information about important factors for evaluating a student's readiness for work or training. The daily, first-hand observation by teachers of their students is an extremely valuable asset and could and should be used by the rehabilitation team in assessment and planning purposes. Development by the team of a pointed model of service using the unique talents and situation of the teacher can create an efficient and reliable method for assessment.

In addition, teachers and school personnel can now employ a new kind of vocational assessment process which will facilitate the transition process. Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA) is a fairly recent approach which has emerged from the field of special education and is gaining national recognition in public school settings as an informal alternative to more formal vocational evaluation programming or other forms of school-based vocational assessment. Some advocates of CBVA are calling for the elimination of other forms of vocational assessment and evaluation services. Many practitioners with experience in schools contend that CBVA can supplement rather than supplant other program options. If one examines the following definitions of CBVA, the parallels with environmental and community-based assessment are evident. The curricula, contents, and environments constitute vocational education, career education, the total education system (including post secondary adult and continuing education) and the community. These form the foundations for curriculum-based appraisal. Because these concepts are relatively new to school and rehabilitation personnel, the following definitions are provided for readers to consider.

Cobb (1986) defines curriculum-based vocational assessment primarily as it pertains to vocational education:

The process of answering service delivery questions about the performance of an individual student through direct measurement of his or her progress against the expectations embedded in a vocational education course of study.

To differentiate CBVA from other, more formal, approaches to assessment, Albright and Cobb (1986) list these characteristics: (1) is conducted primarily through an informal, direct, nonstandardized process rather than through standardized commercially developed methods; (2) occurs largely in instructional laboratories rather than in separate vocational evaluation facilities (p.1); (3) personnel conducting CBVA should be those individuals for whom the results hold importance; (4) should be short-term in duration and frequently administered (p.2).

Stodden and Ianacone define CBVA similarly by depicting it as:

A process for determining the career development and vocational instructional needs of students based upon their on-going performance within existing course content. Assessment

information is collected in the areas of work related behaviors, generalized vocational outcomes and specific skill outcomes (1987).

It is a structured process which is dependent on cooperative planning and implementation, on-going administrative support and consistent monitoring. The process is generated from within a system and reflects the needs, training options, and employment opportunities available for that local service provider and community in which it functions.

Peterson clarifies what information is collected and ways in which it is gathered when he refers to CBVA as:

Using existing school resources and programs to provide assessment information and experiences in a way that affects instruction on an on-going basis. It is composed of (1) utilization of existing school records, special education assessment data, and other school-based information; (2) classroom-based observation and interviews; (3) community-based observations and interviews; and, if appropriate and needed, (4) special screening tests and assessment (1986, p. 47-48).

Presently, CBVA is being promoted for use with individuals who are preparing to enter, or who have already enrolled in, vocational training programs.

This points out a major difference between vocational assessments which occur with school-aged individuals (or adults who are involved with educational endeavors) and adults who are participating in the vocational rehabilitation or other specific job training programs. Often, the purposes for conducting vocational assessment differ for the school-aged and adult segments of the population. Vocational appraisal during one's school years centers around career development, vocational profiling and vocational planning for occupational training. The kinds of training can include general introductory vocational education courses, such as industrial arts or home economics or occupationally specific programs in the major vocational education content areas: agriculture, home economics, health occupations, business occupations, marketing and distributive education, trade and industry programs, and cooperative work experience. Recommendations for training for adolescents can also involve various kinds of career explorations or work experiences in school or community settings. The goals target preparation for later careers or long-term employment, whereas goals for adults may focus on more specific occupational recommendations such as training for immediate placement or direct placement in jobs.

Psychologists

Psychological testing conducted by psychologists is generally not closely tied to a work context, but provides valuable information in the vocational assessment from the standpoint of individual personal and cognitive differences related to their disability. Psychologists

often are important members of the rehabilitation team, especially with developmentally disabled persons, chronically mentally ill and persons adapting to the physical as well as psychological impacts of their disability. Psychologists are usually licensed in the state in which they practice and the licensure requirements vary according to individual state law. The American Association of State Psychology Boards (AASPB) is a collective body of the individual state boards and has a major responsibility of developing a standardized examination to assist states in their licensure process.

Therefore, as previously discussed, the psychologist's contribution to a rehabilitation team can be as an identifier of various behaviors, learning potential, or functioning levels. This information can certainly help predict a client's vocational outcome and may, in some cases, be all that is needed to develop a rehabilitation program. However, behaviors and potential are not always appropriate predictors for vocational success as different jobs, occupations, work settings, and work skills all place different requirements and pressures on a person as those situations vary.

Job Coach/Employment Specialist

The development, in increasing numbers of supported and supportive employment models, requires job coaches who become to many disabled persons the most important link back to the vocational rehabilitation process. The job coach's role in assessment is unique. Depending upon the model of supported or supportive work one subscribes to, traditional evaluation techniques may be nonexistent. Instead, job development, job matching, coordination of ancillary services (e.g., transportation, family, et al), and advocacy all play more important roles than evaluation in the placement of a disabled person in a supported program. According to the Wehman Model (Wehman, 1981), client assessment of vocationally related factors is an important predictor and matching tool to effect a successful placement. Rather than providing standardized work samples or psychometrics, supported work models rely on on-the-job assessments of work proficiency, work rate, work quality, work preservation levels, work repertoire, and work endurance. Also, under these models, assessment of independent living factors such as transportation, socialization, mobility, self-care, and functional reading and computation are seen as critical.

Ancillary assessments may not directly involve a client. However, they include reviews of parental attitudes, interest, and involvement in the vocational rehabilitation program. In addition surveys of job opportunities, job analyses to identify skills needed for performance, information required, and job and environmental modifications needs are assessed.

Employers

When there is previous employment, the employer can be a good source of information on the client and the client's understanding of work. The employer may be able to provide information on the client's attitudes and values; social interaction and behaviors; temperament and

reaction to stress; and general personality characteristics. The employer may also be able to offer information on job skills; work attitude; aptitudes and strengths; how the client accepts criticism or relates to authority; and co-worker interaction and understanding of employer expectations.

CHAPTER IV

THE VOCATIONAL EVALUATION PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

The process of evaluating a person's vocational potential is one which is individualized, flexible, dynamic and outcome-oriented. The information gathered during the evaluatory phase of the rehabilitation process can be invaluable to the vocational counselor. It can provide the counselor and other members of the interdisciplinary team with a profile of the individual's strengths, needs, capabilities and overall potential. The counselor can then use this information to develop and implement career and vocational decision-making and planning. In addition, the information gathered can provide recommendations as to what support services are necessary in order for the individual to be successfully employed.

In this chapter, the authors review the dynamics of the vocational evaluation and vocational assessment processes. Additionally, vocational evaluation is discussed in relation to the rehabilitation process itself. Alternatives to traditional vocational evaluation are discussed and purchasing considerations are explored. Lastly, the desired and expected outcomes of an evaluation are described in order to provide purchasers and users of evaluation with better understanding of what can and should be the outcomes of this widely used rehabilitation service.

ASSESSMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Employers have been seeking efficient ways to select the best applicants for jobs since the industrial revolution. Employers recognize the cost of frequent turnover in positions and having people on a payroll who are unable to satisfactorily perform their required work. As industrial jobs became available, employers recognized a need to develop techniques which provide assurances of hiring "the right person" for a job beyond emotional hunches. The evolution of the corporation and the expansion of the private enterprise system produce a dilemma for the individual seeking employment as well.

People began to realize they had choices about career areas. This produced the need for individuals to explore options, and to become aware of where their talents may best correspond to gainful employment. From family orientations, school experiences, and community exposure, children and adolescents began to explore the answer to, "What do I want to be when I grow up?" or "What do I do now, since I can't do what I did before?" At the time these issues were emerging for both the employers and potential employees, only a designated segment of the population was given the widest choices. White, well educated,

nondisabled males were allowed the first options, with ethnic minority males, females, poorly educated, and finally persons with disabilities considered as potential candidates for only a few jobs.

The interest in developing a systematic approach to matching people with jobs is not unique to the vocational rehabilitation system. In fact, the first societal sector to seriously explore this was the military. Standardized intelligence, achievement, and aptitude tests were introduced in the United States during World War I for military vocational selection purposes. Since then, many private businesses have developed systematic personnel screening processes for job selection and job placement.

In vocational rehabilitation, vocational evaluation and assessment have been the primary vehicles for assessing the vocational capability of persons with disabilities. A combination of standardized testing, observations, job trials and interviews, are some of the techniques used in combination to develop a vocational profile. The purpose of the vocational assessment is to provide the user and purchaser of the service with information which will directly lead to a successful employment.

VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT: AN INDIVIDUALIZED PROCESS

Vocational assessment refers to the process by which information is gathered about an individual's work skills and competencies so that appropriate employment and/or training decisions can be made. By definition, the process implies that all individuals are unique and will possess varying work behaviors, work interests, and work skills. As a result, the vocational assessment process needs to be fluid. It must be responsive not only to the unique differences among people but also to the expected outcomes of the assessment. If in fact, vocational assessments are conducted in order to make appropriate employment and training decisions, the approach used by the decision makers should be individually designed to ensure that valid employment and training forecasts can be made.

The vocational assessment process is most useful for employment and training purposes when it takes into account factors beyond the individual himself. Pancsofar (Rusch, 1986) points out that the process must be ecological. Factors about the individual such as medical data, aptitudes, and interests need to be considered in light of other factors including: significant others, physical environment, and cultural components. Significant others are defined as "...primary care providers, teachers, aides, schoolmates, friends, siblings, and community service personnel." Physical environment considerations encompass the home environment, leisure settings, school settings, and community work sites. Pancsofar defines cultural components as the "operationalized philosophical orientations of representatives of the school/vocational programs, the community news media's portrayal of persons with handicaps, general attitudes of nonhandicapped persons toward persons with handicaps, outcomes of judicial and legislative decisions, and the professional orientation of educators" and other

professionals. All of these factors will not only influence the assessment results and validity but should affect the design of the assessment approach. It is critical that information about each of these dimensions be collected and considered.

Halpern, Lehmann, Irvin, Heiny and Menchetti (1982) have offered distinctions between traditional and contemporary assessment approaches. Menchetti has described traditional assessment as an approach that employs measures like intelligence tests, aptitude tests, and interest surveys for the purpose of classifying individuals. This type of assessment is often used for determining eligibility for services. The contemporary approach, on the other hand, is designed to facilitate the identification of an individual's employment or training needs. This approach is pragmatic and directly related to program outcomes. It also requires that the vocational assessment process be closely linked with training activities whether the training occurs within a rehabilitation facility or within a community after a job site has been found. Schalock and Karan (1979) also suggest that this approach is a shift in assessment focus, away from prediction orientation toward a skill deficit identification orientation. Any assessment approach should, however, serve as a positive experience for the individual and should target future plans which are based on realistic, concrete outcomes.

The assessment process must be fluid. It must be individually designed to ensure that all factors influencing the individual are considered. For example, an evaluator must consider factors such as the availability and dependability of an individual's support system, the individual's adjustment to disability, the community's view of disabled persons, and the availability of technological devices that may aid the individual in job performance. More simply put, environmental and cultural considerations, as well as factors about the individual and significant others, are critical components to consider.

As Pancsofar (Rusch, 1986) reaffirms, the assessment processes in vocational rehabilitation must be ecological. The four components which must be considered in designing assessment processes are the individual, significant others, physical environment, and culture. The assessment tools used, the environment chosen for the assessment, and the training methodology employed are examples of assessment components which must be individually designed. The reason for the assessment referral should also be considered when the process is designed. If, for example, the referral is made for eligibility determination purposes, the process should vary substantially from an assessment being conducted to determine what skill deficits and training needs an individual may require.

It is recognized that disabled and nondisabled people perform differently in jobs for a wide variety of reasons. These reasons can be categorized as factors to consider when conducting and developing recommendations in vocational evaluation. Examples of these determining factors are:

- Job skills

- Work ethic
- Stability of home environment
- Job expectations
- Work environment
- Self-confidence
- Co-worker interactions

Pancsofar (Rusch, 1986) points out that all factors relating to job performance on a specific work task are significant predictors of an individual's chances of maintaining competitive employment. As a result, the assessment process needs to be sensitive to measuring factors such as tardiness, co-worker relationships, reaction to stress, and general personality characteristics. The assessment process also needs to be sensitive to those cultural and familial factors affecting work and social behaviors. Tardiness may or may not, for example, be a behavior that is individually patterned. A severely disabled person, dependent on others for transportation to and from work, may face problems with tardiness which are much different than those presented by a disabled person who functions more independently.

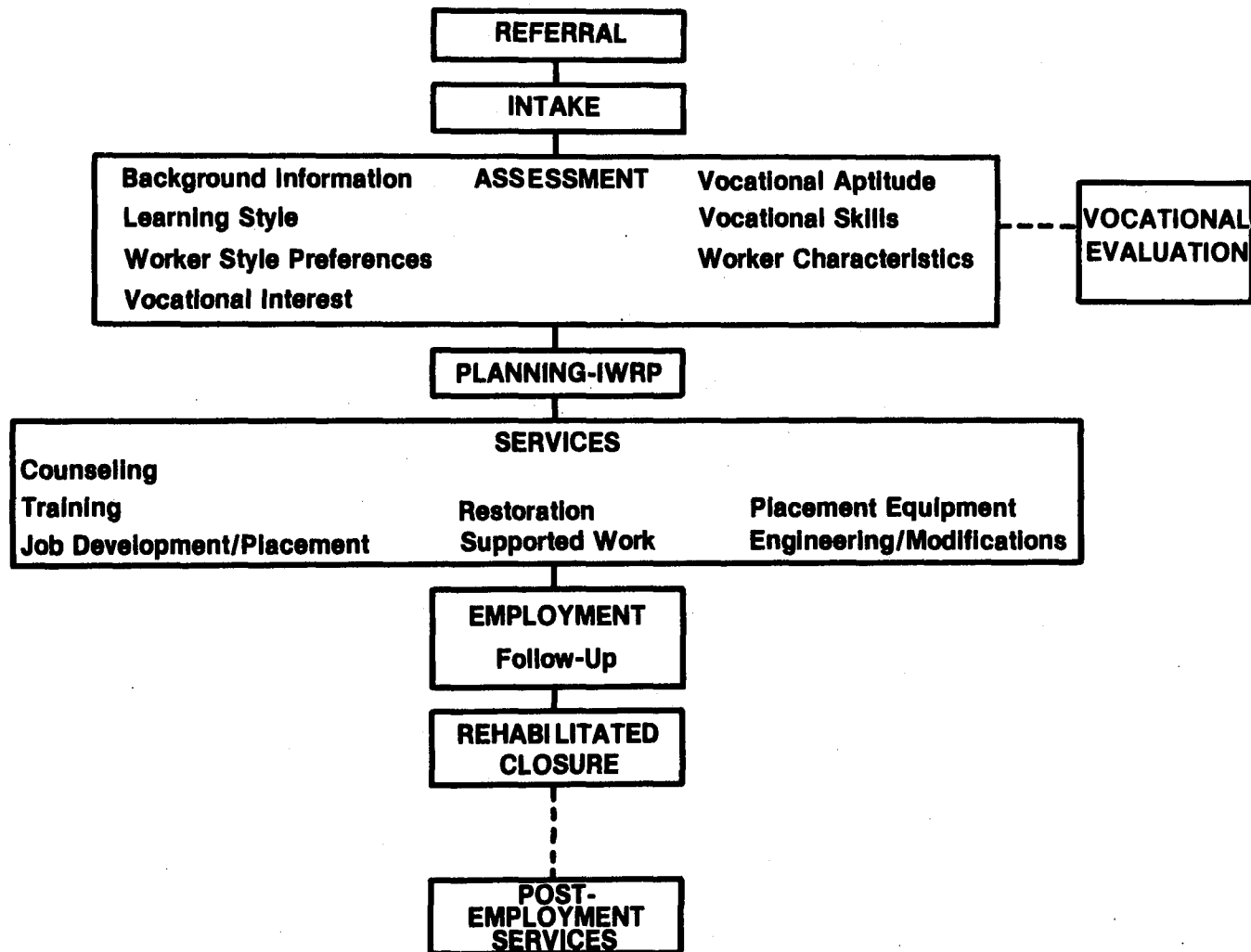
VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT: ITS ROLE IN REHABILITATION

Assessing vocational ability can be done for several distinct purposes. In screening, the assessment process is used to determine whether or not an individual has a vocationally handicapping condition. Assessment may be used for a second purpose of diagnostic review. This may involve further testing an individual to determine whether or not the individual can be appropriately served by providing them with access to a specific program or service. The third purpose of the assessment process is to aid in the development of a curriculum and/or a rehabilitation plan. It is this aspect of assessment that is so important to the overall success of the rehabilitation/habilitation process. (See Figure 1.)

Vocational assessment can initially provide the interdisciplinary team with critical information about the strengths, weaknesses, and interests of an individual. In addition, the assessment process can begin to identify training goals and strategies, job matching clues, and other critical factors about the individual, the family, and the environment in which he or she lives. In fact, the assessment should provide the basis for the Individual Written Rehabilitation Program (IWRP).

Once an individual has entered into the IWRP stage, though, the assessment process should continue. The successful placement of an individual into competitive employment will largely rest on the team's ability to continually assess the individual's strengths and weaknesses based on experience in the service environment. The vocational and

FIGURE 1
Vocational Rehabilitation Process



social skill information provided will help the interdisciplinary team effectively plan for further services, training or employment environments. IWRP's should be continually revised to reflect this new information.

CONTENT OF VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT SERVICES

The following section will present a brief description of the generic content of vocational assessment. This description also represents the content of vocational evaluation. It is the extent or intensity of investigation that establishes the difference between the assessment and evaluation processes. The content can also be divided into categories which represent requisite components of any viable assessment process.

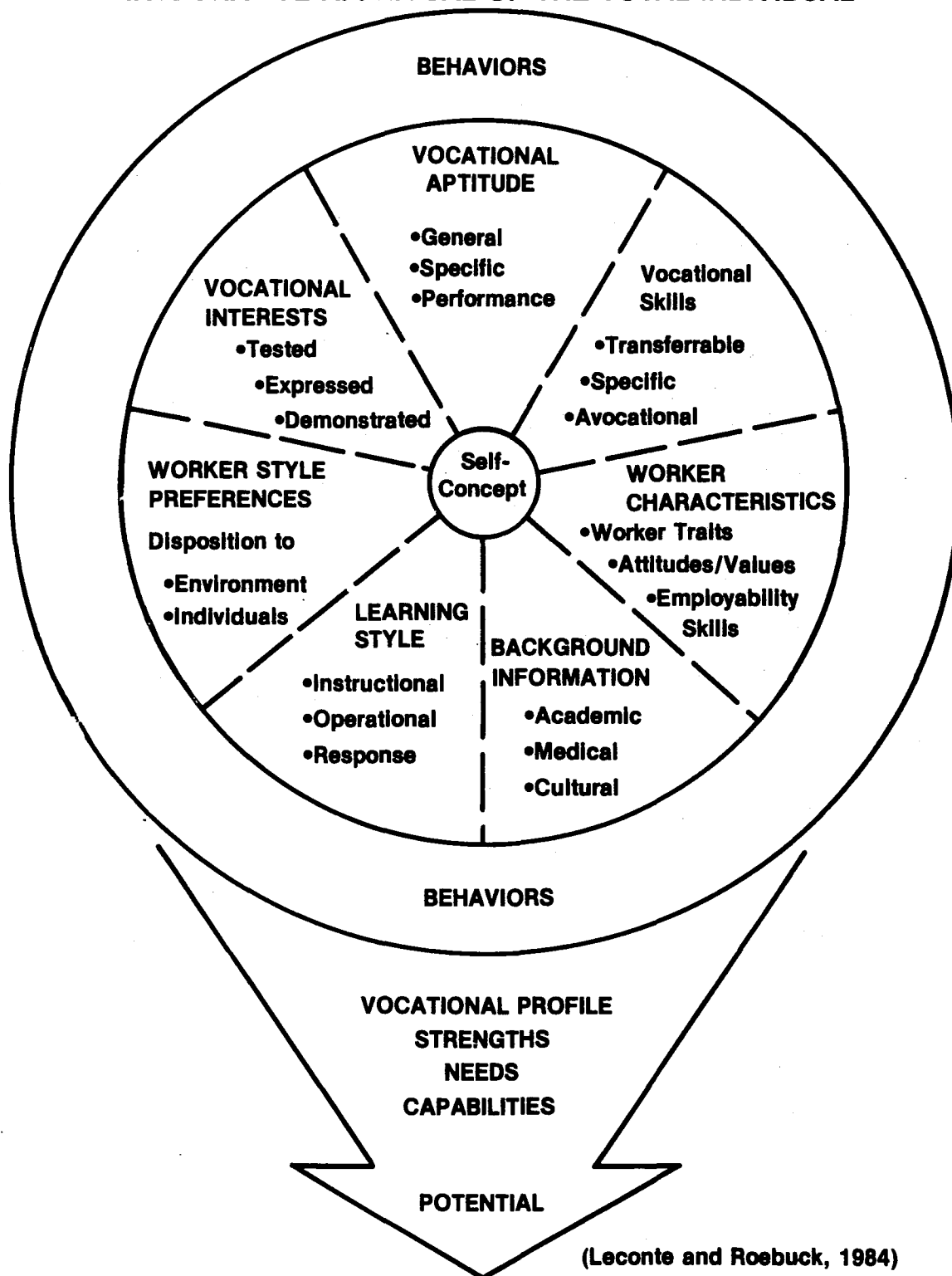
The components, or content, of most vocational assessment services are fairly universal. Each of these components is represented in Figure 2. The compilation of information gathered for each component represents a person's individual vocational profile.

The information collected, analyzed, synthesized, and interpreted comprises the vocational profile. The components of vocational appraisal mirror the attributes which form the vocational "persona" or profile of an individual. Each component provides information which contributes to the profile, therefore, each area should be addressed or investigated. If one component is overlooked or not included in the profile development and analysis, that component could represent a weak link which could create problems in later training and placement.

The core of any individual is his/her self-concept, which emanates from one's center into behaviors which can be observed and measured via performances on vocational skills, aptitudes, achievements and via manifestations of temperaments, interests, and worker traits. An assessor must examine the manifestations of each component in order to get a glimpse of the individual's self-concept. It has been said that one's self-concept is based on self-knowledge. Collecting (and experiencing) information via assessment increases self-knowledge. With more knowledge about the self, people tend to gain self-confidence, which eventually enhances and promotes self-advocacy. One acquires a less distorted or more accurate perception of reality from investigating and learning more about the self. The resulting discoveries can represent the first step toward change, which is something many persons with disabilities are seeking.

This process is based on the philosophy that vocational assessment should collect, provide, and focus on positive information and not on the negative or the individual's deficits. Not that needs should be overlooked, but needs, too, can be presented in positive terms, especially when they are tied to personal and vocational strengths. A profile usually portrays the significant features of a person based on sets of data. These features should at the minimum include individual strengths, needs, capabilities ("can do's") and potentials. Vocational decisions and recommendations can be developed from such a profile.

FIGURE 2
VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT
INTEGRATIVE APPRAISAL OF THE TOTAL INDIVIDUAL



For example, if the client is frequently openly hostile with people, this may indicate they need to work alone.

The components or common denominators for any vocational assessment process are described as follows:

1. Background Information. Includes any vocationally relevant data that can be drawn from previous academic, medical, physical, employment, cultural, or home and community records/histories.
2. Learning Style/Preferences. Consists of behaviors which serve as indicators of how individuals learn and adapt to their environments. Learning style can be described as a preferred way of receiving and inputting information and experiences. The way an individual organizes, thinks, instructs, learns and responds comprises his or her learning preference or style.
3. Worker Style Preferences or Temperaments. Equate personal traits consisting of an individual's characteristic mode or inclination of emotional response. Stated another way, one's temperament is represented by his/her disposition toward environments and other individuals.
4. Vocational Interests. Comprise what an individual wants to do, would be happy doing, and/or what one dreams of doing. Interests can be identified via three methods: tested, expressed, and manifested. Usually the most valid interests are those discovered through observing someone's behavior and demonstrated preferences, e.g., people like to do what they are good at. The least reliable method, especially for individuals with handicaps, involves testing.
5. Vocational Aptitudes. Can be defined as an individual's ability to learn something. It can be further clarified as his/her capacity or capability to acquire proficiency within a given amount of time and with formal or informal training.
6. Vocational Skills. Are those capabilities which are organized around specific occupations or as related to a cross-section of occupational areas. Skills assessed during vocational appraisal fall into three basic categories: occupationally-specific, avocational, and transferable.
7. Worker Characteristics. Encompass those traits and unique features which are characteristic of an individual at work, on the job, or in vocational contexts. His/her attitudes, values and behaviors are manifested via worker characteristics. Employability skills represent more concrete characteristics which include job-seeking, job-

keeping, job-changing and advancement skills or capabilities.

8. Behaviors. Are representative of the individual, particularly as they relate to or impact on work and success in vocational endeavors. The manifestations or performances of a person in various settings or with different people is equated with his/her behaviors. These can include social interacting, peer relationships, how one accepts criticism or relates to authority, etc. Behaviors are "what others see" and when behaviors are deemed unacceptable by supervisors, vocational or employment failure result. This component, more than any other, requires support systems and techniques which can contribute to or help sustain employment or training success.

As a profile is developed, the individual's personal strengths, vocational needs, capabilities, and potential begin to emerge. In order for an individual to attain his/her potential, recommendations must be implemented and can be facilitated via individualized career, vocational, employment, or rehabilitation planning. Just as the collection of vocational profile information requires the input of varied team members, so too, the development and implementation of individualized plans requires collaboration among a variety of professional individuals and members of the individual's personal support network. Use of profiling and collaboration are key to the eventual vocational and employment success of individuals who are handicapped.

DYNAMICS OF THE VOCATIONAL EVALUATION PROCESS: HOW IT SHOULD WORK

In order for practitioners and consumers to gain the maximum benefit from, and to utilize the results of, vocational appraisal processes, it is imperative that they understand what occurs within those processes. This section describes what should happen in vocational evaluation by minimal standards, how the process works and who participates in it. As has been discussed earlier, vocational evaluation is but one type of vocational assessment which takes place in vocational rehabilitation. Guidelines for selecting appropriate and high quality vocational evaluation programming and services are offered as well as a listing of assurances or variables which should be representative of effective and meaningful vocational evaluation services.

The Vocational Assessment Team: Who Does What?

As described in other sections, vocational evaluation is a systematic process engaged in by qualified, trained professionals, preferably by more than one at any given time. These professionals should possess minimal competencies as certified by the Commission on Certification of Work Adjustment and Vocational Evaluation Specialists (CCWAVES). While it is unlikely to be a random, unstructured set of activities used in some haphazard fashion when conducted by profes-

sionally trained and qualified personnel, evaluation is a term used widely to capture a host of observations and assessments.

When other rehabilitation personnel perform specific assessments as a part of the vocational evaluation process (rehabilitation technologists, counselors, psychologists, etc.) they should work in concert with the vocational evaluator and the individualized vocational evaluation plan. Use of a team approach requires that the vocational evaluator serve as the overseer or manager of the evaluation process. Many rehabilitation agencies and programs do not have the resources to support the team approach, nor can they afford the use of more than one evaluator at all times. In spite of these limitations, it is in the best interest of the evaluatee's rehabilitation, as well as the best interest of personnel to try to staff vocational evaluation programs adequately. "Adequately" should mean more than one professional staff member is observing and interacting with the evaluatee. If two trained evaluators can not be afforded, then arrangements should be made during every evaluatee's time in the program for other professionals to participate in the observation and interaction process. Preferably, this professional would be familiar enough with some assessment instruments, activities or procedures to assume an evaluator's role for short periods of time. Two or three heads, or more, are definitely better than one when trying to address and meet the appraisal and vocational needs of an individual, especially one who is handicapped (facing vocational barriers) in some way.

The other participants in the vocational evaluation process are just as critical to its functioning as the trained evaluation personnel. The others being referred to in this case are the individuals receiving the services, those for whom the services have initiated and designed the service, usually the counselor. These individuals carry different designations or labels depending on the system which is sponsoring their participation in the evaluation service. Traditionally, the term client has been used within the vocational rehabilitation system and other such habilitative or restorative human services, such as developmental disability systems and mental health services. As other systems have provided vocational evaluation services, different designations or labels have been assigned which are more in keeping with the services provided, such as the term, student, in public schools, vocational centers, and community colleges. For the purposes of this discussion, individuals who participate in the process, as the targeted recipients of the unique services, will be termed evaluatees.

Regardless of its form or the source conducting vocational evaluation, though, it is a data collection and data synthesis process directed at achieving one or more of three traditional purposes: (a) to determine extent of need or eligibility for a treatment or process, (b) to plan one or more subsequent treatments or processes, and (c) to explore and define alternative options with an individual which will enhance and facilitate his/her vocational decision-making. Consistent with standing philosophy and legislative mandates for education and rehabilitation, there is a fourth purpose. This relates in particular to the issues consumers often raise regarding vocational evaluation's

insensitivity to expressed needs and concerns. The fourth purpose is what Vash (1984) states as a goal in rehabilitation to increasingly "empower" individuals to take effective charge of their own lives. In vocational evaluation, such empowering actions should include increasing their capability to make their own decisions, defining their own rehabilitation to the greatest extent possible, and directing the course of their vocational choices.

It should be against accomplishment of these four purposes that we plan and implement services and appraise the quality of the service. Such monitoring and program evaluation is a primary responsibility of the professional providing and utilizing the services as much as "watchdogging" is for the consumers. Elsewhere in this document quality assurances and program evaluation issues are discussed and outlined in depth. Also, refer to the checklist listed in Appendix B for questions which users and consumers can ask when seeking quality vocational evaluation services. In order to accomplish the purposes or goals described above, criteria must be developed and used to serve as benchmarks by which referents, users, and, most importantly, consumers/evaluatees can select, monitor, and evaluate the services available to them. Also, program options must be organized around the pursuit of these goals, keeping in mind that the needs of individual consumers provide the rationale for these services existing in the first place.

In general, counselors, consumers, and others who may be responsible for selecting appropriate services should keep in mind whether or not the vocational evaluation program actually produces and does what it says it provides. For instance, not only should staff be qualified, trained and certified, but materials, evaluation technology, physical resources, and the organizational structure should be in place so that all personnel will deal with clients in a professional manner to encourage their full benefit from the appraisal process. The technology and processes of evaluation followed by the provider should have known validity and be relevant to the needs of populations with whom the evaluation is used. Again, an effective process will actively promote consumer/client involvement and growth. If meaningful planning and growth are objectives of vocational evaluation, a clear role and evidence of evaluatee-expressed interests and needs in evaluation planning, interpretation, replanning and in report development should be regular features of the evaluation process. There are considerable numbers of publications to aid in selecting appropriate psychometrics, work samples, computerized job search systems, and methods for interviewing and conducting situational assessments (e.g., Botterbusch, 1978, 1980, 1982; McCray, 1982; Peterson, 1985, 1986; Fry, 1986). Both evaluators, consumers, and program monitors should be familiar with such information.

Generic Components of the Vocational Evaluation Process.

The design of vocational evaluation services is embedded in the historical development and natural evolution of vocational rehabilitation services in this country. This design, again, represents but one type of vocational assessment service delivery. A generic and univer-

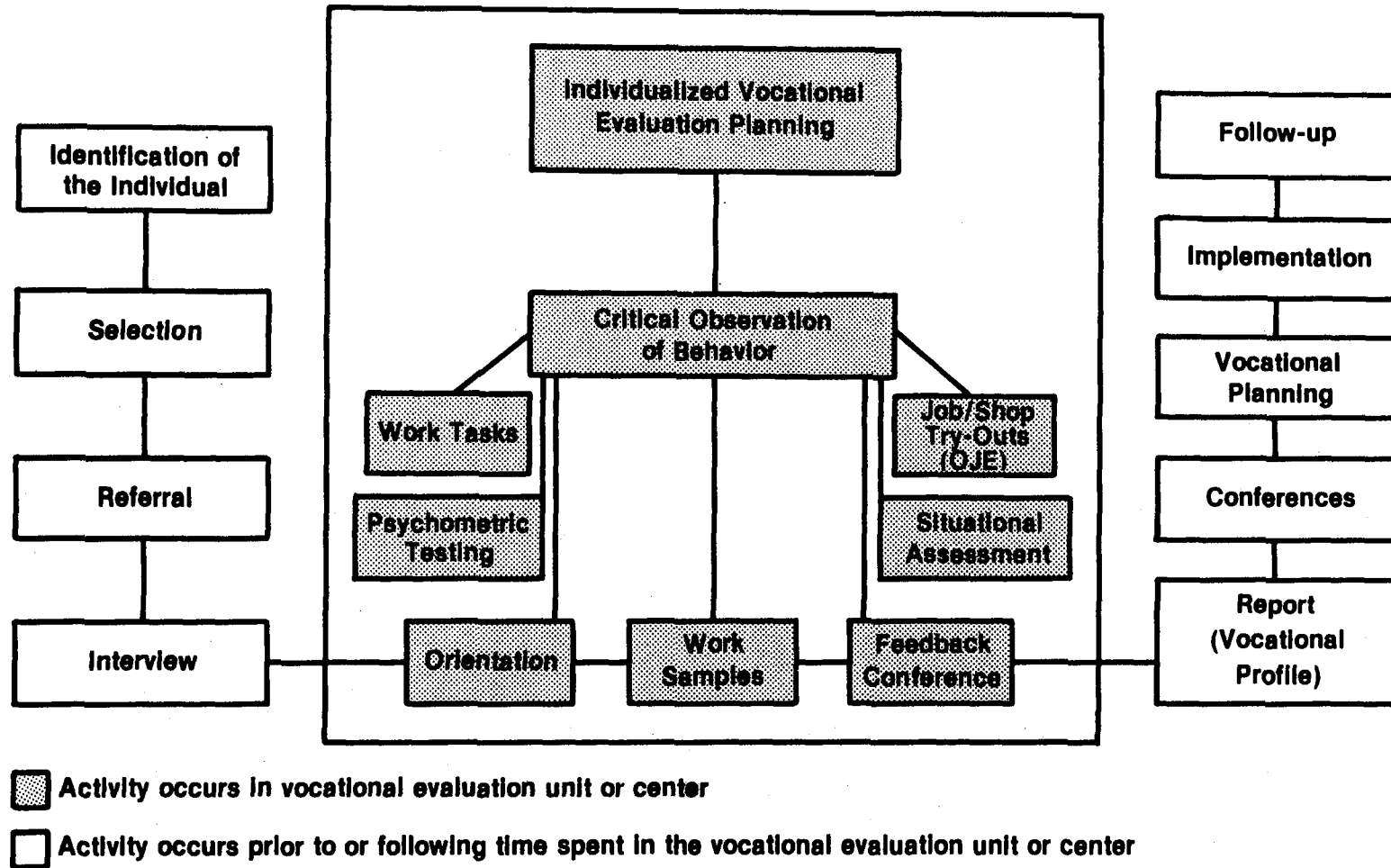
sally-accepted flow of services comprises the vocational evaluation process. This process represents a standard component of vocational rehabilitation programming in most state agencies and in many private facilities. A generic sequence of steps describing the process or flow of services is provided in Figure 3, as a guide to the minimal components of an effective service delivery system or program. This format could be adapted to vocational evaluation services in a variety of nonrehabilitative settings, such as secondary schools, community colleges, public or private employment training programs, etc. In fact, the particular configuration of the process and sequence of steps within it, was designed for a public school system (Leconte & Roebuck, 1981). However, the process is not dependent on any particular setting. In other words, the flow of service components is fairly universal when used with individuals who have special needs, including those who have disabilities.

Though the vocational evaluation need not be dependent or artificially tied to any specific setting, it is imperative that the process not exist or occur in isolation from other services. In order for vocational evaluation to be effective and useful to evaluatees and other professionals, it must be preceded and followed by services which represent some type of comprehensive service delivery to evaluatees. Traditionally, vocational evaluation has occurred after initial referral and before the formal planning phase (Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan) takes place within the vocational rehabilitation process.

Put another way, specific purposes and rationale for referring an individual to vocational evaluation should precede referral, likewise services which allow implementation of vocational evaluation recommendations and use of findings should be in place. It is not necessary for pre and post services to be part of the same system, in fact, it is often economically sensible to form collaborative agreements and service designs between or among community agencies. Historically, vocational evaluation services have ranged among the highest of any service purchased outside of vocational rehabilitation agencies and other rehabilitation training programs. In some cases this may represent a healthy practice if the clients do not become permanent residents of a long-term sheltered workshop or work activity center program. Though extended evaluation or sheltered programming is not a universal practice, it has occurred often enough in the past to warrant criticism by consumers, advocates and professionals.

In any case, but especially if vocational evaluation services are purchased, a systematic, consistent process of opening and maintaining lines of communication should be in place. For instance, it should be mandatory that the counselor representing the purchasing agency and the vocational evaluator, or a knowledgeable representative, discuss the appropriateness of, and the specific match between, a particular vocational evaluation program and the individual client prior to a referral being initiated. Also, if the staff from either agency changes, a formal visit and face-to-face meeting should occur with the new parties. Preferably, the counselor would visit the vocational evaluation program, regardless of which individual was the new staff

FIGURE 3
VOCATIONAL EVALUATION PROCESS
 (Integrative Appraisal of the Total Individual)



person, simply to "scope out" or share in any changes in design, procedures, or operations. During such a visit, or a series of them, each professional should review and describe his/her job requirements, responsibilities, and unique ways of operating with the other. If such an exchange(s) does not take place, assumptions are made about rules or expectations which could be erroneous, and thus, harmful to the client.

It is a fact that the people working in programs make the differences in service delivery, in spite of standard operating procedures, program policies, or their official job titles or published duties. In order for a client to receive the services he/she and the professional are recommending or expecting, they must know the attributes and level of commitment of those individuals who will be providing the services. They must have a clear understanding of who will "go to bat" for them, who will produce, or who may be reluctant to advocate for them. The professional can learn this crucial information only by investigating in person and communicating first-hand. At this point it is important to remember that the principle role and responsibility for vocational evaluation and each of its phases rests with the vocational evaluator. This is but one example of his/her responsibility, however, to carry out this responsibility, the evaluator must depend to some degree on the cooperation of referral agents and their sponsoring agencies.

Maintaining open lines of communication and cooperation are requisite for the vocational evaluation to attain maximum benefit for the evaluatee and optimal cost effectiveness for the community. One example of using open lines of communication involves the easy access of the referral agent by the vocational evaluator in the event that he/she needs clarification about a referral question. Another example might occur when the evaluator provides immediate feedback about the evaluatee's performance midway through the vocational evaluation process, thus providing the referral agent an opportunity to request additional or more in-depth assessment information. In situations where little, if any, interaction occurs between vocational evaluators and referral agents, an uneasy, distracting sense of mystery interferes with the business at hand. Such situations automatically place restrictions on the extent to which, and the accuracy with which, the evaluation will or can be conducted. Although the evaluatee may or may not be aware of this lack of communication, such a scenario could relay the message that he or she is not important enough to take time for.

Purposes and Goals

Overall purposes or goals for vocational evaluation were stated earlier (see Chapter I). It is helpful, however, to examine briefly the more targeted purposes by which potential referral agents or consumers can identify individuals they know who may be in need of the service. Also, it is essential that vocational evaluation be developed and planned around at least one of these purposes, otherwise the evaluatee may drift aimlessly throughout the assessment activities. These purposes have been defined repeatedly in the body of knowledge which helps to distinguish vocational evaluation from other human appraisal services. Neubert (1985) expanded the more traditional

purposes to include the fourth and fifth ones in the following list. These have been alluded to, but mentioned infrequently in literature previously. The nature of these purposes relies on the use of work, real or simulated, as the basis of vocational evaluation. That these exist validates the difference of vocational evaluation from other vocational appraisal services or techniques.

Purposes for referring individuals to vocational evaluation include:

1. Measurement. Of aptitudes, interests, strengths, and needs, social adjustment, physical capacities, etc. to identify levels of functioning.
2. Prediction: To determine potential when placed in a specific environment and placement.
3. Prescription: Prerequisites needed for placement, modifications or special services needed, and input for individualized vocational or employment planning.
4. Exploration: To investigate levels of career development (e.g., career awareness), to determine how interests match with abilities for community jobs, vocational training post-secondary and other adult environments, and to "feel" and interact with the environments and requirements of work.
5. Intervention: Based on successful experiences, exploration of vocational or work options, behavior change and motivation may result (Neubert, 1985).
6. Advocacy: By developing a comprehensive vocational profile, evaluatees, their families and other advocates/supporters can focus on concrete facts and information in assisting them (Leconte, 1985).

More specifically, the last purpose identifies at what points evaluatees may need the intervention of advocates, how much support will be required, and if or when evaluatees may become their own advocates.

The last three goals are more difficult to measure and validate (but not impossible), which may account for their infrequent mention in professional literature. But each of them, especially the last, is tied directly to the more global purpose of empowering individuals with vocational handicaps to manage and take a greater responsibility for their own lives and futures. Accountability and program evaluation become less of a problem when program staff document their activities and those of the evaluatee prior to, during, and following the vocational evaluation. Vocational evaluators should be encouraged to collect data which, when analyzed in aggregate form, can provide sufficient data to justify changes in processes, procedures, or the content of the rehabilitation service delivery system. These data will also assist in program evaluation efforts and cost effectiveness studies.

The Vocational Evaluation Process

The steps depicted in Figure 3 and described below equate an ideal or preferred sequence and content of each component. These are presented with the hope that administrators and vocational evaluators will attempt to integrate each step into current programming practices. It is unfortunate that some of these component steps are eliminated or never included by some programs due to fiscal, time, and personnel constraints. Such programs should be revised and upgraded by complying with the minimal standards of implementing each component step. It is important for any vocational evaluation service to represent a standardized, formal (but with internal flexibility within the established parameters) process so that everyone involved, particularly the consumer, knows what to expect, when, how, and why. Each participant's (e.g., evaluatee, evaluator, referral agent, advocate) personal responsibilities will become clear and be easier to perform as a result.

The requisite components of the vocational evaluation process include, but need not be limited to, the following, which should be viewed as sub-processes to the total process. Each sub-process equates a series of actions, activities, and operations which lead to a particular or desirable result.

1. Identification of the Individual in Need: Usually the individual in need of appraisal and subsequent rehabilitation services is identified by the vocational rehabilitation counselor. However, identification may be made by anyone involved in the total rehabilitation process who is working with the individual and who determines the need for additional data regarding the client's potential, interests, etc. Indeed, the client him/herself may decide that the vocational assessment or evaluation activities he/she participated in were inadequate in assisting with vocational decision-making. For those individuals who may not understand the extent of their own needs (for instance, people with low intellectual functioning or those who have multiple severe conditions) it is incumbent upon the rehabilitation counselor to determine appraisal needs in relation to vocational and employment futures.

Prior to the individual's involvement with a vocational rehabilitation counselor, initial recognition of a potential or actual training, employment or community work integration problem can originate with the individual him/herself, the parents, teachers or school guidance counselors, other service agencies, etc. Regardless of who identifies him/her, such an action often precipitates referral to vocational evaluation. It is critical that the individual who is identified understand how and why he/she was recognized as needing the service. By receiving an explanation, the evaluatee is provided a focus for taking the maximum advantage of his/her participation in evaluation activities and vocational decision-making. If rehabilitation technology is being considered as a

possible need, the individual should be assessed and "treated" by the rehabilitation technologist(s) prior to selection of a vocational evaluation program and referral. This will allow the evaluatee to participate fully in vocational evaluation activities, and, thus, could provide for more employment options later.

2. Decision for Referring the Individual to Vocational Evaluation. The decision to select vocational evaluation is done in conjunction with the individual to be served. It should be decided whether there is a need for: informal, rather superficial or specific vocational assessment information; or the need for a comprehensive, in-depth vocational evaluation. Selection is made based on what services are needed in order for the client to benefit to the maximum degree possible from the entire rehabilitative process. If vocational evaluation is deemed necessary, the counselor will formally refer the potential evaluatee for the service.

Usually, the selection and referral process is formal in that, first, the counselor conducts or arranges for functional assessment data to be collected. This preliminary assessment routine ensures that other services or treatments have been attempted prior to referral (see the two examples of pre-referral checklists provided in Appendix C for samples of appropriate, time-saving and resource-efficient questions which should be answered prior to recommending and selecting vocational evaluation services for the client). In some cases, it might be too early in his or her vocational development or restorative process for the client to be involved in vocational evaluation. Functional and preliminary vocational assessment data may prove helpful to the vocational rehabilitation team in planning the client's overall rehabilitation program.

In preparing for referral, the counselor must communicate, visit, and/or be very familiar with the array of vocational evaluation services available in the community, or, when necessary, the state or region. A careful match should be made between the program selected and the needs of the client. Whenever possible, the client should participate in the selection process. Although lack or absence of resources rarely permit client visitations to potential programs with their counselor, such a step does serve to empower the client early on, acquaint him or her with what will actually happen during vocational evaluation, and begin rapport-building between the evaluator(s) and evaluatee. A step that should not be, but often is, omitted from the selection process concerns the option of allowing the client some freedom in expressing his or her concerns about a program in which he or she is being slated to enroll. It should never be assumed that the

client wants to be vocationally evaluated. Sometimes a missing ingredient of a positive evaluation reverts back to the fact that the client was not provided the opportunity or flexibility to refuse to engage in a particular program or to reject the service itself. By not exercising this option, clients may be placed in the untenable position of having to demonstrate inappropriate behaviors in order to gain recognition of their dissatisfaction with or lack of motivation for a process, in this case, vocational evaluation.

In some instances, when clients do express their preference or intention not to participate in vocational evaluation, they may be viewed as uncooperative or uninterested in being vocationally rehabilitated and/or employed. Such a situation may lead to premature termination of all vocational rehabilitation services. If the right questions are posed to the client, usually one learns that he/she may possess some fear of the process. A fact that sometimes is caused by inadequate or incomplete explanations of what will be happening to him/her in the evaluation program. Often, evaluators question evaluatees who display reluctance, hesitation, or a lack of cooperation and discover that the purpose(s) for his or her participation or the importance it holds for gaining training and/or employment were not explained in a way that he or she understood or recalls. Situations where the evaluatee does not recall any explanation should serve as "red lights" to warn evaluators to better acquaint referral agents with the purposes and content of their service.

A great deal of up-front time needs to be spent on appropriate selection of an individual for a particular evaluation service and, likewise, much time and effort must be dedicated to determining if the person wants to take advantage of or participate in the service. Three phases comprise the selection process: (a) searching and establishing a pool of effective and acceptable programs from which selections can be made, (b) matching clients with appropriate evaluation programming, and (c) preparing the client sufficiently for participation in the program. Again, the success for the client is dependent on the communication which transpires between referring and receiving professionals and the care with which communication is offered and understood between the client and the professionals.

Client orientation is an essential element of the service selection process. As part of the referral agent's intake or evaluation planning process, sufficient time should be taken to familiarize the client with why and for what purposes he/she is to be evaluated, what will be taking place, and what their role in the process will involve.

Special emphasis should focus on, (a) familiarizing the client with evaluation (general purposes as well as reasons for his/her specific participation), (b) putting the client in the most favorable position to evidence need, identify capabilities or to consider options, and (c) readying the client to incorporate as much from the evaluation process as they are capable. It is at this point that real involvement of the client in establishing a rehabilitation plan can begin to occur.

3. Referral: The specific questions or reasons for referral constitute the most crucial pieces of the referral process. The nature and specificity of the referral questions provide the basis for planning and for "what happens" with the evaluatee in the vocational evaluation process. Other questions often arise as the evaluation process gets underway, but the original queries provide initial direction. Also, the content of the particular tasks, tests, samples, activities, and strategies which the evaluatee will attempt and the evaluator will use are directly related to referral information provided, and questions posed. These usually center around the evaluatee's skills, interests and potential. Information about the evaluatee's handicapping condition(s) is also included in pertinent referral data. Any information or background data which is relevant to, or will add to, the success of evaluation should be relayed on the referral form or in the referral packet.

To reiterate, the reasons for referral should be explored with the client or prospective client well before a decision is made to send the client to vocational evaluation. Well-conducted interviews, document and record reviews, analysis of existing testing and assessment data and synthesis and discussion with the client of one's impressions and the client's impressions should precede a decision to conduct or refer for vocational evaluation. From such a decision, the explicit issues around which the referral agent and the client would want the evaluation to center can be specifically phrased and documented. A well-phrased referral question will indicate the nature of issues to be determined and how results of the evaluation are expected to be used in need determination, planning and/or counseling. While the counselor or referral agent has primary responsibility for this to occur, the evaluator also has the responsibility to keep referral agents and counselors informed about the program and what information is needed to function optimally. Referral questions and rationale should be documented on an official referral form of some type, which, ideally, was originally developed cooperatively between referral sources and vocational evaluators. This document serves more than any other to assist the evaluator and evaluatee in

planning and individualizing the vocational evaluation process.

4. Interview: In addition to the client preparation conducted by the referral source, an initial interview with the vocational evaluator(s) should be provided to each potential evaluatee prior to program participation. Preferably, the interview (with initial orientation) should occur in an environment where the individual feels comfortable. Since it is often very difficult for evaluators to leave their programs for extended periods of time, or with any frequency, the individuals referred usually are interviewed in the vocational evaluation unit or the rehabilitation counselor's office. In some cases, the interview is conducted at the same time the orientation to the process is explained.

A direct interview by the vocational evaluator frequently is one component of the process which administrators or fiscal officers recommend eliminating. But, most experienced evaluators know that conducting the interviews themselves serves a number of valuable purposes, such as giving them a head-start in planning and reducing the rate of "no-shows", referred clients who never make it to the vocational evaluation program for one reason or another. The interview often tends to reinforce individuals who may have some hesitancy or doubts about participating and it helps to restate purposes in relation to the individual client. Stated another way, the client can hear straight from the service provider what benefits he/she will gain from engaging in this particular appraisal process. A few of the numerous reasons for direct evaluator-client interviews are to:

- Begin the process of establishing rapport.
- Explain first-hand the nature of vocational evaluation activities, and "what will go on."
- Answer questions the client may have.
- Find out initial reactions, feelings, or possible fears the client may have about the program.
- Obtain a commitment from the client.
- Begin the assessment of vocational interest(s).
- Begin vocational evaluation planning.
- Most importantly, give the client the option of agreeing to, or refusing, the service.

The interview is instrumental in having the potential participant make a decision based on first-hand information from the persons with whom he/she will be involved. However, in situations where vocational evaluation responsibilities are shared by various members of a rehabilitation-evaluation team, any member could conduct the interview. Evaluatees who participate in the vocational evaluation process by simply going through the motions, often are those who did not have the benefit of a client-evaluator interview.

5. Individualized Vocational Evaluation Planning: According to the Commission on Certification of Work Adjustment and Vocational Evaluation Specialists (CCWAVES), this is "a process for developing and writing a plan to structure the evaluation." It presupposes knowledge about the total vocational evaluation process....integration of information from clients, referral sources and other relevant data: (1987, p. 11), such as educational records, reports from other assessments (occupational therapy, psychological, social work, etc.) and family or parent conferences is weaved into a realistic, specifically targeted plan. The plan is based on the information cited above as well as specific referral questions.

Planning for each individual represents the point of "ignition" and the "current" which drives and directs the vocational evaluation process. Preliminary planning can begin upon receipt of the referral. This is followed by more extensive planning after the evaluatee and evaluator have met. Most often, good practice dictates that a plan should be developed prior to the evaluatee's first session in evaluation. This is acceptable as long as the plan is reviewed constantly throughout the course of the actual evaluation. In fact, plans should be devised with the expectation that they will be altered each time new information warrants revision. Both the evaluatee and the staff can suggest revisions to the plan. In order to encourage a constant flow of input and dialogue from and between these key players, both must have a working knowledge of the plan. Again, vocational evaluation is built on the premise that work, real or simulated, is the basis of evaluatee activities. Therefore, it is common for evaluatees to discover new occupational areas to investigate, either while the evaluation process is being conducted or following it. With each new inquiry, vocational evaluation plans must be reconsidered and, often, revised to provide the opportunity for more self-discovery and different experiences of appraisal.

Again, plans should be developed with input from the evaluatee. As the evaluatee proceeds through the evaluation via a combination of self-selection and following the evaluator's recommended activities, the option to change

or review the plan should exist. Appraisal of any type is a dynamic process, and evaluation is designed to foster interaction between the evaluatee, the evaluators, and the evaluation environment. Thus, any plan should be flexible enough to allow for revisions and adaptations, while not diluting or fragmenting the original purposes. It should allow the evaluatee the opportunity to explore several activities. In this way new interests and aptitudes may be discovered. Also, by attempting tasks he/she selected, the pressure to perform well or to avoid failure at all costs may not constitute the overriding concern that it often does for some evaluatees.

It is essential that after each session of evaluation, the staff meet to discuss and "process" evaluatee participation (i.e., work behaviors, interests, task performances, interactions with staff or co-workers, etc.), to address any questions raised, and to plan and prepare for the next session. Without this daily reporting out, and exchange of observations and information, the evaluatee is denied the synergistic element of the team appraisal approach. Informal feedback is provided to the evaluatee on an ongoing basis with a more formal wrap-up or feedback conference occurring before completion of the program.

Again, Figure 3 illustrates the activities which represent the core of the vocational evaluation activities. These represent options or assessment techniques and tools, which may or may not be selected for use with an individual client. These include:

- **Evaluatee Orientation:** After the evaluatee arrives at the vocational evaluation program, evaluation staff explain general operating procedures, review the purpose(s) of the service and reiterate the reasons why he/she was referred. This serves to refresh the evaluatee's memory as to why he or she is participating and provides an opportunity to meet other evaluatees and staff. In some cases, this is combined with the initial interview.
- **Observation and Recording of Behavior:** This particular technique is referred to as "Systematic Assessment of Critical Behaviors" in the Outcomes chapter of this document. Generally, observation of behavior occurs nonstop throughout the evaluation process. The evaluatee should be informed that constant observation will be conducted particularly as his/her behavior relates to work and social aspects of work. Observations are recorded in descriptive, nonjudgmental terms and help to pull together the data that forms the vocational profile of the individual. Observations should be written with the notion in mind that the evaluatee may, and has every right to, request

to read them at various times during the process. Once rehabilitation services have been initiated, vocational assessment may serve to assist the service provider in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of the services that are provided. For example, the development of an observational strategy to assure that consumers are properly performing all critical aspects of their jobs may be one aspect of assessment. Once active rehabilitation services have been terminated or reduced, long-term assessment of consumers may be warranted, assuring continued performance of those skills found to be most critical for continued employment. This continuing observation is particularly necessary with individuals with intellectual/behavioral problems when in a supported work site.

- **Psychometric Testing:** Formal or standardized test instruments are interspersed with other activities and are designed to measure such traits and attributes as academic achievement, dexterity and coordination, specific or general vocational aptitudes, interests, learning styles, temperaments, etc. Psychometric tests, although developed through the psychological test movement are not to be confused with psychological tests which are administered by trained psychologists. If such tests are warranted, the psychologist, who serves as a member of the interdisciplinary assessment team, can be called upon to contribute their findings to the planning process.

These are carefully selected in order to maintain a balance of testing with other vocationally oriented, hands-on activities which are typically unique to vocational evaluation. Only those instruments are administered which will provide relevant information for the vocational decision-making process. Testing should not be given just to fill in time or to impress referral agents. Very few contemporary tests are developed, or appropriate, for individuals with handicapping conditions; this fact should be a paramount guide to the selection and administration of tests (Halpern & Fuhrer, 1984; Albright & Cobb, 1987; Ianacone & Leconte, 1986). Even those instruments which use audiovisual or nonverbal inventories may not be unbiased toward certain handicapping conditions. Often these tests may yield lower scores or flat profiles for certain groups of individuals, particularly, minorities and persons with disabilities. As a result, the usefulness of standardized testing for providing useful, meaningful information may be limited for many evaluatees.

- **Work Samples:** The evaluatee performs actual portions (or simulations) of jobs or training curricula, using the same materials, tools, and equipment that is utilized in the real work or training setting. These samples can be employed as a method of vocational exploration in which the results may indicate specific job tryouts or placement situations that are most appropriate for the consumer.

Three types of work samples may be identified. First, some work samples may be taken directly from a job and represent the actual task demands, including the duties, equipment, and tools required of locally available jobs. Second, work samples may be simulated to approximate available community jobs utilizing equipment and materials that approximate those actually found on the job. Third, some work samples are commercially designed and available that are designed to measure isolated traits or combination of traits that may be required by specific jobs.

- **Situational Assessments:** The evaluatee may experience a try-out in a vocational training shop, a production setting, a job or community training program, which is supervised by an instructor (production supervisor or foreman), employer, or trainer and is coordinated and monitored by the evaluator. The supervisor reports observations and performances to the evaluator. Most beneficial information is gained when the evaluatee works on jobs or tasks which have been organized or analyzed by a team consisting of the evaluator and the instructor, employer, trainers, etc.

Situational assessment has been defined by the Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association (VEWAA) as a "clinical assessment method utilizing observational techniques in established or created environments" (VEWAA, 1978, p. 10). Situational assessment contrasts sharply with standardized testing alternatives by attempting to link the performance of individuals with the environments in which performance is required.

- **Job Try-Outs or On-The-Job Evaluations (OJE's):** In this technique the evaluatee performs on an actual job in the community while being observed by an evaluator and job supervisor or an employee who also performs the job. This strategy improves the ability to fully replicate the entire continuum of conditions under which vocational performance is required. Not only are the task conditions exactly like work, but the environmental conditions are incorporated in the assessment process. These strategies allow for the

assessment of both the vocational and social aspects of vocational performance.

Typically, job tryout strategies will use existing employment sites within community businesses. Evaluatees will be placed within businesses for a brief period of time where they are expected to perform specific functions just like other employees within the business. During this time, the employer will be used to provide information regarding the ability of the evaluatee to perform the specific functions of the position. Following this assessment process, the evaluatee is typically returned to the rehabilitation facility, placed in another job tryout situation for additional assessment or placed into employment at another business site so that the original site can be used again for assessing other evaluatees.

Job tryouts usually provide evaluatees with minimal training or supervision from rehabilitation personnel. What training and supervision the evaluatee receives is provided by the employer and is comparable to that provided to other employees within the business. These strategies can be employed to effectively assess the evaluatee's general abilities within a specific occupation as well as provide evaluatees with self-appraisal. By experiencing a number of tryouts, evaluatees and evaluators can explore a variety of different occupations that may be appropriate and of interest.

As supported and transitional employment opportunities for persons with severe handicaps continue to expand within vocational rehabilitation, the use of job tryout alternatives may enjoy continued and expanded use. When used with persons who are severely cognitively handicapped, however, these tryouts must provide evaluatees with effective and intensive training in order to provide meaningful and valid assessment information. As we will discuss later, persons with severe cognitive handicaps typically exhibit minimal skill repertoires and require specialized training that can not be provided by employers in a traditional job tryout arrangement. For these evaluatees, job tryouts that include intensive training at a job site can provide an accurate assessment of the consumers' learning potential, general aptitudes and abilities and provide a meaningful form of vocational exploration. Due to the limited experience that most persons with severe cognitive handicaps have had, repeated job tryouts may be the most effective method of career explorations (See Pumpian, Shepard, & West, in press).

- **Feedback or Wrap-Up Conference:** The evaluator and evaluatee discuss what happened in the program and what will be happening after he/she leaves vocational evaluation. At this time the evaluatee learns the comprehensive results of his/her participation in evaluation, discusses the projected content of the final report and recommendations, and has the opportunity to provide input into the report, recommendations, and subsequent plans.

Again, assessment and "treatment" by rehabilitation technology should precede the evaluatee's participation in vocational evaluation. If, during the vocational evaluation process, the evaluator(s) or other assessors on the rehabilitation team feels that rehabilitation technology should be consulted or referred to, the process should have the flexibility to allow this to happen. For example, during a situational assessment, an evaluator or trainer could seek the expertise of a rehabilitation technologists for help in developing a low technology device. Without these consulting services, the evaluatee may face barriers to performing and working which are unnecessary, and, therefore, discriminatory.

6. Written Vocational Evaluation Report (Vocational Profile):

A written report that presents a "picture" of the evaluatee is developed. The report provides pertinent data that supports conclusions and recommendations regarding vocational decision-making. The report is the end result of gathering, compiling, analyzing, synthesizing, and interpreting vocationally relevant data, such as observation recordings, assessment results, referral and other supportive information. The report is disseminated to the referral agent, any personnel who can benefit from the information, members of the rehabilitation team, the evaluatee, and parents or advocates. Sometimes evaluatees use their vocational evaluation reports as "report cards" or "references" with employers when seeking employment.

In some programs, recommendations are not written in final form until members of the rehabilitation team have discussed and approved them. Care must be taken to ensure that the vocational evaluator's conclusions are not compromised into less than optimal services for the evaluatee. In other words, recommendations may include a program suggestion that is not readily available but which is needed in the community. While recommendations should be as realistic and cost effective as possible, and be aligned with programs in the local community, if a better program is feasible (with some creativity and commitment from the community) then the recommendation(s) should remain in the report. The report stands as the documentation by which the total vocational evaluation process is

judged. Also, the report can be used as a marketing tool by the evaluatee to promote his/her vocational goals. In order to produce quality reports which can be used to guide and provide the content for vocational planning (e.g., Individualized Written Rehabilitation Plans), sufficient time must be built into the evaluator's schedule to write them. Sometimes, writing reports is viewed as an "extracurricular" or additional activity that is not given enough time within the evaluator's daily schedule. Writing reports is perhaps one of the most time-consuming duties of the vocational evaluator as each "case" must be thoroughly researched to solve any mysteries or loose ends and to investigate the existence, match and efficacy of potential outcomes for each evaluatee.

Sections or components of a written report should contain at the very minimum: demographic information of the evaluatee, an introduction which cites reason(s) for referral, vocationally relevant background data, a summary of vocational interests and dislikes, worker characteristics or traits, vocational aptitudes and potential, functional capabilities and limitations, learning styles or preferences, a summary which outlines the vocational profile, long and short-term goals; and recommendations which are supported with rationale from the evaluation process. The report should be written in a positive tone, emphasizing those attributes and findings which can be built upon to facilitate vocational development and eventual satisfying employment. Vocational needs should be described in terms of how they can be dealt with or treated to support the evaluatee's vocational aspirations. The term "need" is much more positive than the terms "limitations," "liabilities," or "weaknesses," and it denotes that something can be done to meet those needs regardless of whether it constitutes a compensatory measure or a treatment of some type. The other, more negative, terms seem to place restrictions on any possible attempts to address them; they seem to connote "dead ends" in vocational planning, thus, it is preferred that "need" be used in reporting.

Again, the report is a working and planning document which is not totally confidential in nature, but which should be disseminated with the approval of the evaluatee and/or the advocate. The report bridges the realms of appraisal and implementation in moving toward an evaluatee's vocational development and goals.

7. Conferences: There are several types of conferences, some which involve the rehabilitation team, the evaluatee and/or advocates or parents, or potential service providers, exclusively or in some form of combination. While conferences with the referral agent often occur prior to and/or during vocational evaluation, a post-evaluation

conference should be standard procedure. The vocational evaluators(s) uses the post-conference to present a vocational profile of the evaluatee. Recommendations and concerns are addressed from which an Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan (IWRP) can be developed. The conference format and participants are determined by the evaluator(s), referral agent, and the evaluatee. Ideally, a conference involving these same parties should occur after each vocational evaluation. If this does not take place, an accurate transfer of evaluation information can not be guaranteed nor can the evaluator, client, or the counselor effectively advocate for implementation of recommendations and plans.

8. Vocational Planning: This activity usually will be implemented in the form of the IWRP and should include the input of the various assessors and vocational evaluators from the rehabilitation team in addition to the evaluatee, his/her parents or advocates, and other relevant personnel who can assist in the implementation of the plan. The IWRP or any similar post-evaluation plan should contain a timeline, goals and the persons responsible for initiating and/or implementing it. Evidence of evaluation data and conclusions, as well as evaluatee input (whenever possible), should be clear and discernable, otherwise the rationale for conducting a vocational evaluation does not exist. Periodic review and opportunity for updating or revising the plan should also be built into the planning process.
9. Implementation of Recommendations and Plans: In cases where a team has made the referral and participated in the overall appraisal process of an evaluatee, the probability of recommendations being implemented is enhanced greatly. This is true simply because the onus of taking action does not rely solely on one person. The written report and conferences should delineate who is responsible for implementing specific recommendations. The evaluatee should be encouraged to assume as much responsibility as he or she can, to carry out recommendations, to ensure that plans are implemented, and to monitor the IWRP and request or suggest revisions when necessary. If specific recommendations are not used in planning and/or are not implemented, the reasons why action did not occur must be provided along with suggestions for alternative planning or recommendations.
10. Follow-Up: Vocational evaluators as well as others on the team should have follow-up criteria and assignments, and should conduct periodic checks by phone, through interviews, by mail, and by visiting vocational or job placements to determine if plans are being implemented and if the results are positive. The rehabilitation counselor assumes the primary role of case manager whose responsibility it is to monitor and revise plans. However,

vocational evaluation staff must validate and revise, when necessary, their programs and assessment activities, techniques and procedures based on the evaluatee/client outcomes. Therefore, evaluators play a part in the follow-up process. In addition, follow-up information can provide intrinsic rewards and satisfactions for evaluators. Usually they are not able to observe change and long-term success of their evaluatees; follow-up allows them such opportunities.

11. Follow-Along: Is critical to successful rehabilitation and client outcomes. Again, typically the rehabilitation counselor is the case manager who can monitor the client's progress and occasionally provide support. But his/her further responsibilities encompass identifying new or different supports that the client needs, or will need, to maintain success in training and/or employment. It is usually up to the counselor to determine if a reevaluation may be necessary, hopefully after seeking and considering input from the evaluator(s) who worked with the client originally.
12. Orientation, Public Awareness, and Marketing: The initial orientation and continued education of one's referral sources about vocational evaluation services are essential if consumers are to gain maximum benefits and if users of the service are going to be satisfied with the outcomes of those services. The levels of awareness and involvement by referral and potential referral sources will allow appropriate referrals, ensure that the services are used to the best advantage, and establish the vocational evaluation program as viable and worthwhile.

Vocational evaluation staff should develop an orientation or marketing plan, revise it periodically to reflect programmatic or staff changes, and implement it continuously. By meeting with counselors, administrators, rehabilitation or school teams, parent or consumer groups, these individual aggregate groups will benefit by:

- Gaining an awareness of the service -- understanding who it is for, what it can and cannot do.
- Realizing the value of the service for particular individuals.
- Understanding and becoming familiar with the process, procedures, and purposes of the service.
- Learning referral criteria, guidelines, and procedures.
- Understanding referral agent responsibilities.

- Knowing that after the evaluation they may acquire new responsibilities to implement recommendations made during the process.

By making a commitment to carry out the twelve components and steps of the vocational evaluation process, vocational evaluators can provide an effective and comprehensive service for consumers. Two essential requirements for providing the services and maintaining a high level of commitment involve the amount and consistency of administrative support the vocational evaluators receive and the amount and adequacy of the training they are given, both to prepare for employment and to upgrade skills for maintaining employment. The services provided clients are reflective of the competencies and motivation of the professionals offering them. Competence and motivation are largely dependent upon administrative support and the level and frequency of training provided to vocational evaluators. The highest quality of services can be provided only by qualified, trained, committed professionals.

CHAPTER V

ASSURANCES: QUALITY CONTROL

Introduction

Traditionally, vocational rehabilitation facilities have been the major source from which counselors obtain vocational evaluations. As new initiatives and expanded views of the options available for persons with disabilities have come about, that setting is no longer singular. Vocational evaluations are now being conducted in various settings and contexts (e.g., community, on-job, schools), often, but not always in compliance with the requirements of education, rehabilitation and vocational education legislative mandates. The manner and form of evaluation varies, and consequently, the quality of the evaluation can also vary.

Quality control should be viewed as the joint responsibility of those delivering the process and those accessing it, either as purchaser or as consumer. Quality controls provide consumers with assurances if those controls are designed to be preventive, as well as corrective. Those who provide evaluation have the responsibility for setting and enforcing standards regarding the inputs, processes and accomplishments. What basic skills are needed to conduct evaluation, how reliability and validity are maintained in the process, what constitutes humane and ethical practices, what the criteria are for an acceptable evaluation product, and how should practice respond when there is need for change?

Those who are "consumers" of evaluation (be they purchaser or client) have similar responsibilities to define their needs, convey their expectations for a quality product, use the process responsibly, report their satisfaction with the product, and demand change when the process is inadequate to their needs. The evaluation process is working when there are few incidences of discrepancies between consumer expectations and evaluation delivery and when the large majority of users have their individual needs met efficiently and humanely.

In this chapter we carry through with the idea of quality control as a reciprocal process, with both legal and professional foundations. First, we discuss existing legal and professional safeguards. These standards can be applied both for appraising current practices and to establish our expectations for evaluations conducted under the new initiatives. Second, we offer suggestions on how safeguards may be built into vocational evaluation to reduce the possibility of abusive practice. Specific "reciprocal" activities are suggested for providers and consumers of vocational evaluation. Third, we attempt to define important characteristics

of a "quality evaluation process." Where previous chapters have examined the components of the evaluation process, here suggestions are offered about what the "evaluation experience" should be like for the client and "what a good evaluation report should look like." Finally, we identify the most important benefits that quality evaluations can lead to for both the consumer and the rehabilitation process. These impacts and benefits are ones which would be expected when vocational evaluations have been both appropriately conducted and used for its intended purposes in vocational rehabilitation.

EXISTING PROVISIONS FOR ASSURING QUALITY

There are important provisions for assuring quality in vocational evaluation found in education and rehabilitation legislation, in professional standards for the practice of vocational evaluation, and in the accreditation standards for organization's vendors of evaluation services. These provisions can be used to appraise what one might expect from evaluations conducted under a traditional rehabilitation source or under some of the new initiatives. They are also an important resource which should be accessed to rectify instances when vocational assessment has been inappropriately or inhumanely used. Surrounding those legal and professional standards, though, is the most important of all issues: Ultimately, at issue is whether the evaluation yields significant and usable employment relevant information which can be used in vocational planning by the individual and the rehabilitation counselor (in keeping with the evaluation purposes) and which leads to the individual's attaining their economic and integration goals.

Federal Law

Under the 1975 education (Education for All Handicapped Children, (PL 94-142), the 1984 vocational education (The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, PL 98-524), and the 1986 vocational rehabilitation legislation (Rehabilitation Act Amendments, PL 99-506) evaluation is required prior to planning and delivery of services. Under these same laws are requirements that program evaluation be conducted as to the appropriateness and impact of federally sponsored programs. This later provision has been interpreted to include evaluation of the appropriateness and impact of vocational evaluation services provided with federal money. Program evaluation and quality assurance units are established in many state education and rehabilitation agencies to oversee such impact.

Services can not be purchased from programs known to be ineffective or abusive. An important responsibility is given to rehabilitation quality assurance units for review of closures in sheltered settings. Legislation requires that an annual review of every person placed into sheltered employment programs be conducted to determine appropriateness and potential for movement out of that transitional setting.

Rehabilitation legislation and recent emphases on transition from school to work have also raised public and professional consciousness to issues of the utility of vocational evaluation findings. With an increase in joint-planning between schools and rehabilitation agencies, greater participation and utilization of vocational evaluation has resulted. More perspectives are available for examining the validity of evaluation findings and appropriateness of those evaluation findings.

The Department of Labor provides Certificates for Wage and Hour Exclusions to cover persons whose productivity is substantially below comparable industrial standards. A review of prevailing wages and productivity rates for persons competitively engaged in similar work is required before a certificate can be obtained. This certification process is important in practice as it makes it possible to conduct realistic vocational evaluation in actual work situations. Waiving of minimum wage requirements are relied upon for evaluation of persons in work activity and transitional employment programs which use real-work as their basis. Wage setting and reviews of exclusions are supposed to be conducted on an annual basis. Such compliance reviews are often conducted by state labor and welfare departments, as well as vocational rehabilitation agencies.

Program Accreditation Standards

Almost all state vocational rehabilitation agencies have established a list of approved vendors of vocational evaluation services. Some states have established their own standards for controlling the general quality of services they purchase. Other states require that programs obtain accreditation from a recognized accrediting organization. Failure of a facility to meet those standards eliminates the facility as an acceptable vendor of services. However, while the vocational rehabilitation program is one major user of evaluation, other organizations such as developmental disabilities boards, human service agencies and educational institutions do not necessarily require accreditation of organizations from whom they acquire evaluation services. Most state rehabilitation agencies have established quality assurance or program evaluation units to oversee the effectiveness of contracted services.

The accreditation standards established by many states are modeled after standards developed for vocational programs through the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF, 1987). CARF is the major accrediting body for vocational rehabilitation programs. It was established in 1966 as an independent, objective organization to set standards at a national level as "a quality control intermediary" in the rehabilitation industry. Standards for rehabilitation programs are set using input from principal professional and consumer organizations and are regularly updated, most recently in 1986. Accreditation of a service is obtained by application. The applicant must pass an accreditation review and is accredited only as long as the program is in compliance with CARF standards. Additional site visits may occur for monitoring compliance with standards or as a result of consumer complaints.

Accreditation focuses on the inputs and resources available to deliver a program. The accreditation process attempts to assure that fiscal and management resources, procedures, staffing, evaluation technology, physical plant and reporting capacities are adequate, safe, in keeping with accepted professional practices and functional to accomplish the objectives and mission of the program. In the case of vocational evaluation, the focus of the accreditation review is on determining the capacity of the organization to conduct comprehensive evaluation, the quality of the evaluation process, the appropriateness of evaluation technology (e.g., observation systems, testing procedures, instrumentation, validity, norms), appropriateness of settings in which evaluations are conducted (e.g., simulated, on-job, real-work), quality of evaluation reports, the qualifications of staff, and the organization's resources. These standard areas for "quality" evaluation programming should be kept in mind as alternatives to the traditional settings are used and the utility of the resulting evaluation are considered.

The accreditation review includes the facility's own self-review and an on-site review by trained surveyors. Case and record reviews and interviews are conducted by the survey team to appraise the organization's capacities against the standards. A formal program evaluation of the impact and efficiency of vocational evaluation is not part of the accreditation process. However, CARF accreditation will not be awarded unless a functioning program evaluation process that provides managers relevant information on effects and efficiency of the program is in place. An accredited program must maintain data on effectiveness of the vocational evaluation service.

Accreditation is granted for either one year or three years, with one year accreditation granted for programs minimally meeting standards. Subsequent accreditation reviews are required every three years. CARF standards only set broad parameters for quality assurance. Some state models have gone on to identify specific dimensions of quality (e.g., client satisfaction, employment outcomes) and put in place methods which the state can use to evaluate quality and control expenditures for the service (e.g., Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1986; Minnesota Department of Economic Security, 1985).

Professional Certification

As with accreditation, certification is not regulatory, but is rather a standards-setting process governing those who claim to be qualified to conduct vocational evaluation. While some state departments of public instruction certify vocational evaluators working in schools, their certification typically emphasizes teaching qualifications and, occasionally, certification to work with special needs students. Emphasis is typically given to assuring that relevant course work has been successfully completed, not necessarily to assuring that a supervised internship or supervised practice in vocational evaluation was taken.

Certifying organizations like the Commission on Certification of Work Adjustment and Vocational Evaluation Specialists and the Commis-

sion on Certification of Rehabilitation Counselors set meaningful professional standards. Their requirements can be used as referents for reviewing the skills and competencies of persons engaged in vocational evaluation and assessment. While the commissions are not licensing bodies, they can serve an important quality control function in that they are empowered to review and respond to complaints directed toward the practices of those they certify. Certification may be retracted in certain cases of documented misuse or unprofessional behavior. (See Chapter III for a discussion of skill and competencies required of certified professionals.)

Enforcement

These legal and professional provisions often times provide the needed sources of pressure for causing changes in ineffective practices in vocational evaluation. Under law, the pressure is for responsible use of public funds in buying or supporting vocational evaluation. Under accreditation and certification, failure to comply with accepted standards can lead to censure and diminish the credibility of the organization or professional in their service area. All of these represent available vehicles which should be aggressively accessed to promote change, when the process has begun to fail to serve the interests of the people it is suppose to serve. Poor quality and misuse need not be accepted.

ROLES IN PREVENTING ABUSE

Provider Roles

The principal responsibility for assuring quality in vocational evaluation rests with the vocational evaluation practitioner and the organization which sponsors the process. The provider has the responsibility for assuring that staffing, resources, technology, and processes used in the evaluation are appropriate for the consumer and to the reasons for evaluation. The provider also has the responsibility for follow-up and case review to assure consumer satisfaction and improve practices of the following:

Staffing. The provider should employ vocational evaluation personnel with the types of skills (i.e., identified by CCWAVES) or provide for staff development when staff lack skills in significant areas.

Resources. Materials, evaluation technology, physical resources, and an organizational structure should be in place so that all personnel will deal with clients in a professional manner to encourage their full benefit from the evaluation process. The organizational structure should include provision for internal review and response to client-evaluator disagreements. The guidelines for resource mix suggested by CARF should be a principal reference for guiding development of those resources.

The vocational evaluation process. The technology and processes of assessment and evaluation followed by the provider should have known validity and be relevant to the needs of populations and purposes for which the evaluation is used. If meaningful planning and growth are objectives of vocational evaluation, a clear role and evidence of client expressed interests and needs in evaluation planning, interpretation, replanning and in report development should be a regular feature of the evaluation process.

Client orientation. Sufficient time and emphasis should be given to (a) familiarizing the client with assessment and evaluation processes, (b) putting the client in the most favorable position to evidence need, identify capabilities or to consider options, and (c) readying the client to incorporate as much from the evaluation process as they are capable of.

Exit interviews. The exit interview should focus on informing consumers about how the results of the evaluation will affect them (e.g., in their eligibility or ineligibility, for their future training) and how those recommendations came about, as well as documenting the extent of their involvement and satisfaction with the process. How formally structured this interview procedure will be depends on client load, numbers of evaluators involved and the length of the individual evaluations.

Follow-up and case review. Follow-up should be conducted to determine communicability of reports, utility of evaluation findings, and consumer satisfaction with the process. Case reviews can be used to determine where the process may be altered to improve utility and satisfaction.

Intervention. The results of follow-up, exit interviews, case review and observations of practice must be reviewed regularly and in order to identify staffing and professional practices which need improvement and to implement needed changes in practice or staffing.

Referral Source-Consumer Roles

There are certain important preventative actions the referring person might take, as well as certain reactions to ineffective vocational assessment and evaluation that they can take in this reciprocal quality control process.

Referral reason. The reasons for referral should be explored with the prospective client before a decision is made to send the client to vocational evaluation. Well conducted interviews, document reviews, reviews of existing testing and assessment data should be synthesized and discussed with the client. The results of this assessment and the client's impressions should precede a decision to conduct or refer for

vocational evaluation. A well phrased referral question will indicate the nature of issues to be determined and how results of the vocational evaluation are expected to be used in need determination, planning, or counseling.

Selecting the evaluation resource. It is not always possible to choose where the service will take place. Whenever possible, though, there should be as close a match between the needs of the client and the capability of a resource to meet those needs. Some control over the quality of evaluation can be achieved by (a) presenting clear reasons for referral, (b) following-up with the assigned evaluator at the outset to insure that those reasons are fully understood and to find out how the evaluator intends to go about an evaluation in keeping with the issue and the special needs of the individual client, (c) periodic follow-up with client and evaluator on how evaluation is progressing or whether intervention is necessary (especially when an extended evaluation is involved), and (d) careful review with the evaluator of the findings, recommendations and implications at the conclusion of evaluation.

Client preparation. Prior to starting vocational evaluation, time should be taken to prepare the client for this service. The focus should be on why, what might be experienced, how the results will be used (by the referring agency and by the client), and what rights and responsibilities the client has in the evaluation process. If the client is to be in evaluation for an extended period or time, it will be necessary to periodically check with the client on her or his progress, involvement, and gains in understanding.

Client Debriefing. Once the process is completed the client should be debriefed to insure that he or she knows what the recommendations are, what those recommendations mean to the client (in eligibility determination and planning), what the client might do with such information, and to deal with any apparent dissatisfaction or disagreements with recommendations. In particular, full disclosure and utilization of the findings should be provided. A secondary purpose for debriefing would be to determine the perceived utility and satisfaction of each client with their evaluative experience. By inquiring of a number of clients about their understanding of their evaluation, we can estimate where useful evaluations are obtained and which clients a particular evaluation process is more or less effective, creating a capacity for greater selectivity.

Intervention. Intervention should be directed at rectifying problems and abuses that are identified and documented. This intervention may take many forms: (a) Retraining referring staff to be more articulate with clients and with referral sources as to what they and the client need from evaluation, (b) selective use of certain evaluation programs with

particular clients, (c) greater involvement and monitoring of evaluation provided to certain clients, (d) negotiation with evaluators to alter or enhance their planning and practices with clients, (e) the setting of performance standards for evaluation reporting, (f) a sharing of information among referral staff regarding known strengths and weaknesses of certain evaluation processes, (g) better briefing of clients on what to expect during evaluation, (h) recovery of fees from ineffective evaluation sources, and, (i) in extreme instances, sanctioning certain evaluation resources.

Client-Consumer Roles

As part of this reciprocal process, the client (or when appropriate, the client's advocate, parent or guardian) can also engage in preventative and retroactive quality control activities. These may be individually carried out or carried out as part of an advocacy procedure set up by people with disabilities or parties acting on his or her behalf. Most of these, parallel approaches to quality control that are available to other consumers. These actually represent effective consumer behaviors regardless of ones frame of reference. "Assertiveness" is the watchword in the client-consumer's reciprocal role.

Before evaluation. Whether or not a client-consumer is formally part of a rehabilitation or education process, the concern is that they find out what vocational evaluation is all about. They should get answers to questions about (a) who goes to vocational evaluation, (b) what is it and how do vocational assessment and evaluation differ, (c) how each can help them, (d) when each is done, (e) what they can expect to learn about themselves, (f) what it could be used for on their behalf, (g) how it could be used against them, (h) what in particular they are likely to experience (i.e., given their experience or disabilities), and (i) whether there is some place where there are evaluations being done or people who have gone through it that they might visit? If the answer to this last item is yes, the time spent by actually going to an evaluation site and questioning people doing evaluations or who have experienced vocational evaluations would be valuable.

Evaluation planning. Some part of this planning should take place with the client's case manager. What takes place, though, is more important than with whom. First and foremost, he or she should make known what it is that they expect or need from evaluation. They must convey to the person with whom they are going to work, information about (a) the kinds of work they have done, have enjoyed and disliked, (b) the types of activities and settings they like, (c) their ideas about the work they have thought about, and (d) what he or she expects that their work would provide them. Then, work with the evaluator in selection of the evaluation tasks. The

client should know that the plan must be agreed upon by him or her.

During evaluation. The person should ask questions about why they need to do certain things and become familiar with what they are told. The client should ask for another interpretation or explanation if they do not understand the interpretation they were given. Their questioning should lead to an understanding of how the evaluation may help them. As certain findings or experiences trigger thoughts about jobs or careers, the client should talk about them with the evaluator. If they do not think the evaluation is going well or is not coming up with what he or she needs, they should ask what the alternatives are and help plan for them with their evaluator. If legitimate differences cannot be resolved, requests should be made for a review of the plan or for another evaluator to be assigned. When there is a chance to choose among alternatives, the client must do so and be able to explain their reasons for choosing one alternate over another.

Following evaluation. Once the process is completed, the client should become familiar with the recommendations that are made. He or she should expect that they will understand the recommendations, whether or not they agree with them. She or he should also understand the implications, particularly as they may apply to their eligibility for services or to their future in rehabilitation. If they disagree with the conclusions, any decisions or planning that stems from the evaluation, those objections should be voiced and some resolution sought. During any follow-up, they should indicate whether the evaluation findings relate to the goals they finally pursued.

Advocacy. Clients and their advocates can play a pivotal role in quality control for any human service process. Legislation and policies which control the funding and delivery of these processes provide one of the strongest footholds for the concerned advocate or aggrieved client. The professional standards provide the very criteria against which to effect changes at the practice level. Professional standards (a) set the preferred combinations of skills and experiences needed by personnel who will be competent to practice a process and (b) set requisite conditions and qualities of delivery mechanisms which are likely to effectively achieve desired outcomes. These also provide some of the simplest safeguards to diminish the possibility that they will encounter insensitive and abusive practices.

Under law, rehabilitation agencies are to (a) establish policies for planning and referral of clients, (b) review and evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of their program, including service utilization, (c) make available to the public information on their policies and effectiveness, (d)

optimum recovery. Would the evaluation be more useful after restoration, engineering or specific job-site modifications? Will additional re-assessments be needed during the course of rehabilitation?

Orientation. How well prepared was the individual to take part in the evaluation? Was attention given at the start of evaluation to reduce anxiety, explain what was going to take place, what would be expected, and how evaluation might help them? Were reasons for all evaluation methods carefully explained and questions simply answered? Did reorientation and reclarification take place throughout evaluation? Did the individual have a good idea of what was going on throughout evaluation?

Planning. Was there a clear focus and planfulness? Were there reasons for certain techniques or methods and did those reasons make good sense? Was the plan written down? Was there clearly someone responsible for carrying the evaluation plan through to completion? Was it clear why particular evaluation techniques were selected and were selected in the interest of the client? Were adaptations made to the plan for good reasons and involved the client's inputs? Were evaluation results gathered at various points in the execution of the plan shared with the client and used to shape or modify the plan? With whom did the "locus of choice" or "locus of decision-making" rest in planning? Did the evaluation plan get carried through? Did the client generally agree with and cooperate in completing the overall plan?

Standardization. Was there enough consistency in how individuals were evaluated that would lead you to believe that the evaluation would yield comparable findings about the person on another occasion? If there was a core set of evaluative measures or experiences used with most clients, were these measures appropriate and was there a convincing rationale for use with the functional disabilities represented in the group? Which of the following characterized the evaluation process: Instructions for evaluation activities were correct, clearly presented, understood and presented in formats in keeping with the individual's disability; group and individual assessments were monitored; accepted practices and applications of behavior observation, recording and testing were followed; test and other data collected were correctly scored and recorded; conclusions, recommendations and reports were reviewed and verified.

Individualization. Did the evaluation show intellectual involvement, customization, creativity and an understanding of both the reasons for the evaluation and the values, needs and interests of the individual? Was there clear evidence that evaluative measures were taken which were consistent with the needs and disabilities of the client? Was there enough questioning and interviewing to detect perceptions,

reactions and needs to shape the evaluative process? Were there any nonstandard evaluation processes selected, applied and utilized? Was there any indication of changes in planning based on evaluation findings or client reactions?

Empowerment. Did you sense that there was concern with the "empowering" of the individual to direct their rehabilitation? Was the intent shown that the value of the information was for the individual and that it was their decision-making which would be expected to be enhanced?

Learning. What specifically did the individual learn about themselves as "a vocational being?" What new knowledge, confirmation or insights were begun or obtained among the following about themselves: Interests, skills, aptitudes, tolerances and capacities; jobs, occupations and careers; vocational decision-making; occupational and economic benefits of traditional and nontraditional occupational choices; own needs, values and available options to meet those needs; functional limitations and capacities related to disability and jobs; training needed to acquire job, work, academic or independence skills for self-sufficiency; engineering, adaptation and modifications to environment, job or self; and supportive needs.

Involvement. To what extent was the consumer encouraged and actively involved in their evaluation? Were the following types of questions asked: "What do you think of these findings?" "What do you think these mean?" "Do you think that this could be something you would want?" "Does this make sense to you?" "Now that we know this, do you think we should find out about ... ?" "Where would you like to begin?" "Is this too overwhelming?" "Well, what do you know now about yourself that you didn't know when you came in?"

Interaction. Was there a reasonable, shared-responsibility for planning and conducting the vocational evaluation? Did the evaluator show personalism (sensitivity and caring) and professionalism (responsible case management) in developing, reviewing and modifying the evaluation plan, in explaining and interpreting results, and in drawing conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation? How often did reviews and discussions of the findings take place? How accurately was the client's perspective reflected in the plan and in recommendations? How were client-evaluator disagreements resolved?

Economy. How well was the evaluation time spent? How would you rate it with respect to the following: Scheduling and valuing of client's time; amount and how nonevaluation time was used; turn around for reporting results back to client during evaluation; availability of information and resources; report writing and completion; staffing.

Professionalism. Were the vocational evaluation personnel knowledgeable and adequately skilled to conduct the evaluation and develop recommendations for clients? Were they able to explain how and why the evaluation was planned and conducted in the way that it was? Were you able to understand what it was they did and how and why they derived their recommendations? Did they know enough about work and how people with the disabilities go about getting into the work force? Were they trained to do evaluation or did they learn it themselves? Do they hold any degrees, recently completed in-service training, or passed any certification process? Did they conduct a respectable evaluation? Did the client find that evaluation was reasonable and humane? Is there reason to issue complaints to certifying or funding organizations regarding the evaluation or the competency of the staff?

Evaluation Resources. Were the quality of the physical and materials resources adequate to conduct evaluation? Was the setting in which evaluation was conducted appropriate to the evaluation questions (e.g., real work, community-based). Were the evaluation technologies (e.g., work samples, adaptive devices) in working order? Were tests the most recent editions and the format (instructions, mode of responding) appropriate for the disability group? Were norms available and relevant to the evaluation questions (i.e., recent, valid for person engaged in the particular job)? Was the physical environment in keeping with Office of Safety and Health Administration standards and likely to encourage "best performance" for the individual (i.e., clean, well lighted, comfortable)? Was the evaluation facility accessible? Is the program accredited? Has it recently lost its accreditation or been placed on a probationary status?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A QUALITY EVALUATION REPORT

The vocational evaluation report is the most tangible product of evaluation. The report might be a single page containing an answer to a specific referral question, along with the "data" used to derive the answer. Or, it might be a lengthy written analysis of options and training and career projections, coupled with a full-scale staffing on the individual. In any case, the evaluation report should convey messages that go beyond a reported "set of numbers".

A quality evaluation report should have certain common structural characteristics, as well as reflect specific profile qualities. Even though, the report will vary with the reasons for the evaluation, the person evaluated, and where the evaluation was conducted, there should be more similarities than dissimilarities in the report that reflect quality criteria for evaluation.

Among the important structural characteristics or qualities one should find evidenced in any good evaluation report are plausibility,

credibility, feasibility, relevancy, personalization, fairness, validity, utility, and cost effectiveness. The value of evaluation particularly rests on how well the evaluation presents a profile of the person along those dimensions expected by the user, such as the agency who pays for it or the individual who is the recipient of the planning and decision-making which stems from it. Depending on how extensive the vocational evaluation was, one would expect useful samplings of information about the individual's eligibility, functional capacities and limitations, learning style vocational decision-making, basic factors important for employment decisions, work habits and related behaviors, job skills, vocational and occupational potential, resource needs, adaptation, engineering and assistive needs, employment and placement.

The following are intended to be guides to the kinds of characteristics and information or answers that are desirable from a vocational evaluation. They are offered like a check-list of structural and substantive characteristics of what might be contained in a vocational evaluation profile, given the expectations you (and an individual) had for vocational evaluation. These are focused on "What was found out about this person and how can it be used on their behalf?"

Structural Characteristics

As you review the evaluation report for this person, how well does it relate to these structural criteria?

Plausibility. Given what you know about the client/yourself, do the results make sense? Not everything that comes from evaluation will be true. There are "margins of interpretations" built into every evaluation methodology.

Credibility. Are the conclusions understanding and convincing? Is the rationale supportive of the conclusions and recommendations the evaluator arrived at? How many other interpretations or conclusions could you reach with the same information? Given the evaluation technology the evaluator used, can the evaluator support the statements he/she made?

Feasibility. Do the answers and conclusions reached from the evaluation point to options consistent with the existing labor market (economics) in the area, the resources the agency and the client can bring to bear, and the urgency the client has for achieving economic self-sufficiency? Are recommendations nestled in reality or are they idealistic goals?

Relevancy. Did the evaluation answer the question(s) posed? Did it aid in accomplishing the purpose for using evaluation: Provide evidence to support a decision about eligibility and or provide information substantively useful in planning, selecting or undertaking a rehabilitation process?

Personalization. How humane and respectful of the dignity, needs and values of the individual is the report? Does it attempt to provide information or a point of view which relates to this individual's involvement and needs to direct their rehabilitation and achieve self-sufficiency? If so, are the results of any real value to this client?

Fairness. Is a balanced picture of the person and his/her capacities and limitations presented? Does the evaluation unnecessarily stress the limitations imposed by a disability or does it present a picture of the person painted around capabilities which may be residuals (or unintegrated) and might require extensive accommodation to exploit in the labor market. Was the evaluation search a real search for capacities?

Validity. Is the evaluation right? Beyond credibility and plausibility come the issue of whether the estimates and recommendations are correct. For example, when the evaluation speaks of aptitudes, were appropriate aptitude tests and data used to make such statements? When the evaluation suggests career goals, were measures or evaluation systems used which would identify such career goals? When specific local occupations are recommended, were relevant samples of the person's work skills and work behaviors gathered that would coincide with that type of occupation?

Utility. Were you or the client able to do something with the results? Did this measurably help you to make a better decision or do better planning? Did you get enough out of it to feel that the expenditure of time and money was justified? Would you put up good money to act on these results?

Cost effectiveness. Given what you wanted and given what came back (what was experienced, what you learned about yourself, what was found out about your capabilities), was it worth it? Honestly now, was their time valuably spent?

Vocational Evaluation Profile

Given the original intent or reason for the vocational evaluation, how well does the vocational evaluation profile address one or more of the following?

Eligibility. What does the evaluation say with respect to eligibility for the program or service you can offer? Do the data and findings help to make a fair decision about eligibility or their possible access to such related or relevant programs and resources as vocational rehabilitation, Projects with Industry, supported employment, employment covered under the Job Development and Training Partnership Act, veteran's benefits, educational and training programs or funds, placement services, sheltered employment, job transfer?

Functional capacities and limitations. What has been learned about how the individual's impairments affect their capacities to function vocationally (and avocationally)? How might their abilities or skills be transferred or positively affected through use assistive devices, engineering or retraining? Which capacities have limited potential and which are residual capacities which may be realistic alternatives that could be pursued? How negatively affected will the person be in job seeking and retention, use or transfer of existing job skills, in acquisition of alternate skills needed for specific jobs or occupations. Are their self-care, social skills and capacities for independence affected? How might these be enhanced to improve their likelihood for economic self-sufficiency and community integration?

Vocational decision-making. How well developed are the knowledges and skills they need in order to plan, to initiate and carry through their rehabilitation and to achieve their vocational goals? Have they identified alternative jobs or careers? Do they understand the economic (earnings, fringe benefits, benefit losses) and social consequences (people they might work with, transportation, where to live) of their goal choices? Do they understand the skills, interests, aptitudes, experience and training requirements for their goals? Are they following or do they have a plan for achieving their goals?

Basic factors important for employment decisions. Did the evaluation provide information with minimal errors of interpretation about the individual's possession of these basic factors: Physical capacities and psychomotor function, intellectual and academic achievement, aptitudes, vocational interests, psychological and emotional stability, current vocational skills, learning and comprehension skills, orientation to jobs and working conditions, motivation to be employed, environmental functioning capacity.

Work habits. Did the evaluation provide useful information about whether the individual has appropriate general work habits? What did the evaluation have to say about quality and quantity of work (productivity), attendance and punctuality (reliability), and attention to work tasks (persistence)? What did it say about their abilities to follow instructions, accept criticism, be supervised, communicate work needs, and relate to supervisors and peers?

Work related behaviors. Does the evaluation speak to how the individual responds to job pressures and change, their physical and or emotional tolerance for job(s), to the appropriateness of their personal hygiene and appearance, performance under different supervisory styles, or to their self-care, independence, and mobility needs?

Job skills. Were there alternative jobs identified for which the individual has skills? How economically rewarding would work in those options be for the individual? Do those options reflect expressed and demonstrated interests in this kind of work? Do the options consider current work skills, potential or transferrable skills, native aptitudes and the individual's hobbies and other avocational experiences and values?

Vocational and occupational potential. Are specific jobs and occupational goals identified for which the individual reasonably might be capable, given existing training, adaptation, engineering or assistive devices? Which of the following characterize these vocational goals: Available in the individual's labor market; will continue to be a growth occupation for next 5 years; has career or advancement potential; is likely to provide income that is sufficient for economic self-sufficiency (including benefits to support disability needs); will provide opportunity for social and economic integration; and is consistent with their personal values and needs.

Resource needs. Does the report provide guidance for identifying and selecting assessment, evaluation, training, experiences, and resources necessary to achieve desired goals or to overcome adverse effects of disability? How specific and useful are comments about how the following might be used to achieve desired rehabilitation goals: Specific vocational and academic skills; job seeking skills training; training for work habits, hardening and adjustment; training for mobility, independence and self-care; work experience, placement and follow-up; other evaluations and assessment; transportation, restoration, assistive devices, and engineering needs; needs for job-related supportive resources; needs for supportive and family services.

Adaptation, engineering and assistive devices. If functional limitations are evident (vocationally or avocationally), what options were suggested to overcome adverse affects or to accommodate those limitations? Does the evaluation suggest specific job, work, or environmental modifications?

Employment. Is the client ready for employment? Does he or she have work habits which are consistent with employment, a valued marketable job skill, the willingness to accept and continue a job, and the functional capacities to fulfill the demands and expectations of a job? Which of these may need to be supplemented to achieve and maintain competitive employment?

Placement. For which form(s) of employment is the individual presently ready: Competitive employment, supported competitive employment, supported group work, other alternate employment, sheltered or transitional employment, unpaid

family or community work. If the individual is not presently ready for competitive employment, when (i.e., estimate of potential) and under what conditions (i.e., needed training, adaptation, engineering, assistive devices) will the individual need to be ready for placement.

IMPACTS FROM VOCATIONAL EVALUATION

The quality of outcomes must be viewed in relation to stated purposes, questions or objectives for the evaluation. Generically, the fundamental purpose of vocational evaluation is to enhance meaningful decision-making for a person's rehabilitation and employment options. The value of the vocational evaluation must be judged in relation to how relevant the information to accessing appropriate and optimal employment options for the individual.

Ultimately, the vocational evaluation is to impact upon decision-making, planning, selection and delivery of rehabilitation. If we accept the premise that evaluation is more than an information collection process, vocational evaluation can also be expected to have measurable gains for both clients and the rehabilitation system.

From the user's perspective, the vocational evaluation process should produce information which can be used to determine the extent and type of resources that will be needed for the individual to obtain and retain their preferred employment. Its worth has to be measured against the final employment status of the individual in relation to the recommendations developed from the information obtained, assuming that relevant and accurate recommendations were offered and followed.

Achieving these outcomes requires a deeper sense of awareness on the part of the evaluation information user as well as the evaluator. Articulation of the factors used to make decisions such as these will assist the evaluator in making more precise recommendations. By knowing the criteria by which these decisions will be made, a more successful evaluation can be provided to the user.

The proper use of tests, work samples, and other assessment methods used in vocational evaluation is important to acquire accurate data, but how the evaluation findings are used is of equally great importance. The presentation of detailed, functional information can assist the user in locating proper services which will support the individual in securing suitable employment. If there is a lack of follow-through after the evaluation process, though, these important benefits cannot be possible. As we consider the attainment of these impacts from "quality evaluation," we should be clear when lack of impact is due to a lack in rehabilitation resources and when it is due to the limitations of the individuals who made use of the evaluation. If evaluations have been properly conducted and appropriately used, immediate and long-term impacts are likely.

Immediate Impacts

The most immediate impact on clients and the system would be in decision-making regarding an individual's eligibility, in planning and in delivery of rehabilitation, and in how clients are empowered to act vocationally on their own behalf.

Eligibility decision-making. The vocational evaluations would provide the added information needed by counselors to determine whether the individual's disabilities and capacities warrant an acceptance decision. The evidence presented from evaluation in support of the decision would be convincing to both the system and to the applicants for services.

Planning for rehabilitation. The results would contribute recognizably to an individual's plan acceptable to the system (i.e., consistent with resources) and to the client (i.e., in keeping with their hopes and interests). The plan would show greater correspondence between what was agreed upon with the client and the goals and services selected to achieve those goals? The plans would more likely reflect all important personal and vocational training, restoration, education, independence and engineering services and assistive devices needed to achieve rehabilitation. There would be greater likelihood that the vocational goals for most clients would be consistent with evaluation recommendations.

Selection of options. The training and jobs in which clients go would be related to the options identified in evaluation. Of the training or careers, jobs, or occupational options selected by individuals, they would be ones revealed or suggested through their vocational evaluations. Greater retention, success, and satisfaction would be likely from goals selected in keeping with evaluation recommendations.

Empowerment. Clients would be better equipped to take part in the planning of their rehabilitation. Consumers would be more knowledgeable about their own capacities, needs, interests, goals and ways to achieve goals after vocational evaluation. Individuals would be more likely to participate in the planning process with their rehabilitation counselor, more likely to take advantage of opportunities that would lead to rehabilitation, and more likely to pursue training, jobs or advancements that would lead to their economic gains and community integration.

Long-Term Impacts

Long-term gains should be evident from quality vocational evaluations both for individuals served in rehabilitation and to the rehabilitation system. Gains to individuals should be evident both in how they go about their vocational selection and in the occupational, economic and societal integration they obtain from their choices.

Vocational decision-making. Individuals' vocational decision-making skills and their capacities to make choices that take advantage of opportunities or changes in options that are available to them once employed would be expected.

Occupations and jobs accessed. Training options selected would more often be in growth occupations with career potential. There would be greater incidence of employment in skill areas and occupations or jobs with careers that correspond to those suggested in evaluation.

Employment. There would be greater incidence of placements in competitive versus community or supported employment versus sheltered employment versus unpaid family worker categories.

Integration. Integration would be both economic and social: Wages and fringe benefits in excess of the poverty level; income sufficient to provide for disability related medical, psychological and engineering and assistive needs; and economic and social integration extended to work, avocational, and broader community settings.

Self-sufficiency and resource access. More selective reliance on public aids, services and resources. Individually tailored portfolios of economic supplements for disability related medical, psychological, and post-rehabilitation services; for engineering and assistive devices; and for supportive networks. Minimized general use of public subsidies would be evidence of increased self-sufficiency.

Long-term system gains should be evidenced if vocational evaluation recommendations are in fact appropriate and are incorporated in the planning and delivery of rehabilitation.

Program capacity. The capacity of the system to serve greater numbers of severely disabled persons.

Caseloads. Greater caseload control and reduction in average expenditures would lead to increased case movement and more efficient use of available training and restoration resources.

Rehabilitation counseling. There would be increased rehabilitation counselor effectiveness. More time would be given to counseling, instead of case management, greater specialization, and greater consistency in the quality of closures between counselors.

Closures and outcomes. There would be increased rates of closures into preferred closure categories: In competitive employment versus community, supported, and sheltered employment versus homemaker options. There would be corresponding increases in the quality of occupations accessed

by vocational rehabilitation recipients. There would be increased incidence of outcomes in entry-level, growth and career occupations and decreases in closures into dead end, retrenchment, and seasonal occupations.

Accountability. Finally, greater program accountability should be evidenced for taxpayers: Containment of program costs, decreases in welfare requirements, and increases in taxes paid by recipients.

APPENDIX

A

APPENDIX A

Knowledge and Performance Areas for Certification Vocational Evaluation Specialists

(As of January, 1986)

1. PHILOSOPHY AND PROCESS: Vocational Evaluation is defined as a comprehensive process that systematically uses work, real or simulated, as the focal point for assessment and vocational exploration, the purpose of which is to assist individuals in vocational development. Effective utilization of vocational evaluation/assessment tools and techniques requires a thorough understanding of the various definitions, philosophies and processes that govern their application in a wide variety of long-term and short-term, profit and non-profit and public and private settings. An understanding of the most cost effective, reliable and appropriate approaches in dealing with specific populations is essential to meaningful service delivery. This requires a knowledge of the primary components (instruments, techniques and technologies) needed in developing and maintaining an efficient vocational evaluation program and a thorough understanding of how these components are organized and utilized to constitute an effective process of vocational evaluation/assessment.
2. JOB ANALYSIS: Job analysis is a systematic procedure for gathering information about what workers do in performing their jobs. The procedure involves identifying the work tasks, traits, environmental conditions and other relevant information, such as physical demands, aptitudes, temperaments and training. It also includes analyzing vocational training areas to determine skills needed to succeed. The primary skills are those of observation, interviewing and recording.
3. OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION: The types of information involved include job codes, definitions, industrial classification, worker functions, worker traits, physical demands, working conditions, interests and temperaments as found in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles and supplements (and allied documents such as Guide to Occupational Exploration, Occupation Outlook Handbook) which are standard sources. The related sources of occupational information deal with demand for workers, trends, training, career ladders, geographical and industrial areas where jobs are located, and prevailing wage rates. It includes the identification of vocational training programs, curricula and agencies that might provide services.
4. FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF DISABILITY: Refers to a body of knowledge about disabilities and the effects of disability upon work related and independent living functions and recommendations for potential services that might optimize individual's overall functional capacity.
5. VOCATIONAL INTERVIEWING: The method for obtaining and providing information about an individual's vocational, educational and social background primarily for the purpose of vocational evaluation planning and vocational exploration. Attitudes, values and interest pertaining to these areas are also considered relevant information. The knowledge involved includes the interviewing process and techniques, a general understanding of personality and human development and the ability to analyze and interpret verbal as well as non-verbal behavior.

6. INDIVIDUALIZED VOCATIONAL EVALUATION PLANNING: The process for developing and writing a plan to structure the evaluation. It presupposes knowledge about the total vocational evaluation process. The specific skills include planning and writing abilities and the integration of information from clients, referral sources and other relevant data.
7. PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING: General knowledge of testing using standardized instruments (paper and pencil tests and performance tests) to provide a quantified assessment of cognitive, psychomotor and affective traits of individuals. The skills include selection, administration, modification, scoring, interpretation and a basic understanding of tests and measurements theory.
8. WORK SAMPLES: Knowledge about the theory and practical application of work samples in vocational evaluation/assessment. The skills involved include selection, proper use (e.g., administration/re-administration, modification, scoring) and interpretation, the ability to develop norms, to use established normative data and to develop work samples.
9. SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT: The systematic procedure for observing, recording and interpreting job performance and work-related behaviors. Included is knowledge about various observational/recording techniques, work requirements and performance standards and sources of error that might influence the interpretation of data. Skills include the ability to schedule, observe, record, and interpret performance and work-related behaviors in a broad variety of setting, including work stations in sheltered workshops, vocational classes and on the job.
10. LEARNING STYLE ASSESSMENT: Knowledge about learning theories and skills used in assessing individual learning style, and the methods under which the individual most effectively learns. Such information is used to recommend appropriate behavior change and/or teaching techniques.
11. REPORT DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATION: Knowledge about the process of developing vocational evaluation reports, including formating and writing. The skills include the ability to integrate, synthesize and interpret evaluation an other relevant data and to provide useful recommendations to the client and referral sources related to employment, training, accommodation, adjustment and other rehabilitation/habilitation services. The ability to effectively communicate relevant evaluation data and its meaning, through staffings and meetings, is also emphasized.
12. ADAPTATION OF JOBS AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING: This area involves knowledge of rehabilitation technology and person-work matching, adaptation of vocational training procedures and curricula, architectural barriers and specific knowledge about the functional limitations and abilities of individuals.

APPENDIX

B

APPENDIX B

Selecting Vocational Evaluation Services

Organization/Facility/Agency is accredited by

Yes	No	
_____	_____	Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).
_____	_____	Accreditation Council on Services for People with Developmental Disabilities (ACDD).
_____	_____	Regional accrediting body for educational programs.
_____	_____	State Vocational Rehabilitation Facility Certification.
_____	_____	Other

Primary Mission _____ Rehabilitation of handicapped
 _____ Education of school-aged individuals
 _____ Job training and placement (e.g., JTPA)

Primary Income/Funding Sources: _____

Type of Facility/Organization:

_____ Sheltered workshop
_____ Supported employment
_____ Vocational training
_____ Work activity center
_____ Public school
_____ Private-for-profit
_____ Career counseling/consulting
_____ Job training
_____ Community college/adult education
_____ Other

Staff/Client Ratio: _____

Personnel - Number of vocational evaluation staff

_____ Professionals
_____ Paraprofessionals
_____ Support personnel (clerical, aides)

Is vocational evaluation their sole responsibility Yes No
 _____ _____

What additional job responsibilities do they have _____

Does more than one individual have exclusive responsibility for vocational evaluation _____ yes _____ no. How many _____

Other personnel who contribute to the vocational evaluation process:

- _____ Occupational Therapist(s)
- _____ Rehabilitation Counselor(s)
- _____ Job Coaches
- _____ Work Adjustment Specialists
- _____ Job Developers/Placement Specialists
- _____ Teachers, Instructors
- _____
- _____

V.E. Staff are certified by CCWAVES _____ yes _____ no

Agency will provide references of others who have used its VE services _____ yes _____ no

Agency is accessible:

- _____ Architecturally
- _____ Programmatically (e.g., accommodations made for individual with auditory deficit or learning disability; different media are used for instructions, etc.)

Evaluation procedures available and used:

- _____ Work Samples
(commercially developed)
- _____ Situational Assessment
- _____ Formal or Psychometric Testing
- _____ On-the-job-evaluation
- _____ Behavior Observation
- _____ Shop/Job try-outs
- _____ Work Tasks
- _____ Computerized Job Matching/Career Information Systems
- _____ Work Samples (homemade or locally developed)
- _____ Activities, instruments are relevant to labor market:
_____ Local _____ Current

Personnel are familiar with, and trained to work with specific groups or populations:

- _____ Disadvantaged youth/adults
- _____ Offenders (juvenile and adult)
- _____ Limited English proficient
- _____ Mentally retarded
- _____ Learning disabled
- _____ Orthopedically handicapped
- _____ Hearing impaired (or deaf)
- _____ Visually impaired/blind
- _____ Chronically mentally ill
- _____ Chronically ill

- ☐ Traumatcally brain injured
- ☐ Multiply handicapped
- ☐ Other

Educational credentials and backgrounds of staff _____

Average length of vocational evaluation sessions _____

Total time period for vocational evaluation _____

Average length of time between end of evaluation and dissemination of results _____

Type of reporting used for results and recommendations:

- ☐ Narrative report
- ☐ Computer print out
- ☐ Checklist report
- ☐ Combination: narrative/checklist report
- ☐ Parent/advocate/evaluee conference
- ☐ Staffing conference(s)

Type of recommendations made:

- ☐ Short term
- ☐ Long term
- ☐ Community placements
- ☐ Vocational training
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Type of follow-up used: _____

Safety procedures and equipment in place:

- ☐ Safety glasses/goggles
- ☐ Shields for power equipment
- ☐ Dust removal
- ☐ Ventilation for fumes
- ☐ Safety apparel available
- ☐ First aid available
- ☐ Liability insurance
 - ☐ For staff
 - ☐ For clients/evaluatees

APPENDIX

C

APPENDIX C

This form is completed prior to making referral to vocational evaluation services in a vocational rehabilitation agency

VR COUNSELOR ASSESSMENT/RESPONSES:

1. IS CLIENT CAPABLE OF ENGAGING IN COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT? _____

2. FOR WHAT TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT HAS THE CLIENT EXPRESSED AND/OR DEMONSTRATED AN INTEREST? _____

3. WHAT KNOWN FACTORS ARE INTERFERING WITH COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT? _____

4. SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY THIS EVALUATION? _____

5. HOW LONG OF AN EVALUATION PERIOD DO YOU THINK THIS CLIENT NEEDS? _____

FACILITY EVALUATION RESPONSE

THE FACILITY REPORTING FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AT THE END OF THE VOCATIONAL EVALUATION PERIOD. THE FOLLOWING FACTORS ARE ADDRESSED ON THIS FORM:

1. QUANTITY OF WORK
2. QUALITY OF WORK
3. ATTENDANCE
4. PUNCTUALITY
5. ATTENTION TO TASK
6. ABILITY TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS/DIRECTIONS
7. ABILITY TO ACCEPT CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM
8. COMMUNICATING WORK NEEDS
9. RELATIONSHIP WITH SUPERVISOR AND PEERS
10. EFFECTS OF JOB PRESSURES AND CHANGE
11. PHYSICAL AND/OR EMOTIONAL JOB TOLERANCE
12. PERSONAL HYGIENE AND APPEARANCE

WITH RESPECT TO THE ABOVE FACTORS, ALSO INCLUDE COMMENTS REGARDING THE FOLLOWING:

1. WHAT JOBS IN THE LABOR MARKET IS THE CLIENT CAPABLE OF PERFORMING ON A COMPETITIVE BASIS?
2. FOR WHICH OF THOSE JOBS HAS THE CLIENT EXPRESSED AND/OR DEMONSTRATED AN INTEREST?

3. ARE THE CLIENT'S WORK HABITS CONSISTENT WITH COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT?
4. IF NOT, WHAT SERVICES AND TECHNIQUES WILL HELP THE CLIENT CHANGE HIS/HER BEHAVIOR?

PLEASE DISCUSS THE CLIENT'S ABILITY TO ENGAGE IN NONTRADITIONAL PROGRAMS SUCH AS SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT, PROJECTS-WITH-INDUSTRY, TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT, MOBILE WORK FORCES, OR OTHER INDUSTRY-INTEGRATED POSITIONS.

VOCATIONAL EVALUATION REFERRAL FORM

NAME _____ S.S. # _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____ TELEPHONE _____

SEX _____ AGE _____ D.O.B. _____ MARITAL STATUS _____

OVR COUNSELOR _____

DIAGNOSED DISABILITY(S) _____

FUNCTIONAL LIMITATIONS _____

EDUCATION/TRAINING _____

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY _____

CURRENT SITUATION RE:

SOCIAL SERVICE INVOLVEMENT _____

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS (FAMILY, ETC.) _____

MEDICAL STATUS (MEDICATION, ALLERGIES, ETC.) _____

TRANSPORTATION AVAILABILITY _____

FINANCIAL (INCOME, ETC.) _____

This form is completed before a team refers an individual to vocational evaluation in a public school system. (Attach copy to Voc. Eval. Referral Form)

Vocational Evaluation Referral Checklist *(Steps taken by school prior to referral)*

Student's Name	School
Referral Agent's Name	Date VE Referral Initiated

DATE	STEP TAKEN	COMMENTS
_____	review cumulative folder	
_____	change of class schedule	
_____	progress sheets/class assessment reports	
_____	teacher(s)/counselor/pupil conference	
_____	administrator/counselor/parent conference	
_____	career counseling	
_____	testing by outside agency (Gless Clinic, Kennedy Institute, etc.)	
_____	referral for psychological testing	
_____	date psychological was given _____	
_____	date of psychological update _____	
_____	Pupil Personnel Worker involvement/referral	
_____	team conference held for consideration for Vocational Evaluation	

Additional Comments:

2700/24(New 6/81)

☐ North Arundel Vocational Technical Center
800 Stevenson Road
Severn, Maryland 21144

☐ Annapolis Junior High
Forest Drive & Sax Road
Annapolis, Maryland 21403

Expressed Vocational Interest		
Vocational Skills Identified		
Vocational Courses Taken		
Work Experience		
		
Comments:	Date Interviewed	Participation Date

Attach	1. Referral Check List	2. Student Class	3. Most Recent
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REFERENCES

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