

Assessment



Purpose of Assessment

- Assessment is the process whereby counselors collect data that helps the counselor make decisions about the client. Assessment is used to:
 - Diagnose client problems.
 - Make predictions about clients.
 - Develop client self-awareness.

Assessment

Types of Assessment

- Standardized Tests: An objective measure given in a standard way.
- Nonstandardized Assessment or Clinical Assessment: This is the counselor's assessment of an individual based on clinical experience.

Assessment

Types of Standardized Tests

- Intelligence Tests (General mental ability).
- Aptitude Tests (Knowledge and skills useful in educational or vocational settings).
- Achievement Tests (Skills and knowledge acquired through education).
- Career-related Inventories (Looks at preferences and beliefs about career).
- Personality Inventories (Looks at consistent patterns of thoughts and behaviors).

Assessment

Assessment Through Interviews

➤ The Intake Interview: Addresses client problems and resources in preparation for treatment or referral.



- What is the client's presenting problem?
- What is the history of the problem?
- What has been the treatment of the problem?
- Are there any other problems?
- What is the client's social, educational and occupational history?
- What is the client's medical history?
- What are the client's resources and abilities?

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Assessment Through Interviews (continued)

- Making A Diagnosis: Usually in a mental health setting using the DSM-IV.
 - Diagnosis should be about the client's current problem.
 - Past history can confirm or rule out a diagnosis.
 - Intensity and frequency of the problem is important to note.
 - Has the client deteriorated as a result of the problem?
 - What has been the duration of the problem?

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Mental Status Exam

- Counselors can use the mental status exam to get a clearer picture of what is going on with the client and to make a differential diagnosis. The mental status exam assesses the following:
 - Appearance, Attitude and Activity
 - Mood and Affect
 - Speech and Language
 - Thought Processes
 - Cognitions
 - Insight and Judgment.

Assessment



Assessing Emergency Conditions

- Two things to look for are dangerousness and suicidal tendencies.
- Signs of active crisis are:

Disorganized thinking
Impulsivity
Hostility
Emotional distance
Acute anxiety
Substance abuse

Immobilization
Helplessness
Loss of control
Panic
Indecision

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Assessing For Dangerousness

- Potentially dangerous people may have been victimized themselves in the past.
- Many have poor impulse control.
- Some may harbor persecutory thoughts.
- Some may hold grudges or seek revenge.
- Many have made lists of those who have harmed them.
- Many have criminal records.
- Many own weapons or know martial arts.

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Assessing For Suicide



- Is the client depressed? Is the depression lifting?
- Is the client psychotic?
- Does the client have a history of substance abuse? Poor impulse control? Violence? Past suicide attempts?
- Has the person recently suffered a loss?
- Does the client have social support?
- Does the client have a plan, the means and the intent?

Assessment

Assessing For Coping Skills

- What is the client's environment?
- What is the client's problem-solving style?
- Is the client impulsive?
- Does the client have social support?
- Has the client had successes? Failures?