

Assessing Interests – No Inventory Required

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## **Assessing Interests - No Inventory Required**

Counselor's use the term "measure" when they are using inventories to ascertain quantity. They use the word assess when they evaluate the significance of inventory scores or client verbal reports. There are two ways to measure occupational interests (i.e., inventories and tests) and two other ways to assess interests (verbal expressions and behavioral manifestations).

### **Inventoried Interests**

Inventoried interest denotes responses of like, dislike, and indifference to verbal presentations of activities, objects, and types of people. These responses can be summed to produce scaled scores on standardized profiles that depict an individual's vocational interests in reference to some normative group.

### **Tested Interests**

Tested interests "refer to interest as measured by objective tests, as differentiated from inventories which are based on subjective self-estimates. It is assumed that, since interest in a vocation is likely to manifest itself in action, it should also result in an accumulation of relevant information" (Super & Crites, 1962)

### **Expressed Interests**

Expressed interests refer to the verbal profession of interest in an object, activity, task, or occupation. The typical question used to elicit an expressed interest is: "Which occupation do you intend to enter when you leave school?" Expressed interest in an occupation is more than a statement of liking. It involves a complex, conscious evaluation of many additional factors beyond simple liking.

### ***Manifest Interests***

In contrast to the verbal nature of expressed interests, manifest interests denote active

participation in an activity or occupation. The rationale for this definition of manifest vocational interests argues that if individuals do not have an interest in an activity or occupation, they would not participate in that activity or occupation. Obviously, a person may engage in an activity or occupation for reasons other than manifest interest.

Bingham (1937), who wrote about "interests manifest," concluded that "instead of relying solely on what a person says are his or her interests, observe, if possible, that in which he or she actually takes interest." Bingham also offered a practical method for assessing manifest interests. He urged the use of an interest diary in which individuals would record, over time, their activities. He believed that these "notes of doings" would clearly indicate manifest interests, and with analysis by a counselor could produce an *interest behaviorgram*.

Fryer (1931) urged counselors to take an interest history of their client's manifest behavior as a means for diagnosing interests. Fryer would help his clients construct an *interest autobiography* by focusing on different developmental eras: (1) earliest recollections, (2) entering school, (3) last years of elementary school, (4) last years of high school, (5) entering college, (6) graduation from college, (7) time of going to work, and (8) after several years of occupational activity. Clearly, analysis of behaviorgrams or interest histories secured by the autobiographical method reveal a continuity. As Fryer (1931) noted, "when the pattern is completed it is not so difficult to follow the design" (p. 412).

### **Career Construction Interview**

The *Career Construction Interview* assesses occupational interests by asking client to report and then describe their favorite television shows and magazines. When clients engage these magazines and shows, they manifest their interests. The following two slides illustrate how magazines and programs relate to inventoried interests using RIASEC instruments.

