

CAREER MASTERY INVENTORY

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Part I of the CMI consists of six scales which measure coping with six vocational development tasks of the career establishment stage: (1) Organizational Adaptability, (2) Position Performance, (3) Work Habits and Attitudes, (4) Coworker Relationships, (5) Advancement, and (6) Career Choice and Plans. Each scale contains 15 items. Clients respond to the items on a 7-point Likert scale. Higher scale scores indicate greater task mastery. A profile of the six scale scores portrays a client's progress along the continuum of vocational development tasks that define the three phases of the establishment stage.

As described in the foregoing section on the ACCI, Super's model of career development defines three major phases for the years from occupational entry to midcareer (i.e., establishment stage). Each phase is characterized by concerns about stabilizing, consolidating, and advancing one's occupational position. The CMI scales for "Position Performance" and for "Organizational Adaptability" indicate how well clients have coped with the stabilizing phase of early establishment. Poor performance or conflict with organizational values prevents stabilization and generally forces an individual

to find a more fitting position within the same occupation or to enter a new occupation.

Once individuals stabilize in their positions, they should attend to consolidating their job by forming cooperative relationships with coworkers and sustaining positive work habits and attitudes over the long haul. The CMI scales for "Coworker Relationships" and for "Work Habits and Attitudes" measure the degree to which an individual has become a dependable producer with a positive attitude. Failure to deal effectively with interpersonal problems on the job is the most frequent reason for leaving a position during the consolidation phase of the establishment years. Mastery of the twin tasks leading to consolidation prepares people to enter the advancement phase of the establishment stage.

The CMI scales for "Advancement" and for "Career Choice and Plans" measure the degree to which an individual has mastered the tasks of career advancement. The "Advancement" scale looks to the intermediate future and indicates the degree to which individuals know about the career paths in their organizations and know how to move to the next position. The "Career Choice and Plans" scale looks to the long-range future and indicates the degree to which individuals know how they want to spend the rest of their working lives. Often, people who are actively coping with the career planning task are viewed as having a "midcareer crisis." However, not all workers suffer a crisis as they face this task. Many workers, after a period of reflection, move smoothly into the maintenance stage (i.e., the years from midcareer to retirement) and deal with the tasks of holding, updating, and innovating their positions. Workers who spend significant time dealing with the task of career planning at midlife may be in a renewal stage (Murphy and Burck, 1976; Williams & Savickas, 1990). During a period of renewal, people thoroughly reassess their careers and lives. They dream about alternative futures, examine their direction in life, reorganize their priorities, and consider changing occupations. The reassessment may result in (a) reaffirmation of the present occupational position through updating and innovating, (b) reordering priorities to devote more time to family and leisure while holding on to the present position, or (c) redirecting oneself into a different occupational field and recycling through the tasks of stabilizing, consolidating, and advancing in a new occupational position.