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Reference Counselina Services

Link to Counseling Forms

<http://www.floridajobs.org/pdg/guidancepapers/Counseling.pdf>

FINAL GUIDANCE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

OF INTEREST TO:

Workforce Florida, Inc., and Regional Workforce Boards

SUBJECT:

Employment Counseling

PURPOSE:

To transmit information regarding Employment Counseling Services in the One-Stop Delivery System.

BACKGROUND – UNDERLYING STATE/FEDERAL POLICY

No mandates exist in law which define the skills and qualifications necessary to provide employment counseling nor what services specifically constitute counseling. It is left to each state to design and develop a counseling program. At the time the counseling program was developed in Florida relative to the provision of Wagner-Peyser services, standards set by the American Association of Counseling and Development and the National Employment Counselors Association were used to determine the minimum level of education and training necessary to provide counseling.

Methods of doing business have changed rapidly in the last few years, however, and employment counseling must evolve to accommodate this transformation and the implementation of the One-Stop service delivery concept. In order to provide our customers with maximum exposure to counseling services, the qualifications necessary to provide these services must be less restrictive.

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Eligibility to provide counseling should not continue to be predicated primarily on an employee's formal education. A determination relative to an associate's ability to provide counseling should consider and include past job experiences, current job requirements and current and past job duties.

Counseling services were first mandated by the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 with the directive that counseling services be provided to persons with disabilities. Subsequently, the provision of counseling services to other identified special needs groups became compulsory.

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-220), Section 7(a)(1) states that sums allocated to each state will be used for services to job seekers, and includes, among other services, counseling. Section 8(b) requires that each state's plan include provision for the "...promotion and development of employment opportunities for handicapped persons and for job counseling and placement of such persons, and for the designation of at least one person in each State or Federal employment office whose duties shall include the effectuation of such purposes."

EMPLOYMENT COUNSELING PROCEDURES

Employment counseling is the process whereby a One Stop Center professional and customer (s) work together in group and/or individual activities so that the customer may gain better self-understanding and knowledge of the world of work and more realistically choose, change or adapt to a vocation.

- One-to-one counseling is a private face-to-face session between a One-Stop Center professional and a customer. The goal is to help the customer explore his/her present situation in relation to choosing or changing a job or occupation, or providing assistance in reaching a decision on a current job survival or job maintenance problem. Information obtained from the customer, or on the customer's behalf, is confidential.
- Group Counseling is a process whereby One Stop Center professionals use the principles and techniques of group dynamics to assist customers who experience difficulty obtaining or keeping a job due to work related attitudes, behaviors or habits.

Professional employees in the One Stop Delivery System may provide employment counseling if they possess the following qualifications:

- Experience or training in delivering employment and training services;
- Knowledge of the purpose and functions of one stop delivery systems;
- Knowledge of methods and techniques of registering, interviewing and placing customers;
- Familiarity with a variety of occupations and industries, including a broad knowledge of conditions, skills, abilities and personal qualifications needed and the training required for jobs in the local area labor market; and
- Knowledge of community resources available to increase the employability of job seekers.

Any employee in the One Stop Delivery System who meets these qualifications may provide employment counseling. Formal counseling training is available through the Office of Workforce Program Development and Guidance. It is recommended that all One Stop Delivery System associates be provided this brief training so they are familiar with counseling expectations and can thereby provide a quality counseling experience to One Stop customers.

As provision of counseling is mandated and tracked for performance measurement purposes, it must be recorded on the "A" and "H" screens in the On Line Data Entry and Display System (ODDS). Information should also be recorded on the applicant's "R" screen indicating the counseling outcome.

Please refer to the attached "Employment Counseling Services" manual for more detailed information on the provision of counseling services.

AUTHORITY

Agency for Workforce Innovation

Wagner-Peyser Act as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998, State Workforce Investment Act of 2000, and Strategic Five-Year Workforce Investment Plan for Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. 38 USC 41, Job Counseling, Training and Placement Services for Veterans.

SUPERSESSION

This guide supersedes Guide BOO 95-102R, dated November 25, 1997.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Employment counseling has been a fundamental part of the nationwide network of public employment security offices since its inception. The Wagner-Peyser Act, formulated in 1933, mandated the provision of counseling services initially for persons with disabilities. This act also standardized the functions of state operated Job Service Offices. The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) again amended the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1982 and by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. Both amendments specifically mandate the provision of counseling services for persons with disabilities.

Over the years, the role and mission of the Job Service Offices have been defined and redefined by legislative mandates, influenced by such factors as reorganization, automation, technology, urbanization, population explosion and sharp growth in the size and composition of the labor force. The role of the Wagner Peyser funded One Stop Center associate has also been defined and shaped by these ever changing factors to meet various demands and to adhere to legislative mandates.

The adaptability of employment counseling to the periodic changes in policy and program emphasis is reflected in the following chronological summary:

1944-1949 Emphasis was on services to the handicapped, veterans and youth. The General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) and National training for employment counselors were introduced. Employment counseling in Florida started in 1948.

1950-1964 Emphasis was on placing customers on available jobs. This was a period of assessment for the counselor. More involvement was needed to improve and increase job placements, therefore, states experimentally introduced group counseling.

1965-1974 The focus was on employability development planning aimed at improving placement opportunities for hard-core unemployment and economically disadvantaged persons.

1975-1982 Job Service redirected the counseling focus by concentrating on the job placement of persons who were better prepared for employment. The programs operated under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) focused on employability development planning.

1983-1985 By statute and regulation, Job Service counselors were directed to give priority to veterans, persons with disabilities and Migrant and Seasonal Farm workers (MSFW). Local office counselors often assisted applicants with short-term counseling needs as a means of placing them into employment. Job development for and placement of those counseled became part of the counselor's role.

1986-1992 Six Job Service offices were chosen as pilot offices to implement a new referral process called Validity Generalization (VG), a new method of using

the GATB. This was the period for implementing U.S.C. 2001-2012 Chapter 41 and 42 requiring that eligible veterans receive the maximum employment and training opportunities through the Job Service offices. The Omnibus Competitiveness Trade Act (OCTA) and the Economic Dislocation and Workers Adjustment Assistance Act (EDWAA) were enacted to assist with the immediate readjustment of workers into the labor force.

1992-1995 Florida Job Service offices were flooded with job seekers (over a million customers for the 1992 fiscal year). Small business failures, projected military base closings and realignments, continued down sizing of major corporations and government agencies decreased the availability of viable employment opportunities.

With the increased number of persons seeking assistance, the

available time for maintaining individual workloads began to diminish. In an effort to keep up with the changing times, and to be more responsive to the community and the local labor market demands, emphasis evolved to working with customers in groups instead of individually. Sixty percent of the service mixture provided by the counselor involved some form of group activity.

1996-1998 In preparing to meet the employment demands of the new millennium, the following laws/acts stand tall among those enacted. These laws/acts were accompanied by amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Law, and emphasized employment counseling, job placement, training and other supportive services to WAGES customers and to WIA customers.

October 1, 1996 the Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency (WAGES) bill was passed with a

goal to reform welfare in Florida. Heavy emphasis was placed upon "Work First" for applicants and recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

The Workforce Development Act of 1996 furthered the establishment of public-private partnerships by calling for the chartering of Regional Workforce Development Boards.

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) established a one-stop delivery system through which core employment-related services are provided and through which access is provided to other employment and training services funded under this title and other Federal programs. The access to services was provided by not less than one physical one-stop center in each local area, which could have been supplemented by networks of affiliated sites. The programs providing services through the one stop system are referred to what we now know as one-stop partners.

1998-Now Legislative laws mandated a workforce system that was integrated, performance driven,

outcome based and customer choice oriented. The Florida Counseling Program, in accordance with the changing times, automation and downsizing, evolved from one responsible for monitoring, assessment, approval and certification to a program that provides information, training and technical assistance relative to counseling and training. Counselor certification was eliminated and basic qualifications were rigorously modified.

DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE OF EMPLOYMENT COUNSELING

DEFINITION

Employment counseling is the process whereby a One Stop Center professional associate and customer(s) work together in group and/or individual activities in order that the customer may gain better self-understanding and knowledge of the world of work and more realistically choose, change, or adapt to a vocation.

One-to One Counseling

1. One-to-one counseling is a private face-to-face session

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between a One Stop Center professional associate and a customer. The goal is to help the customer explore his/her present situation(s) in relation to choosing/changing a job or occupation, or providing assistance in reaching a decision on a current job survival or job maintenance problem.

2. Information obtained from the customer, or on the customer's behalf, is confidential. This also applies to the results of any tests that are given to the customer in the One Stop Center. Individual sessions must be documented and the outcome is to be entered on the Management Information System (MIS) "R" screen.

Group Counseling

Group counseling is a process where One Stop Center professional associates use the principles and techniques of group dynamics to assist selected customers who experience difficulty obtaining or keeping a job due to work related attitudes, behaviors, or habits.

Counseling Outcomes

Placement/Obtained Employment/Entered Employment

employment/entered employment outcomes.

Customers' becoming employed is the ultimate goal of the One Stop System. Increased use of group activities and resources and technology will positively impact placement/obtained

Other Positive Outcomes

Enrolled in School

Enrolled in Training

Enrolled in Military

Priority

(NOT NECESSARILY IN THIS ORDER)

By statute, mandate, policy and regulation, priority is due the following customer groups (Not necessarily in this order):

- ◆ Customers with disabilities
- ◆ Dislocated Workers
- ◆ Ex-Offenders
- ◆ Welfare Recipients
- ◆ Labor Force Re-entrants
- ◆ Migrant and Seasonal Farm workers
- ◆ Minorities/Women
- ◆ Older Workers
- ◆ Veterans
- ◆ WAGES Participants
- ◆ Youth

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE CUSTOMER

*In a counseling relationship,
the One Stop Center
professional:*

- Demonstrates respect for the worth, individuality, and dignity of the customer, creating a climate that is conducive to counseling.
 - Attempts to reach a common understanding with the customer regarding the nature of the employment counseling problem/challenge.
 - Clearly indicates the condition under which counseling is provided, including the confidential nature of information received during the counseling interview.
 - Adopts a flexible approach to assessment.
 - Interprets test results in a way that does not impair the customer's freedom of choice.
 - Helps the customer in self-evaluation, self-understanding,
- and self-direction, thus developing the customer's decision-making ability regarding appropriate occupational goals and plans.
 - Informs the customer concerning occupations, including traits and abilities needed, training requirements, and occupational trends.
 - Assists the customer in understanding the labor market and economic changes that have taken place and the relevance to choosing, preparing for, or finding employment in a suitable occupational field.
 - Helps the customer understand the environment and social structure of an office, plant, or other employment setting in which he or she is placed.
 - Provides referral and placement assistance as necessary until job adjustment is achieved.
 - Provides assistance within the bounds of professional expertise; refers the customer to other professionals when other assistance is required.
 - Accepts the responsibility for analyzing the effects of counseling on the customer and working to achieve more positive effects when needed.

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KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Effective counseling requires professional knowledge and skills, some of which can be gained only by direct experience. Specific skills and areas of recommended knowledge include:

- Detailed knowledge of basic One Stop System operations including testing, placement, employer services, services to special applicant groups, and general knowledge of the operations and functions of Unemployment Insurance (UI);
- Knowledge of, and ability to use, a variety of counseling methods and techniques applicable to the employment problems of One Stop System customers;
- Assessment and problem solving skills;
- Knowledge of the unique problems experienced by various applicant groups (e.g. veterans, persons with disabilities, youth, dislocated workers, Welfare Transition participants)
- Knowledge of administering, scoring and interpreting tests;
- Knowledge of accessing up-to-date labor market information and occupational exploration information; and

- Counseling skills, including:
 - Establishing rapport and a professional working relationship;
 - Being courteous and maintaining a courteous manner;
 - Listening skills-attending to what is said as well as unspoken or ill-expressed ideas and reactions;
 - Controlling the interview;
 - Avoiding expressions of critical attitude, prejudices or preconceived opinions by word or action;
 - Recording information including ODD System documentation completely, accurately and as soon as possible after the counseling session;
 - Maintaining a professional and objective point of view, avoiding becoming emotionally involved with the applicant; and
 - Preparing properly for the counseling session by reviewing the customer 's file and any other information that will be of assistance.

LOCAL MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS

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Continued conscientious effort is required for the counseling program to be efficient and effective. General responsibilities are as follows:

- The One Stop Center manager is responsible for managing the counseling function and for maintaining a physical and operational setting which promotes the effective provision of services, including counseling, within the constraints of available resources. This includes: providing physical space conducive to counseling; allocation of staff time for counseling; appropriate attention by all staff to identification of customers needing counseling; recommending pertinent training; assessment of counseling performance; initiating and conducting remedial action if needed; and seeking technical assistance for the One Stop Center associates when needed.
- The supervisor should have sufficient knowledge to recognize effective and ineffective counseling. It is the responsibility of supervisors to monitor performance, identify training needs, and recommend training as appropriate. Supervisors should also provide, or arrange for the provision of, direct

assistance to counseling problems. Technical assistance from the Office of Workforce Program Development and Guidance can be requested when needed.

Specific Local Responsibilities Include:

- Assigning trained associates to provide employment counseling services;
- Insuring that counseled applicants are referred to suitable job openings or that suitable job or training opportunities are developed for them.
- Insuring that cooperative relationships are established with partners and other community organizations having guidance and counseling programs and/or having customers that may benefit from employment counseling; and
- Insuring that customers in need of training, psychological services, rehabilitation, health services, and other services beyond the scope and resources of the One Stop System are referred to appropriate community resources.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Performance Standards are set by the Workforce Development System. They will contain standards for both quantity and quality of performance. It is essential that counseling be as efficient as possible in order to provide the maximum amount of service. It is also essential that counseling is of the highest professional quality, numerical standards must not destroy the quality of service. Counseling quality is difficult to assess and requires, therefore, continuing effort on the part of those who supervise counseling. First-hand observation and evaluation of the quality of the counseling process will evaluate counseling effectiveness.

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

It is the responsibility of the Office of Workforce Program Development and Guidance to maintain a training program to foster the continuing professional development of associates involved in counseling. Counseling information should be disseminated and training given to the staff in One-Stop Centers who have contact with customers. Training will assist the staff in becoming able to adequately address the needs of the "total person". In-service training will

be provided on policies, procedures, counseling methods and techniques. In-service training will be supplemented by out-service as needed and as funds permit.

It is the responsibility of individual One Stop Center associates to maintain and improve their professional counseling skills by maintaining familiarity with professional literature, internet usage and attend training as available and as appropriate.

Technical assistance on difficult policy, procedural, or counseling concerns will be provided to One Stop System management and staff as needed.

IDENTIFICATION OF NEEDS

All One Stop System staff who come in contact with customers should be able to identify obvious vocational problems and make appropriate referrals to counseling or other agencies. In some cases, logistical problems such as lack of child care, transportation, food, housing, and medical care are the immediate problems that must be addressed, before employability and employment can be addressed. Staff should be observant, empathetic, and willing to serve customers who may need special services.

Challenges and barriers of customers are not always

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immediately obvious. Sometimes problems can be resolved with or without the full counseling function; in other cases the problems may be of such a nature that they cannot be dealt with by the One Stop System, or can be handled more effectively by other organizations. Often, of course, counseling is appropriate. The counselor should assist other staff in identifying, and learning to identify challenges and barriers.

Clues for identification of counseling needs include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Veterans status (all veterans should be offered counseling)
- ◆ Unusual behavior
- ◆ Inability to comprehend instructions at the reception desk or during group orientation
- ◆ Obvious sensory or physical disability
- ◆ Inability to cope with the registration form
- ◆ Inability to cope with a test or testing situation
- ◆ Unusually low test scores
- ◆ Repeated failure to appear when referred
- ◆ Multiple referrals without being hired
- ◆ Multiple hires
- ◆ Obsolete skills
- ◆ Dislocated from a declining industry
- ◆ Unmarketable experience

- ◆ Re-entry to the labor market after a prolonged absence
- ◆ Prison record or sporadic work history

Most applicants who need employment counseling fall into two groups:

- ◆ Choice/Change such as dislocated workers who have lost or soon will lose their jobs because of plant closings, technological changes, layoffs, or those who are entering the work force for the first time, and have no clear vocational goals.
- ◆ Those who are not ready for employment because of a disability (physical, mental, drug-related), prison record, low ability, low literacy skills, situational problems (single parent in poverty, no child care, poor health, lack of transportation), a poor work record (no relevant experience or skills, job-hopping, irresponsible behavior, lack of work ethic, unrealistic expectations) or a combination of problems.

LINKAGES/RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

In any given community, partners and other organizations exist which provide services potentially useful to customers with

challenges or barriers to employment. To avoid duplication and to provide effective services, it is important that these organizations understand and support the

COUNSELING PROCESS

Counseling is a process requiring professional competence and a high degree of interpersonal skills and empathy. This manual cannot cover all possible situations, actions, and problems. This section is, rather, a general guide to the way in which the usual counseling functions ordinarily proceed in a One Stop Center setting.

1. Dealing with Immediate Barriers to Counseling

If the customer has problems that would hamper or preclude counseling, the One Stop Center associate and the customer must decide if vocational counseling should be postponed until more urgent problems are resolved.

2. Providing Structure and Setting the Tone for Counseling: Establishing Rapport

In order for counseling to be effective, the customer must recognize the need for addressing employability challenges and wish to become employed. Attitudes such as hostility, apathy or an unrealistic view of the rewards

counseling program and accept referrals for services from the One Stop Center and that the One Stop Center accepts referrals from other partners and agencies.

versus efforts must be addressed before counseling can proceed. The customer must also understand:

The objective and limitations of the counseling process and the One Stop Center associate's role in helping the customer make satisfying vocational decisions;

- The need for the customer's active participation in the process;
- The time commitment required; and
- The responsibilities and limitations of the One Stop Center associate.

To assist the customer to become aware of these aspects of the counseling process, the One Stop Center associate must, from the beginning, provide structure and set the tone. The customer is more likely to become an eager participant if this is done early in the process.

The One Stop Center associate should personalize this explanation as much as possible, relating it to the customer's particular situation, and stressing that the One Stop Center associate will provide meaningful information to enable the

customer to make the necessary career decisions.

The confidentiality of the information given to the One Stop Center associate should be emphasized. The One Stop Center associate should make it clear that several sessions may be needed, especially if the problem is one of choice or change, and determine if the customer is willing to commit to the necessary time. The more the customer can relate the benefits of counseling to his or her own situation, the more likely the individual will make the necessary commitment to the counseling process.

Once the customer understands the counseling process, the One Stop Center associate should then ask the customer to relate the circumstances contributing to the current situation. This provides an excellent opportunity to establish rapport--an atmosphere of warmth, open communication, caring, trust, and mutual respect.

Rapport can be established by attentive listening, by maintaining eye contact, by recognizing and acknowledging both the obvious and subtle feelings expressed by the customers and by being actively interested in the welfare of another person and showing it.

By these actions, the One Stop Center associate encourages the customer to relax and to explore

their life situation in depth in a non-judgmental atmosphere.

The One Stop Center associate *should not* fall into the trap of telling the customers what to do. Many customers want the One Stop Center associate to make their decisions for them or to give them advice. The One Stop Center associate should constantly reinforce the fact that the customer must make his or her own decision, but the One Stop Center associate will do all possible to enable and empower the individual to make an informed decision.

Counseling should not become a routine, stylized question and answer exercise to acquire and give information or to complete a form, but rather it should provide a structured framework for constructive and purposeful employment exploration.

Counseling is done with (not to or for) Each individual is responsible for his or her decisions. Counseling attempts to help the individual make better decisions and to have more accurate knowledge of the probable results of his or her actions and behavior. Also, unless the customer participates in and internalizes the decision-making and planning process, there is little likelihood of counseling being effective.

3. Assessment

Counseling requires solid information concerning the customer's characteristics, requirements of jobs, and the availability of jobs under consideration in the relevant labor market.

3.1 Individual

The amount and kind of assessment required will depend largely on the nature of problems/barriers addressed by counseling. However, in most cases, assessment of the following factors will be of assistance in vocational planning.

The One Stop Center associate should determine the customer's ability to acquire vocational proficiency. Abilities may be inferred from the customer's work experiences, educational training, and leisure time activities. However, more precise and reliable information is available from the administration of the appropriate assessment tool. It is important that One Stop Center associates are aware of tools available through cooperative relationships with partners and other community organizations. The methods and details of cooperation will depend on customer needs. Types of assessment tools available through One Stop System funding include, but are not limited to, the following:

Vocational Aptitude: General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB), also available in Spanish Language and non-reading versions. For counseling purposes it is interpreted through a system using the Guide for Occupational Exploration and the appropriate test manual.

Literacy: The Basic Occupational Literacy Test series measures basic language and math skills over a wide range of abilities. Its content is oriented to adults. It is interpreted through the use of the General Educational Development estimates for occupations contained in Selected Characteristics of Occupations Defined in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles.

Typing Skills: The United States Employment Service automated typing test measures typing speed in accurate words per minute.

The test manuals should be used for detailed descriptions of these tests. The GATB and Interest Inventory are utilized more than the other tools to assess customers' abilities and to clarify their vocational goals. The One Stop Center associate should ensure that the customer is properly prepared; the appropriate pre-testing orientation should be provided as necessary. In other cases,

written material such as "Doing Your Best on Aptitude Tests" will be sufficient.

3.2 Interests

Vocational interests can be assessed using the United States Employment Service Interest Inventory or Interest checklist. The scales on these instruments are directly related to the occupational arrangement of the Guide for Occupational Exploration.

Interest measures are often used in combination with the GATB through the computerized or manual system relating both to the job groupings in the Guide for Occupational Exploration. Job groupings indicated by both interests and aptitudes is an excellent starting point for occupational exploration.

However, excessive credence should not be given to the expressed interests of applicants who have limited exposure to or knowledge of jobs. Interests may change over time and may assume lesser importance than, for instance, availability of work or rate of pay.

3.3 Physical Capacities

Physical capacities are particularly important when working with persons with disabilities. The One Stop Center associate should

never assume the inability of an individual to perform a job without careful consideration of the true requirements of the job (with reasonable accommodations) and the true capabilities of the individual. Conversely, if it appears that the job may cause stress or danger because of its physical requirements, this factor should be honestly discussed with the customer.

For most applicants, physical capacities are taken into account along with other factors only when considering the appropriateness of specific jobs.

3.4 Experience/Work History

Work experience is sometimes helpful but often misleading as a method of ascertaining skills and occupational likes and dislikes. The fact that a customer performed a job does not mean that it was done satisfactorily or that the person liked doing it. Further, seven years of experience may mean one month of experience repeated 84 times.

In interpreting work experience, the following questions may be relevant in inferring the customer's present skills and abilities.

*What the customer did on the job?

- *How well he/she did the job?
- *Why she/he did the job?
- *What is involved in doing the job?
- *How he/she obtained each job, why he/she took it and why he/she left it?
- *Which of the jobs he/she liked best and least and why?
- *Reaction to supervisors, the place of work, working conditions, and job content.

3.5 Leisure Activities

Leisure time activities may or may not have any vocational significance, but for some customers with limited or irrelevant work experience they can serve as a proxy for work experience. The above questions are also applicable to the analysis of leisure activities. Leisure activities may be relevant when they have been frequent and continuous, show evidence of interest, and/or have resulted in increased skill. A well-developed hobby may result in acquiring a skill equal to that gained through work experience or training.

3.6 Education and Training

The One Stop Center associate should determine the vocational significance of the customer's education and training. This

factor may be especially significant in the following cases:

- *For veterans
- *For inexperienced youth and other inexperienced customers, as a substitute for work experience.
- *For experienced customers, when nothing in the customer's work experience seems to be related to their occupational choice.
- *For dislocated workers.
- *For persons re-entering the labor force when previous work experience has been some years ago and is of limited relevance.
- *When the customer expresses an interest in further education or training.
- *When the occupation being considered requires further training.
- *When education or training has been recently acquired or is being acquired.
- *When the education or training is directly related to a job or vocation, e.g., automobile mechanics or electrical engineering.

3.7 Needs/Values

Needs and values are very closely related; both seem to be related to the individual's cost-benefit or effort-reward system. Assessment of a customer's needs and values usually involves consideration of the customer's personal factors, including interests and abilities, and environmental factors.

What customers want to become or to do depends largely on their self-concept. Vocational development will be influenced by opportunities for education or special training, social and economic status, and by the extent of existing job opportunities.

Counseled customers are sometimes in a financial crisis, as in the case of dislocated workers. It is often the case that customers who have worked in a plant that has been closed cannot realistically expect to become employed at the same income level. Financial needs assessment and counseling may well be appropriate for such applicants.

3.8 Work Attitudes/Personality

People often succeed or fail on jobs because of personal factors, which include appearance, attitude, manner, and temperament.

A customer's appearance, attitude and manner can indicate emotional maturity and emotional

adjustment, which in turn influence one's ability to recognize one's problem and work out a suitable plan. If a customer is not receptive to counseling, this must be addressed at the beginning of the counseling process. Inappropriate appearance, attitude and manner can also cause or reflect potential job adjustment problems.

When the customer fails to adjust satisfactorily to situations on or off the job, the One Stop Center associate should try to determine the underlying reasons. Are the difficulties real or fancied? Are they due to misconceptions of what the job called for, or did the customer try to satisfy needs which the job could not fulfill? The One Stop Center associate will note such attitudes or feelings as over-sensitiveness, discouragement, unwillingness to accept criticism, or "a chip on the shoulder," and will try to gauge whether they are due to temporary circumstances or if they constitute a real handicap to employment.

Chronic, fundamental maladjustment problems will probably require long-term therapy that is beyond the capacity of the One Stop System services. Time may be spent assisting the customer to recognize the problem, however, One Stop Center associates should work directly with

customers who have less pervasive adjustment problems.

Temperaments are inferred from activities (hobbies, work experience, training) liked or disliked, or in which the customer was successful or unsuccessful. For example, does the customer appear better suited for work involving repetitive tasks, or for work involving variety and change? For working with others or alone? For working under specific instructions or being responsible for directing, controlling, and planning the work?

In analyzing personal traits and assessing significance in a vocational situation, the One Stop Center associate may have only subjective information on which to make judgements. One Stop Center associates should avoid hasty conclusions and guard against projecting personal prejudices and biases.

3.9 Life Situation

Problems in a customer's life situation, such as those listed below, can limit the options available, and must sometimes be addressed before counseling can take place or produce meaningful change. In other cases, limitations must be taken into account in vocational plans.

3.10 Family problems

Family problems, such as child care, family conflict, illness, etc, must sometimes be resolved before meaningful counseling can occur. The One Stop Center associate may be of assistance in these instances or may refer the individual to a One-Stop partner or other agency.

3.11 Transportation

Access to transportation or information about the transportation system may be required for the person to be mobile and employable.

3.12 Economic and Financial Status

This factor must be taken into account in order for employment to be realistic. For instance, if the customer is in need of food and shelter, these needs must be met before long-term training can be considered. On the other hand, if the customer has some means of support (family, spouse, transfer payment, etc.,) the options are considerably greater.

This factor is particularly important when: (1) the plan being considered by the customer involves postponement of employment in order to take additional training; (2) training requires a considerable outlay of money, thus necessitating concurrent employment; (3) the

customer considers an entry level job and the wages are considerably less than previous earnings.

Factors to be considered include available financial resources; availability of financial assistance, financial obligations; and available supportive services.

4 Test Interpretation

Information obtained from testing, when combined with labor market information, training possibilities (literacy and job skills), information from job search workshops, and job placement services can provide powerful assistance to applicants in making occupational decisions. For this reason, it is imperative that sound, accurate, informative test information be provided to applicants.

Tests provide the most accurate information available about the potential of customers and their current probable job success and should be assumed to be correct unless there is convincing evidence to the contrary or unless the tests were given under non-standard conditions. However, as is the case with all human measurement, tests are not perfect and therefore should not always be used as the only indicator of ability.

Test results will ordinarily be interpreted in terms of indicated

and contra-indicated groups of jobs or training. Methods developed by the USES-state test development system will be used, following the appropriate manuals. Computerized versions of these methods will be used to the maximum extent possible.

4.1 Preparation for Test Interpretation Sessions

Prepare a list of possible occupational options for the customer to consider, utilizing:

The appropriate USES test manuals

The Guide for Occupational Exploration, Selected Characteristics of Occupations Defined in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles

The Dictionary of Occupational Titles

The Occupational Outlook Handbook

<http://stats.bls.gov/oco/ocoiab.htm>

Occupational Information Network (O'Net) <http://online.onetcenter.org/>

Take into account other factors such as labor market conditions and the individual's life situation and values/needs.

Plan a suitable strategy for imparting this information to the

customer and for eliciting the customers' feedback and reactions.

Have all reference materials and e-mail addresses that may be needed in the session organized and easily accessible.

4.2 Test Interpretation Process

Solicit the customer's reaction to the testing experience. This information will help the One Stop Center associate tailor the interpretation to the customer's needs and, also, will provide clues regarding the validity of the test results.

Review with the customer the purpose for taking the test, relating the reason to his or her specific situation.

Explain the procedure that will be followed in the session so that the customer will understand the sequence of actions. This will give the impression of continuity and provide a sense of direction for the session.

Develop a keen sense of timing; adjust the rate and way information is imparted to the amount of understanding on the part of the customer. Be careful to avoid unnecessary jargon with which the customer may not be familiar.

Emphasize the potential occupational possibilities for the customer, not the test scores.

Encourage as much customer participation as possible. The choice of options should be the customer's responsibility, not the One Stop Center associate's.

Focus on positive information.

Ensure that the results of the test interpretation lead to a plan of action for the customer.

Request customer reaction and feedback throughout the process of disseminating the information to ensure that what is being said is understood.

Do not insist that the goals and plan be formulated in the test interpretation session. Often, it is preferable for the customer to be given time to digest all the information and to analyze his/her situation before arriving at definite goals, and a specific plan of action.

5. INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL OCCUPATIONS

The One Stop Center associate is responsible for providing labor market, occupation, educational and training information to customers. The amount and kind of information provided and the manner of presentation should, ideally be tailored to the

individual. The kinds of information which are usually most helpful are:

Training opportunities and requirements;
Nature of the work;
Qualifications and requirements;
Working conditions, pay, hours, etc; and
Local/regional/national LMI.

The use of occupational information is particularly important in formulating an employment/training plan, but should also be used throughout the counseling process to explore vocational areas which may not be familiar to the customer but which may be appropriate.

One Stop Center associates should be familiar with accessing labor market and occupational information using the Internet and other One Stop System available resources.

Departmental information is readily available at:
<http://www.floridajobs.org/>
<http://www.doleta.gov/>

Other helpful sites are listed in the index of this manual.

6. SYNTHESIS OF ASSESSMENT & OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

The GATB and the Interest Inventory, because they are

An equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to 23 individuals with disabilities. All voice telephone numbers on this document may be reached by persons using TTY/TDD equipment via the Florida Relay Service at 711.

related to the occupational structure of the Guide for Occupational Information, can almost always materially aid in this synthesis by providing a framework for structured occupational exploration. One Stop System partners also provide tests (i.e., TABE -Test for Adult Basic Education) that also provide a structured framework and aid in the synthesis process.

6.1 DEVELOPMENT OF AN EMPLOYABILITY PLAN

- **OPTIONAL**

The plan should be based upon a careful consideration of the individual's characteristics and labor market realities. It should require reasonable effort and assumption of responsibility on the part of the customer, but not require super-human effort or resources that are not available. Employability plans are assessable on line www.floridajobs.org/. The plan may be kept on diskette, computer hard drive or in hard copy. The basic purpose of the plan is for the customer to become employed, or at least to begin the process of becoming more competitive in the labor market.

The employment plan describes goal(s)...immediate, interim, and long-range, the steps necessary to reach the goal, and a timetable for necessary action. At least the

first few steps should be so simple as to ensure against failure. They can be as simple as "Buy an alarm clock", or "Get an application from Mr. Jones at 123 Main Street, Room 321" or even "Call the bus company 999 34304321 for the Main Street bus line schedule."

When a customer is experiencing or has a history of experiencing difficulty in adjusting to employment and/or training, it should be addressed in the employment plan.

The plan should contain *what* is to be done, *who* is to take each action, *how* it is to be done, *when* it is to be done, and *why*.

The steps to be taken in carrying out the plan must be jointly arrived at and fully understood and accepted by the customer. Moreover, the plan must be clearly recorded for the customer's use and the guidance of other associates who may be involved in putting the plan into effect.

Successful implementation of the employment plan requires action to achieve the sequential objective of the plan. Required behavior changes, training, education, job search, etc, demands considerable time, energy and persistence by the customer. The customers' ability

to meet these demands can be enhanced by counselor support.

The follow through is particularly critical in the early stages of the employability development process. The One Stop Center associate's responsibility is to provide the continued contact and support necessary to achieve the customers' employability employment-training plan.

The One Stop Center associate should follow-up with applicants who have entered employment or enrolled in training to offer needed assistance. The employment plan might need to be revised in light of the new information. Early and effective follow-up can preserve, reinforce, or appropriately alter the original employment plan.

7. COUNSELING METHODS

7.1 Group Counseling

Group counseling is a process whereby a trained and skilled One Stop Center associate, using the principles and techniques of group dynamics, helps selected customers with appropriate adjustments and plans. The goals of group counseling are most often to address, and perhaps change, attitudes, motivation, self concept, and behavior which are related to vocational challenges. Through group interaction, customers have the opportunity

to learn new ways to approach difficult situations. Through the influence, support and strength of a group of individuals who may be experiencing similar problems, positive modifications leading to more effective employment behavior are reinforced.

Individuals who might profit from group counseling include those who have major difficulties in finding or keeping a job because of ineffective behavioral patterns, a sense of personal inadequacy, or other negative attitudes such as hostility or discouragement. Some groups may be more effective when composed of those who have similar problems, such as dislocated workers, public assistance recipients or Recently Separated Veterans.

7.2 Group Orientation

Group orientation activities are "information centered" and aim to efficiently and effectively teach and inform customers about methods and facts necessary for planning and obtaining suitable employment. Group orientation sessions may address any one of a wide range of topics e.g., orientation to the services and programs provided by the One Stop Center, labor market information, test-taking techniques, resume writing, etc.

8. COUNSELING RECORDS

8.1 Need for Counseling Records

Uniform and accurate records of counseling services as well as adequate records on customers counseled are necessary in order to (1) assess the quality and quantity of the counseling program (2) determine additional services needed by individual customers, (3) aid the memory of the One Stop Center associate, and (4) assist other One Stop Center associates who may see the customer.

For this reason, the ODDS "R" Screen should be thoroughly documented with the vocational challenge and plan of each counseled customer. An *optional* counseling record card is available on line and may be utilized for more detailed and confidential record keeping.

In addition to pertinent identifying information concerning the customer, the Counseling Record may contain the following information:

1. A summary statement to establish the existence of the customer's vocational challenge/s.
2. Identification and interpretation of the vocationally significant facts about the customer obtained during the interview and from testing and other resources contributing to a

sharper definition of the challenge or to its solution.

3. A clear and concise statement of the vocational plan indicating the goal and the steps the customer will take to reach that goal.

4. A notation of any significant behavior of the individual counseled may support, assist or identify hidden vocational challenges. Examples of appropriate behavior notations are as follows: *seemed nervous, unusually quite or non-responsive, seemed frustrated and angry, seemed anxious to end interview, or very serious about planning goals.*

5. A notation to indicate the type (negative or positive) of rapport that was established between the One Stop Center associate and the customer.

6. A dated entry for each counseling interview or group counseling session and a description of the contact in terms of progress made and/or actions planned.

7. A record of any follow-up contacts, including information such as progress in carrying out the plan, the outcome and effectiveness of the service and the need (if any) for additional services.

8. A record of any additions or revisions to problems and/or plan statement.

The employment goals should be reflected in the plan and in the coding of the customer record. Significant information about the vocational plan should be recorded on the application for the purpose of guiding other staff in job development and selection and referral of the counseled customer. Record forms may be kept on diskette, computer hard drive or in hard copy. Records must, however, be kept confidential.

8.2 On Line Data Display System (ODDS) "A" & "H" Documentation

ODDS A - In the "CNSEL" field (Characteristics section) code **60** should be used to identify individuals counseled. Once counseling is concluded and the application is inactivated or mainstreamed, the code should be removed.

ODDS H - Each time an individual counseled is provided counseling services, the "H" Screen should be documented. In the counseling field, enter code 1 if the customer has received individual counseling and code 2 if the customer participated in group counseling.

8.3 Confidentiality of Counseling Records

One Stop Center associates must be aware of and adhere to Federal and State laws pertaining to privacy and confidentiality of information and records.

More specifically, information given to the One Stop Center associate by the customer in a counseling interview must be considered confidential. In this connection, the following additional guidance is provided:

1. The circumstances under which information obtained from the customer may be disclosed shall be made clear to the customer.

2. Confidential information about the customer obtained from partners, outside agencies and professional sources shall not be released to a third party without the permission of the professional source which provided the information. Preferably, the requesting agency should be referred to the original source of information.

3. The vocational plan or the summary of the plan that is entered on the work application should be available for review when requested by the customer.

4. The customer's permission must be obtained before undertaking tape-recording or observation of any counseling

interview. Such recordings are confidential, will be used only in training professional One Stop Center associates and will not contain identification of the individual.

5. Confidential information obtained in counseling may have to be released under a court subpoena. Applicants have a right to know that information could possibly be subpoenaed. If any attempt is made to serve a subpoena, refer the server to the One Stop Center Manager. The manager will contact the Agency for Workforce Innovation for advice.

9 CUSTOMER GROUPS

America is a land of people with diverse racial, ethnic and social backgrounds. Every individual must be treated as an individual; each customer's challenges are unique to that customer. Stereotypes should never be depended upon in counseling. However, certain kinds of customers tend to have similar challenges, and often similar approaches have been found effective.

9.1 Veterans

It is particularly important that veterans receive priority in counseling, as counseling is basic to job or training placement,

employability development and the provision of other services.

All services available in the One Stop Center are to be provided to veterans and eligible persons on a priority basis. There must be at least one specially trained person in each One-Stop Center who works directly with veterans. This requirement is contained in Title 38, United States Code, Chapter 41.

9.2 Dislocated Workers

Dislocated workers are often faced with problems of obsolete skills, the necessity for geographical/vocational change, financial distress and prolonged periods of unemployment. One of the major concerns noted is the tendency to continue for an unreasonable period of time to believe that the plant will reopen or the industry revive when all indications are to the contrary. If at all possible, counseling should begin before the workers are dislocated, and all parties (worker, union, management, One Stop System) should become involved and active as soon as possible.

9.3 Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities cover many different sensory, physical, mental and emotional disorders. Obviously, what is appropriate for some persons with disabilities will

not be for others. However, there are some principles that should be followed.

Good working relations with partners, particularly vocational rehabilitation, schools and other training institutions should be maintained and utilized.

Each person with a disability is unique and by definition different from other customers; ordinarily job development will be required. Often reasonable accommodations by the employer will be needed.

Tests and other standardized instruments should be used as minimal, not best, estimates of ability, as there is always the possibility that the individual is challenged to a greater extent in the testing situation than on the job. Of course, the reverse is possible.

There will be no presumption of inability to perform a job. At the same time, contraindications should not be ignored. Good, honest evaluation of the individual and of job requirements is required for the individual to make rational decisions.

9.4 Youth

Ordinarily, young applicants need assistance with vocational choice, and are often hampered by a lack of specific training or relevant experience. For young applicants,

good assessment and vocational exploration is crucial. They are more likely to need vocational or skills training than are other applicants. Good working relations with training partners and other training and school system institutions can increase the value of organizations to the young customer.

9.5 Labor Force Re-entrants

When customers have been out of the work force for an appreciable length of time, they sometimes have a tremendous need for information. In other cases, they only need to have their information updated. Often they fail to give themselves credit for their accomplishments and skills learned outside of the formal paid workforce. They may also be fearful and apprehensive about their age and lack of accomplishment in a formal work place. Ability assessment, vocational exploration, labor market information, job search skills and relating skills and accomplishments to job requirements are ordinarily valuable services to such customers.

9.6 Migrant and Seasonal Farm workers

Migrant and Seasonal Farm workers (MSFWs) must be granted equitable service as is provided to other customers. As

with all customers, there must be no presumption regarding level of ability, motivation, or interest. Ordinarily, MSFWs who seek non-seasonal farm work are faced with the same challenges associated with occupational change as are other customers and should be provided the same service.

9.7 Older (Mature) Workers

America is faced with an aging population and employers are leaning more and more toward developing creative, customer-focused solutions to using the talents and skills of older individuals. In spite of that, mature workers seeking employment may find it even more difficult to deal with unemployment and/or seeking employment than most. Dislocated older workers may feel that somehow they, personally, have failed and/or, understandably, feel that they have been unjustly treated by becoming unemployed despite many years of loyal and productive service.

Mature workers may not have sought a job for a number of years and may be apprehensive and fearful of the employment process of presenting qualifications for a particular job, making favorable impressions during an interview, and doing well on employment tests. They may also feel that they have

demonstrated their competence and feel that they should not have to market themselves.

At the same time, most mature workers have valuable skills and experience and have demonstrated stable work habits. Techniques involved in assisting customers with vocational change are particularly applicable with these older workers. The One Stop Center associate should make particular efforts to find occupations for which the older customer's skills and abilities are applicable. This is particularly important, as mature workers may be reluctant to invest extensive time in training.

Group counseling may be very effective in assisting older workers in imparting job seeking skills and in identifying appropriate job commensurate with existing skills and abilities. Job development may also be a great tool to use.

9.8 Ex-Offenders

Ex-offenders are those recently released from incarcerations and who obviously have problems of a poor recent work history. Their problems most often center on vocational choice or change. They may often require an interim job while working toward their longer-term vocational goals. Almost all prison systems provide some vocational and/or literacy training and some of these

training programs are excellent. Documentation of achievement will often be available. Attitude counseling, group or individual may be required. Job development will almost always be helpful.

9.9 Minorities/Women

The 21st century is a nation of opportunity, with strong principles of diversity. In the past, however, minorities/women have been relegated to a limited range of jobs. Feelings of inadequacy may occur, especially in nontraditional job settings. These feelings must be identified and addressed as soon as they surface. Many times, minorities and women must complete the entire range of vocational exploration and some may need training to acquire needed skills for successful employment.

9.10 Public Assistance Recipients

Welfare reform laws have placed emphasis on employment and self-sufficiency for public assistance recipients. Laws are built upon the philosophy of "Work First" and require recipients to engage in work activities as a condition of receiving welfare assistance.

When customers have been not working or have been out of the work force for an appreciable length of time, they sometimes

have the same need for information as do youth. Often they fail to give themselves credit for skills learned outside of the formal paid work force. They may also be fearful and apprehensive about their lack of accomplishment. Recipients often need assistance with transportation and childcare.

Ability assessment, vocational exploration, labor market information, job search skills and relating skills and accomplishments to job requirements are ordinarily valuable services to such customers.

Staff should be knowledgeable of services provided by the One Stop Center partners as well as services provided by other community organizations.

As with all applicants, there must be no presumption regarding level of ability, motivation, or interests.

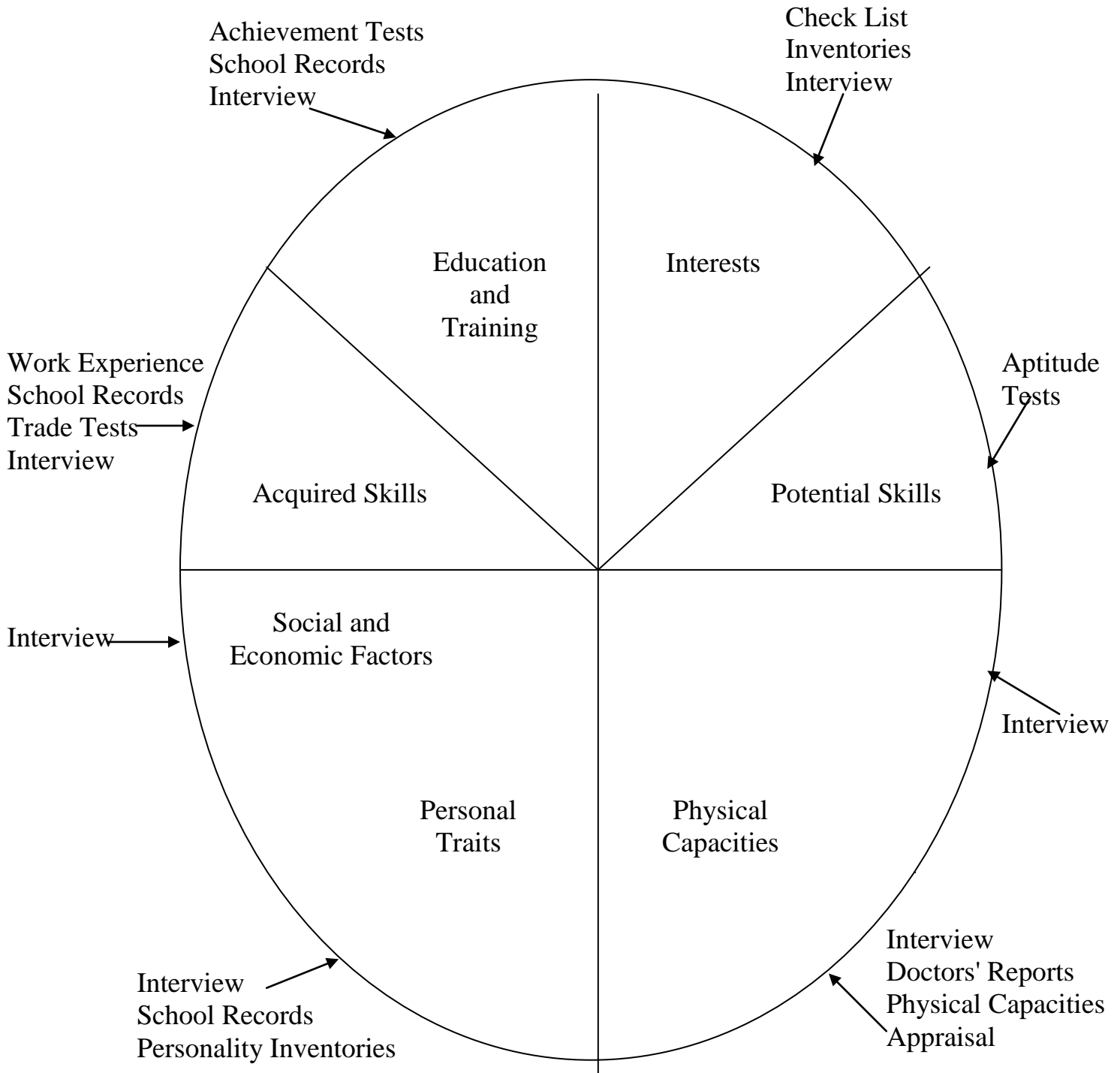
10. COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The need for counseling services will almost always exceed the counseling resources available. Therefore, One Stop Center associates must make maximum use of all available community resources.

In order that One Stop Center associates may be aware of community services for referral

purposes, One Stop Center associates should be proficient in using the Internet. The Internet contains a wealth of information regarding resources available to customers. *Some helpful Internet addresses are listed in section 3 of this manual.* It is the One Stop Center associate's responsibility to maintain and improve his/her professional competence and alert supervisors to training needs.

Appraisal of the Individual



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