



NTAR LEADERSHIP CENTER
LEADERSHIP. INNOVATION. CHANGE.

Transcript, Webinar - Assessment: What it is...What it's Not...and Why to Use it, February 16, 2012

ROBB SEWELL: Good afternoon, this is Robb Sewell and I would like to welcome you to today's webinar, *Assessment, What It Is, What It Is Not and Why To Use It*.

Today's webinar is being captioned in real time, I just right now, I sent the URL to all of you via our webinar chat feature. Copy and paste that URL into a separate web browser to access the captioning.

The presentation slides will appear on the right side of your screen. A chat feature on the left side enables you to communicate with me should you have any questions or encounter any problems. Simply type your message and click send. Click the hide chat button to temporarily remove the chat feature and then click show chat when you want to restore it. You can click full screen so that the webinar occupies the complete width and height of your computer display.

Now during today's presentation, the only voices you will hear are those of myself and our presenter Lisa Stern.

We will have time after the presentation for Q and A and at that time I will provide you information about how to ask your questions of Lisa. Nonetheless, throughout the presentation, please feel free to forward your questions to me through the chat feature, I will release the questions to Lisa.

This webinar is being recorded. It will be available tomorrow, Friday, February 17 by 9 a.m. The NTAR website can be accessed at www.ntarcenter.org.

After you exit the internet portion of today's webinar, your web browser will be taken to a brief survey where you can give us feedback about your experience today. I would ask you to take a few minutes to complete the survey.

For those of you who may not be familiar with the NTAR Leadership Center, we were established in September 2007 through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. The center is a collaboration of partners with expertise in a variety of areas, including workforce and economic development, disability employment, financial education and asset building, and leadership development.

The NTAR Leadership Center was created to build capacity and leadership at the federal, state and local levels to enable change across the workforce development and disability specific systems that will increase employment for adults with disabilities.

Our mission and efforts are grounded in a series of five principles.

Increasing partnerships and collaboration among and across generic and disability specific systems,

Increasing the use of self direction in services and integration of funding across and among systems.

Increasing economic self-sufficiency through leveraging work incentives, financial education or other strategies that promote profitable employment and asset building,

Increasing the use of universal design in employment services and as a framework for employment policy.

And finally, increasing the use of customized and other forms of flexible work options for individuals with disabilities and others with barriers to employment.

At this point, I would like to introduce our presenter, Lisa Stern. Lisa began her career about 25 years ago as a vocational evaluator. With a Master's degree in education and human development with a concentration in special education and school-based vocational assessment, she spent the first part of her career working on career development initiatives for middle, high school and post-secondary students with disabilities. She has managed successful workforce programs focusing on people with disabilities and veterans with barriers to employment and served as director of operations for a Maryland One-Stop career center. Lisa has been a consultant since 2009 and focuses most of her efforts today on universal design and veterans employment.

So Lisa, at this point I would like to turn things over to you.

LISA STERN: Okay, can you hear me?

ROBB SEWELL: We can hear you.

LISA STERN: That's good. Okay, wasn't sure with my eyes these days whether that was star 7 or pound 7. Thank you, for the invitation to meet with everybody today. I will do my best to speak slowly so there is no issue with interpretation or closed captioning which speaking slowly tends to be an issue for me but I will do the best I can. The objectives today, what it is, what it is and why to use it, there's about four different things I hope we will get across before our time is up. One is to examine the purpose of assessment. We

hear about the different aspects of the work we all do when it comes to work force and development but talk about why people should assess.

We're going to define assessment and provide a distinction between assessment and evaluation which are two separate issues and separate identities. We will discuss different types of assessment within the context of career planning and review how to pro actively use assessment as part of the career planning process. We will finish with Q and A unless I have put everybody to sleep and there are no questions. That would be it.

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Okay, so the biggest question is why should we assess. In front of you is a picture of someone looking at one of those maps that you might see in the mall when you're shopping. It says, you -- typically those maps say you are here. This map says you are lost. And we assess basically because it's very important for us personally and then also to help our customers figure out where they are before they can figure out where they're going.

So if you don't know where you're starting from, it's very difficult to create a path of career development or a career pathway that will help you get to where you would like to be. That's why we assess.

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Assessments can do a lot of things. They can help someone understand where they are, in the process of achieving their goals. Assessments can be used to identify strengths and resources and also support needs, usually in four separate areas. Those areas are educational, vocational, psychological and medical. Assessment also can intimidate. Most people don't hear the word assessment and think positive happy thoughts. If any of you are teachers in a special education process, testing and assessment is certainly something that did not ingratiate you to your students. If it was assessment or test time they would pretty much run the other way and that's oftentimes the way people think about the word when they hear assessment.

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Assessment is also an ongoing process and this is one of the key items that is important to remember. It's done formally and informally in many different settings and with different measures. It's a process, not an event, and that's what is important to remember. Many people believe you use it, get a result and you're done. In fact, it is one piece of a pretty much a very complex puzzle that people and job seekers present to the table but it's a piece of the process. Assessment is intended to bring about improvement and growth. If something is considered a one-time event it typically won't have the power to do that.

Assessment, when done correctly and with right intention, can bring improvement and growth. And a step but not a means to an end. It's a piece of the puzzle we are helping each of the job seekers put together in jig-saw format.

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We hear the words assessment and evaluation. I'm not going to get very detailed into this but going to talk about the basics. An evaluation is more of the analysis and use of data that might have been received by a trained professional to make specific judgments about an individual's performance. It's more of analyzing data; whereas, assessment is the analysis and use of that data and other information to make informed decisions such as about career goals.

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So assessment is formative, so it relates to development. Again, it's not a one-time event it's something that can develop in time. It's process-oriented. Assessment can be flexible. And assessment also tends to be reflective and thoughtful experience. Evaluation on the other hand is more summative. There's a product associated, so there may be an assessment report or summary. It's very prescriptive and judgmental because it's focusing on learning and understanding. So we're going to really focus mostly or really solely on assessment during this conversation today.

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So assessment I'm going to be talking about assessment today, there's all different kinds of assessments, but we're going to be talking about it really focusing on the career development cycle and that may include assessments in the area of abilities, aptitudes, skills, interest, personal style and personality style, environment, family, values, goals and goal setting.

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So there are four different assessment domains. There's educational, psychological, educational and medical. Psychological is going to look at cognitive abilities but within the realm of social behavioral and emotional. Vocational is interests, aptitudes and skills, occupational specific, including certifications and medical is really focusing on physical and functional capacities. This is kind of the boring stuff behind the meat that we're going get to but I think it's important that we recognize and start on the same page.

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We have formal assessment and informal assessment. Formal tends to be standardized tests validated and tested. If you're looking for specific assessments sometimes you're

using assessments that have reliability and validation and they have, they give you information based on a specific group of people. Formal assessment also typically has very specific test administration and scoring procedures and also they're usually purchased from publishers or test development companies. Those are some of the key components of a more formal assessment.

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An informal assessment on the other hand is, includes a lot of different things. Observations, interviews, it could be a records review, and less structured performance reviews. It may not necessarily be valid -- which isn't a bad thing it means it hasn't been tested for reliability but it can give you the specific information that you and/or your customer needs in order to make more career informed decisions. It might include portfolio development, work experiences, work samples, personal preference questionnaires. It's a very wide range of considerations that can be considered informal assessment.

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There are seven basic assessment principles that I personally think are important.

The first, first and foremost is self determination based on informed choices should be an over riding goal of assessment. You don't assess to assess. We assess because we want people to have a better understanding and more informed decision-making capabilities based on what their goal is. So ideally and we'll go over some more of these things obviously throughout our talk and I'll give you maybe 10 rules to follow but the first and foremost purpose is to ensure the person is using this as a self-determination tool.

The second is assessment can be a very dynamic process and it really does facilitate and can facilitate self discovery of talents and goals and strengths and needs but if you assess just to assess it's not going to do that, you need to do something with the results. I know earlier I talked a little bit about how assessment really isn't the word that people always want to hear but to me it's always been an incredibly dynamic process. I think it depends a lot on how you as the facilitator are actually facilitating the assessment process.

The third is that the purpose and the goal of an assessment should always be clear. Meaning please don't give an assessment to someone if you don't know what the goals of that assessment are and please make sure that you're not having someone take an assessment without being very clear about why you recommend this assessment and what the goal of the assessment should lead to.

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Principle 4, in the 7 assessment principles, assessment should be integrated into a larger plan of individualized services and should consider environmental factors that might affect an individual's performance. This is why I focus on assessment can be not necessarily but can be a much more informal process. Environment is key to many people's success, you have to think about the temperature, the room, other things going on with the environment. That's why we don't assess once, that's one of the reasons why it is just part of a larger process but it should be just one piece of a larger plan of integrated and individualized services. If you're choosing to use formal assessment instruments or if you are using them, be careful how you choose them.

Just really pay attention to the documented reliability and validity and be sure that it's administered and interpreted by qualified personnel. Some formal assessments will require there is a credentialed person, to administer the assessment and also to interpret results.

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And the last two, in the 7 assessment principles, number 6 is assessment activities should be positive and lead to self empowerment and improvement. If you start an assessment process by having people think it's a test and they can do well or not well and they can score terrific or poorly, it's not going to be very helpful. It can be a very positive experience and lead to a lot of self discovery, improvement and empowerment.

Lastly, don't assess just to assess. Assessment must be purposeful and thoughtful because if it's not, you won't get the results that you need and it will just be a pretty much a waste of time for the job seeking customer.

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So selecting and using assessments for a career planning purposes. I'm looking at these based on some core and intensive service structures mainly within the One-Stop career centers but we're talking about front line staff and staff that tend to do more case management. If I talk about core, I'm talking about front line, kind of quick staff that's quick on their feet, on the ground and intensive services would be staff providing more intensive case management to maybe a smaller group of people.

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So the different types of informal assessments that are out there, there are checklists, games, different career fantasies, forced choice activities, card sorts, structured interviews. This is a short list but there's quite an assortment of different instruments that you can look at and choose based on the makeup of the population that you're serving and the information that you are looking to glean from being able to use some formal assessment.

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How do you find assessment instruments? I will never say this one is better than this one because truly it will depend who on your staff is doing the administration. It's going to depend on finances. It's going to depend on again the population that you're serving and depend on the type of information that you're looking for. What I did here was give you a quick highlight of some of the places where you or staff or a group of you could go and look for some of the different assessment instruments that are out there.

Quint career -- the links are here -- has a great page that focuses on different assessments and these focus on work force and career assessments.

The resource center, it really is a terrific and reliable resource.

I like ONET, Crosswalks with different activities and computerized assistance that can help people do the additional research they may need to do to figure out if these jobs may be appropriate for them. Or may be jobs that they would be interested in.

The national career development association, that's a long link. Hopefully it will be easy to cut and paste, they have a site that has a great suite of different career assessments that may be beneficial to you in the places where you work.

The Riley guide also has a nice assortment of assessments, and JIST.

JIST is a publication and they usually have a wide variety of different types of assessments.

I received an E-mail the other day saying that they do offer more than 50 and their focus is a pathway to success. Their assessments within JIST, they are not very expensive but have a cost focus on career planning, job search knowledge, barriers to employment. There's ex-offender and student transition assessments. The nice thing about JIST is if you are interested in one of the assessment, you can call and talk to a customer service representative and they will send you a sample copy of anything so you can get it, use it and see if it does what you're hoping that it does. So just a quick view of different places where you can find different assessment instruments.

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Okay, so there's all these different assessments and instruments but what's really practical? My focus is thinking more of that core front line staff and then more of the case management staff. So core staff or front line staff should have a knowledge of basic assessments. There doesn't need to be the very high level -- I shouldn't say high level but the level to which people might need to do some major interpretation or a records review. It's important if you're dealing with a lot of people to have a good idea of some of the assessments that are that are out there.

I would never recommend an assessment to somebody, especially a job seeker without having experienced it myself. I think it's something that's important to consider. It's not that you have walked in someone's shoes, but that you know what they may be experiencing so you have a little more information behind you when you're talking about what the assessment might be and what they can expect. But also core or frontline staff should have a variety of options available. It's not going to help the universal customer or a larger population of individuals if you only have paper and pencil assessments or computer assessments or you only have one assessment. Very important to consider the universal customer who has a variety of learning styles and strategies and brings different things to the table. It's important to have a wide variety and knowledge base so you can better determine which assessments might be most helpful to the customers that you're serving. Then intensive services staff are staff that's doing more case management, should be a little more comfortable interpreting and discussing more comprehensive assessment data. This might be coming from on-site assessments that you are giving or evaluation and testing referrals that you have sent out for or that have been referred to you. This staff needs to be very comfortable and have a little more experience doing more of that interpretation than core services staff. Core services staff needs to be able to do more guidance.

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And you want to maximize your efforts. So you want to consider, no matter what you're doing, consider extension activities to assessment based workshops. Whether it's a career center or voc rehab agency wherever it is, consider workshops that extend on some basic assessments. You have taken a career assessment now what? Or it could be something similar to a career development checklist which I hope is on the next page or on the page after that.

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The maximizing efforts is a focus on not assessing and stopping but assessing and doing something with it. What I have here is something that you are more than welcome to download. It is a career planning checklist I put together and used when I was in the work force center and used it both with youth and adults. It's one of those things that helped me to help my customers because it's never up to me to tell someone that something is not realistic and an assessment may, I may have taken or someone may have taken an assessment that says they could become a mechanical engineer. I don't know enough about that person or enough about mechanical engineering to know if -- you can download this from the slide share link at the bottom of the page, that could be the next step for you to help one. You have determined an interest, whether using the interest inventory or some other assessment looking at abilities or personal profiles and you are helping someone to make decisions on their own. Becoming aware of your community, doing a search, using indeed or hire one of the job sites to figure out are these jobs available within my local community. If that they are not, that person may be going to

receive additional training or education for a job that's not in existence. It's important for that individual to know that the job I think might be good for me is available in my community. Also, being able to research and discover if it is a good fit. Knowing this assessment has led to a possible level, do you have the training, physical ability to do the job. This document allows someone to make decisions on their own. Ideally in tandem with the counselor but it gives them the self determination and informed decision-making skills to help them answer their own questions. Some of the other pieces within the checklist includes some action steps and identifies maybe doing informational interview and finding out more information about what the job is really like, determining their own personal readiness, identifying a network of support so the person is not being forced but is really kind of forcing themselves to identify who they can go to should they have difficulty or if they have questions. Acing the interview, some barrier identification and solution, and then some notes. It's a very basic document. You are more than welcome to download it, cut and paste it, if it can be helpful -- I found during the time I was not only in schools but at One-Stop, it's the type of document that helps people take that assessment data and the assessment results to the next level, which was then to figure out, okay, I have this information, now what's going to be next and this was a way to do that.

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So also in terms of maximizing your efforts you don't want to recreate the wheel. There are a lot of people out there, a lot of work force centers and community providers that have created their own assessment tools and that they are able to be used by others. So two that hopefully I have listed in here, one is the New Mexico department of work force solutions and one from career builders. I am going to show you briefly what they look like.

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Career solutions which is the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, has really what this issue the ONET profiler and work locator downloaded to their site. You don't have to be a customer of the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions to have access to this, you can go to the website, look at it, you can take the assessment, you can look at career clusters, you can do some career exploration. Again, it's they've taken some very good information and put it within their website so their customers have more opportunities to access assessments and other things on their own.

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careerpath.com, this is one of the forced choice statements. You go through 24 questions. Someone can do it on their own, do it in a group, someone can read it out loud if necessary. You go through 24 pairs of statements and seeing what appeals to you the most and then because of the forced choice you will have some results that say these types of positions or these types of jobs might be something you want to look into. 24 questions is

not going to tell someone this is the job for you, but based on the information that you provided, here are some career opportunities that may be worth looking into. Again, that's when you can use something similar to the career assessment checklist to help people determine what it is they need to be successful or go to the next level.

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So I was asked to give some common instruments that are used to measure interest, aptitudes and things like that. Again what I'm sharing with you here is not the be all and end all in any way, shape or form, they are just ones that I know in places where I have been throughout my very long and feeling longer by the day career that have been used and used with success. So again, I mentioned ONET before. That has an interest profiler and the link is on the screen. You can do the interest profiler on the computer and you can also through ONET and JIST get the paper/pencil version. It's a solid, comprehensive interest assessment that gives you results that also connect you to what might your values be or how much education would this take. So it's not just an assess and done or one and done, it's an assessment that leads you to other information as well and it's very widely used within the workforce centers. On line, paper/pencil assessments, a lot of people use the caps, cops and copes. A lot of -- and again, most of these things will cost something so it's important to take a look at that also when you're looking to see what might be right for you. And also just because there are different populations out there, there are not very many but there is a reading-free interest inventory. This has come a long way. Back almost 30 years ago when I started my career, in the reading free vocational interest inventory came out, focused in what we call the four F's, and I did look at it recently and it has come a long way, based on where it was originally. But it's a nice option for those that don't have reading abilities or are not English speakers. So to just -- but not to take it as this is the occupation for me but here are some -- by using this instrument you can figure out some career areas of interest.

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Some common instruments that are around that measure skills and abilities include Skillscan. That looks at transferable skills. Workkeys has job assessments. They are used throughout the country, some places more frequently than others, there are certain areas of the country, certain states that connect the Workkeys assessment to specific credentialing opportunities within industries. It's very much worth looking at as a possibility. The Passion Revealer is a left brain, right brain characteristics profiler and ONET has an interest profiler and an abilities profiler. Hawaii does a nice assessment with right brain, left brain, helps determine a little more intuitively what the process, how they process information and that might help people determine the types of jobs that might work for them. There's a lot of different Holland code vocational assessments out there that might be of use and of help.

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Other inventories to consider, Myers-Briggs, measures personality type. You need to have some training behind you to be an effective instructor. ONET has a work importance profiler. That helps measure importance of work values. Super's, my skills my future is out there. Which is from the department of labor that interacts with ONET and different department of labor websites and information and part of careerone-Stop.org which is a nice chunk of material for lack of a better word from the department of labor and employment and training administration.

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So then there's also this kind of crazy out of the box thought. Back in the day when I was working with young people first and then obviously with adults, I was very, I did a lot of research with the theory of multiple intelligences. The theory of multiple intelligences focuses on how people are smart, not if people are smart. There's three different assessments that I personally have used. One is the Teele inventory, one is for adult literacy and education and using multiple intelligences to choose a career. It's another possibility of the different types of assessments out there that helps you help your job seeking customers figure out who they are, where they are, where they are now and where they would like to go. I personally like multiple intelligences because when you think about tests and what makes someone quote unquote smart, we think the person must be a good reader, write well. They must be able to speak well. And multiple intelligence focuses on how people think. Are they logical, mathematical? Kinesthetic, there's a different variety of different intelligences. It's worth a look-see if you are one of those crazy, out of the box thinkers like me.

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Another resource, not to be overlooked, is a resource that is out of the national collaborative on work force. This is a guide for professionals that serve youth. The same assessments, many are used for adults. With career and career development challenges, if you go to the next slide, you can see a little bit of what this guide first of all it talks about assessment. You have more information than you would ever want to have about assessment. But it also goes into different tests that are available. It tells you the name of the test, where it can be found in terms of a website, what it measures, who are the target group is. If it's normed, if there's reliability in normative information there, if that's what you're looking for, how it's administered, how much time is needed, how it's scored, the cost and information how to get the assessment from the publisher. The whole focus of assessment besides the fact that it's not a one-time event, it is a process but it is you and your agency or whoever you are representing knowing what exists, always kinds of being on the lookout for something that might be another option for somebody and not just relying on one instrument because that's not going to be enough to help people get to where they want to be. One instrument and the results may be enough to help someone answer some of their immediate questions which is great but if it doesn't take them as far as they would like to be, additional assessments may be warranted.

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So there are some proactive steps to the basic assessment process. I want to share some of the questions you can ask yourself before you do assessments. So the first step in the basic assessment process is to recognize assessment is not a one size fits all process. I don't care what anyone tells you, there is no way that one assessment can or cannot or will or will not tell you everything. One of the main reasons why you need to have an assortment or inventory of different assessments and assessment strategies so you can be sure you are hitting your target population and ensuring that the results of the assessments that you're giving are valuable and helpful. The next proactive step is to do your homework. It's going to help you prepare your customers. Do the assessments on your own. If you are really interested in assessment, have some Google alerts out there for work force assessments or interest inventory assessments. You would be amazed what will be at your fingertips. It's important to interpret assessments properly and discuss results. I can't emphasize the discuss the results more. I have seen more situations where someone was given the assessment, given the results and they were sent on their merry way. That's not enough and that's one of the reasons I think it's important if you're going to be giving an assessment, take it, know what it's like, know what you can do with the results, know what the possibilities are so it also helps you to help your customer be a better interpreter. Follow through and know how assessment results can be used for action planning. There is no reason to assess, to assess. You want to assess because it's going to lead to someone making some additional decisions and having some action steps based on fulfilling their goals.

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And really assessment, should consider the past, examine the present and guide the future. That's really some of what's critical about assessment. I'll leave you with just some thoughts about what you want to do before you assess, questions that you might want to ask yourself, knowing that there's no two job seekers that are alike, nor are two job seekers ever going to present with the same career aspirations, same experiences. Assessment is just one tool in your toolbox that can be used to help your clients or your customers or job seekers make better and informed decisions about their future and really assessment can become someone's road map to success. So you want to ask yourself some of these questions and these are some things to think about. Why am I assessing? What's my reason for assessment? What's the underlying need or the question to be answered that these results might offer? Have I thought about the range of assessment options? Have I discussed them with my customer? Do I have cultural diverse, why have I chosen this assessment? Did I ask the customer how he or she learned best in order to help determine what assessment might be most beneficial? If the assessment is informal and not standardized, am I prepared to alter the setting or pace for someone that might need a reasonable accommodation. Am I at ease, comfortable in this assessment? Your comfort level is going to share a lot of information to that individual taking the assessment. Have I taken it myself so have I a true level of comfort with the instrument I'm prepared to

administer? Did I brief my customer, not necessarily reading what's in the book although if you're doing a standardized assessment you need to do that, am I prepared to answer questions about the assessment? Do I know how to interpret and communicate the results? Did we discuss a plan for what we're going to do with this information after the results? Am I prepared to help the customer learn kind of how to make some informed decisions based on the recommendations of these assessment results? And then how to help them determine what their next steps might be. Where is the assessment going to take place? Am I able to limit distractions? Have I considered lighting and temperature and things like that? Do I have an on site assessment buddy to reach out to if I need help when on the job. Having just one person that does assessment can be a little trying sometime.

And having other people with whom you work that you can ask questions to, and reach out for. It's helpful to consider for those of you just beginning to start an assessment process. And those that may have a more sophisticated assessment process. Thinking about what you're doing to provide support to that individual who was doing the assessment. Let's see, I think that might be the end.

Let's go to the next slide.

So, I ended a little early. But hopefully there will be some questions that come through. I'm happy to engage with anyone to answer questions or whatever Robb tells me

ROBB SEWELL: Thanks, we do have a couple of questions that have been submitted via the chat feature. Before I relay those, let me let folks know how to raise questions. You can click the raise hand button in the upper left-hand corner of your screen. I'll be able to see it on my display and I will reach out to you and let you know how to ask your question. Or you can click the use -- or you can use the chat box to type in your question and I'll then relay it to Lisa. But in the interim while waiting for some additional questions to come in, there have been a few. The first one is, are there any vocational assessment tools that you would recommend that are successful with the deaf and hard of hearing population?

LISA STERN: Oh my. Gosh, it's been a long time since I was working with that population. There's nothing right now that comes to me off the top of my head, but let me -- I will go back into some of my old notes and do a little bit of information to Robb. Off the top of my head I would not say there's a paper and pencil -- specific populations personally what I think is best is a work site assessment or situational assessment so that someone can actually feel the job, try the job, be around the job, be around people that are doing the job and I find that gives greater information than any paper/pencil assessment could do. As long as you know what goal of the assessment is and there would be accommodations, there wouldn't be one specific assessment that I would be specific for one population.

ROBB SEWELL: Great. Do you have any recommendations for older adults looking to re-career themselves.

LISA STERN: Re-career. That's a good one. Department of Labor through Career One-Stop has a variety of new tools that are available that I really do think are good. There's one that's called -- it's not my success, my future. Oh, it's escaping me. I'll send that to Robb. If you go to the Career One-Stop portal, there's one that talks about re-engagement in the work force and they have integrated some transferable skills assessments that I think are quite beneficial. Some of the assessments through JIST that I have used before that focus on transferability of skills. I have seen to be quite useful. Now I just want to think about the name of that one through department of labor. I'm going to look it up on my computer while I'm waiting for the next question and I'm going to tell you. Hold on. It's called My Next Move. I knew I was going to find it. It's My Next Move. There's one for veterans and there's a generic, my next move. the website is www.mynextmove.org. It helps you look at different ways to find information, again some through transferability of skills, one who is returning to the work force, but connected to the ONET system of resources which is also pretty helpful. That was babbling, but hopefully some of that was able to be understood.

ROBB SEWELL: Another question is, in your opinion what do you feel is a big number of assessors to have in a department? And please explain.

LISA STERN: I think that depends on, I can't ever say what a good number is. It's going to depend -- which I'm sure is not the answer you want but it's going to depend on your resources, it's going to depend on what you do as an organization. If at all possible, I would all have more than one. And if you have a small handful I think would be fine of people that might have different experiences and have different -- bring different things to the assessment table. I have seen huge organization organizations that have two, but you have more people, you want them actually focus on assessment, it's critically important that someone who has chosen the field of assessment, that person really keeps on track with current research, with new things, new materials, new protocols, new research that's out there and the whole goal really of the assessments that I'm talking about today really have to do with career planning. So it's important that the person also has a good understanding of the labor market and labor market information in their local area so that they can help individual job seekers to make more informed decisions. It's very difficult for me to say how many people or how many assessors there should be on staff because it really will depend on the number of staff you have and the number of individuals that you serve. Again, I know it's not the specific answer that you wanted.

ROBB SEWELL: Okay, we have a question from Laurie. All you need to do is press star 7 on your telephone key pad. You will be unmuted and be able to ask your question.

LISA STERN: A real person.

PARTICIPANT: Thank you. This is Laurie. For the work keys testing, are accommodations allowable with that or any of these for example, someone to read the questions to an individual who may have a disability or to allow for more time?

LISA STERN: It's interesting. My background is disability and disability employment. No matter what assessment you're using, you can always make accommodations. Whether those accommodations are going to make the test quote unquote valid and reliable is another story. The first question you want to ask is what information are you looking to get from the assessment. If you're looking let's say at work keys and you want to find out if someone can make the, they have a job readiness credential, if there are certain pieces of that, if you want to know if the person has the ability to do that and reading the questions you're going to get that information for them, then it's worth while. There are other assessments like the GED and things like that where you have to go to the manufacturer and submit for accommodations and different things of that nature. So it really, as far as I'm concerned and I'm not trying to be wishy-washy about this, it boils down to what are you looking to get. If it's information that's going to help that person make a better informed decision about their future, read whatever you need to do to help them get that information is what's going to be important and the reliability and validity may not be as important depending on what you're looking to achieve.

PARTICIPANT: We're finding that some employers are interested in everyone being considered for an interview go through work keys

LISA STERN: Right. Are you in North Carolina by any chance?

PARTICIPANT: No, New York

LISA STERN: There's quite a few states that are really kind of honing up on work keys and those assessments.

PARTICIPANT: Okay. Wonderful. Thank you so much

LISA STERN: Sure thing.

ROBB SEWELL: Another question, another individual raised their hand. It's Ann B. And all you need to do is press star 7 on your telephone key pad and you will be unmuted

LISA STERN: Another real person

PARTICIPANT: I just wanted to say that I had some materials right in front of me with the website for my next move and I believe it says it's dot GOV. It would be www.mynextmove.GOV.

ROBB SEWELL: Are there any particular assessments that you use on a regular basis?

LISA STERN: I don't do this work regularly anymore so there's nothing I would say I do on a regular basis but when I was doing this work, I would really, what I would do more so on a regular basis, much more informal and work sample and situational assessment

based. As much as I believe in the assessment process I also truly believe that there's no experience in assessment that can every outweigh having someone do the work. And try the work. And see if they can -- if they have the skills. Not just that an assessment tells you that. A lot of work sample assessments and situational assessments would be what I do on a regular basis. Besides that, because it's not always going to be practical, the ones I would use more regularly because I was in the work force system before I went into consulting was really the ONET pieces. They interconnect. I am not sure how many have used that just as a career research tool but it's pretty good. People can look at bright outlook and green jobs. Such as what is the educational level needed, what is the salary in my local area. Because the ONET pieces have interest, values and aptitude, it made a nice package that allow for additional research. You can also call -- well, they used to do this. I'm not sure they still do, but it would be worth a question. See who at the state or local level could come out and do some training on how to use the whole ONET suite of assessments.

ROBB SEWELL: Before I move on to the next question, I want to say what I'll do is tomorrow I will send everybody who was on the webinar today an E-mail with all the links included in today's presentation so you can look to get that sometime tomorrow morning. Another question we have is, what do you think are good assessments to assess productivity and speed with autistic clients?

LISA STERN: I don't know that I have a solid answer. I didn't work with people who had autism specifically, so I don't know that I can give you an specific assessment for using -- excuse me, for productivity and people with autism but if Robb will send me that question, I will do a little research and speak with some of my mentors to find out what they recommend.

ROBB SEWELL: Asina, press star 7 to unmute your line.

PARTICIPANT: Can you hear me?

ROBB SEWELL: Yes, we can.

PARTICIPANT: I'm a visual learner but I absolutely got everything that I understood what you were saying when you said ask these questions of yourself before you actually give an assessment. Do you have any of those questions written down somewhere?

LISA STERN: Funny that you say that. I actually just wrote a brief on front line assessment. It's going through the NTAR center through some of the work we're doing on universal design and strategies. I will cut and paste those questions. I almost didn't bring them up because I'm visual as well and want to see them. I'm glad you asked. I will send those and have him put those out for everybody.

PARTICIPANT: Thank you so much.

LISA STERN: Thanks

PARTICIPANT: You're welcome.

ROBB SEWELL: Another question, I have to say this is one of the most popular webinars we have had, questions are flowing in which is awesome. Have you seen any issues when an assessment is taken via paper/pencil versus computer?

LISA STERN: I'm not sure what you mean by issues. I think the bottom line is recognizing how people learn best. Some people will be great with paper and pencil because they're not good with the computer. Other people would be thrilled using computer because the written word scares them to death. The only issue I would say for consideration is knowing how that individual learns best. If you're able to offer both or either-or, paper/pencil or computer assessment, giving people the choice as to which one to use. I think anything that you can do that focuses on informed choice and decision making is going to get that individual better answers to some of their questions. So if I didn't understand what you meant by issue, just re-type to Robb and he can repeat or ask me again.

ROBB SEWELL: The individual did clarify that they were specifically questioning about outcomes, differences in outcomes

LISA STERN: Well no, because I think it boils down to what -- prior to giving an assessment you need to know what the results are going to look like. I don't mean specific results for a specific person but ideally you have taken the pencil/paper so you know what the results page will look like and have taken the computer assessment before giving it to someone. You will have a better idea how to use those results and how to guide that individual to use that information to get to their next step or maybe have some action steps. I think it all depends. I have seen incredible stuff, incredible results and actions that have been created based on paper/pencil tests and also the same based on computer. If you can mix it up a little, that's always a great thing to do because you're getting at people in different ways that they are learning but it really boils down to not what the test gives you, but what you can help that person do with the results of that test.

ROBB SEWELL: Another question is, what strategies would you recommend using if undertaking a more comprehensive assessment process that is seen by managers in a One-Stop center as being too time consuming

LISA STERN: Repeat that again. I understand the time consuming part.

ROBB SEWELL: What strategies would you recommend if undertaking a more comprehensive process if seen by managers in a One-Stop center as being too time consuming

LISA STERN: There's going to be two places where assessment could happen, core service level and intensive level. I don't know that there will be a lot of managers that will be -- I'm trying to think of the word. That will invite a more comprehensive assessment strategy at the core service level just due to the numbers of people that come through core services. I think the comprehensive assessment piece could be written up or shown to management as a collaboration between core services and intensive services and there are things that you can do in core services and they may be shorter, quicker assessments than when you're getting to the intensive service level you can actually do things that might be a little more, take a little more time or a little more investment of time because you're working more in a case management role. So that would be the way that I would sell it to management, that it is going to be cross -- not agency but cross One-Stop, meaning that there will be a series of things that could happen at the core service level and some additional pieces that might be able to enhance some of that information at the intensive service level. That is, the One-Stops have more people than ever coming through and that's one of the other reasons why you want to be able to offer an assortment of different assessment strategies because there are some people who can do these assessments on their own and come back to you with the results and can go over them or have something that documents what the next steps should be. Obviously there will be other people that need more hand holding and that's where the crunch or log jam kind of gets in the way. The other thing you can do is to partner with another local service provider that may be coming in and doing assessments. It doesn't have to be a disability service provider, it could be C SEP or senior services or partnerships where someone else might come in, it's not necessarily taking time away from you and your job but creating a better community evaluation for.

ROBB SEWELL: We have three more questions at this point. What are your thoughts at the importance of assessment in the current political climate with a focus on reducing welfare.

LISA STERN: I'm not sure that assessment, that -- I don't know that one has anything to do with the other except for the fact that the more people know about themselves and the more that people understand the labor market and what's out there based on what they know themselves and their skills and abilities the more likely we are to see greater employment outcomes. I think the greatest part of this -- not the greatest but the biggest part of this political climate is employment outcomes and obviously having more tax paying citizens than people that are receiving taxpayer services. So I look at assessment, again, and I tend to look at my life through rose colored glasses and the glass is all half full. Unless there is legislation I don't know about, and I would be happy if someone could send it to me, I don't know that assessment would necessarily be a political action based on -- based on the question in terms of political climate and welfare. I may have just missed what I understood the question to be.

ROBB SEWELL: Another question is, do any of the assessments that you mention today cost money.

LISA STERN: Let me go back. Some do and some don't. So let me go back to my -- to the slides and I can tell you. Actually, I can't. Hold on. Let me pull it some somewhere differently. All right. Well, first of all, the -- well, looking up the assessments on the resources obviously that's not going to cost anything to look to see what's available but in the list that I gave you, the ones that are available on obviously some of the other internet sites like work force solutions and career planning quiz through career path which is part of career builder don't cost anything. ONET series you can do for free on the computer. The paper/pencil version and additional pieces there is a small cost. The self directed and caps, cops and copes. I think most of others -- skill scan, work keys, passion revealer, Myers-Briggs -- anything besides the ones that I talked about today that were ONET related or government related which would be the my skills my future or the other one that we talked about, those would be free. You can do a certainly a Google search on free career assess many inventories. The only issue is you just have to be careful. There's going to be a lot of stuff you can use and create on your own to work with the population that you're serving. It's going to depend on what you do with the results really. Some tests have a reliability and a validity to them and they have gone through extensive assessments themselves to figure out does this, is this information reliable. You're all going to pay something for a lot of those things. But there's a lot of good stuff out there like I said through ONET that give you some of the basics that won't cost you anything. And as an assessment tool that career, the piece that I said that you were welcome to download, the career planning checklist is something that is free that really, it's not going to give you tons of information about someone's interests, their abilities, but it's a piece that you can use to help people determine what's going to be right for them. So it's really just a research piece that is free.

ROBB SEWELL: At this point I have two more questions. The first is from Vicky. Press star 7 on your telephone key pad and you'll be unmuted.

LISA STERN: Vicky decided she is done with me.

ROBB SEWELL: Vicky, did you have a question for us? Okay, I'll move on to the other question that was sent via the chat. Just one second. Trying to find it on my monitor here.

LISA STERN: That's okay, it's not just me that can't find things when they need them.

ROBB SEWELL: Okay. An assessment is more of a process. How would you address the report writing piece?

LISA STERN: Well, the report -- depends on what you're writing the report for. If you're a vocational evaluator and writing a report, you're writing a report on a comprehensive approach, not just one but a variety of assessment tools that might have been used. The bottom line is, the process is, this is one piece of the big puzzle and the big puzzle is the person's identified career goal. Do they have the skills, interests, capabilities, value sets, personality sets to do this job. The assessment is one piece of the person's global

development process and needs to be one piece of any kind of write-up that talks about any kind of -- what was it, a report that would have to be written. I think I would have to know more about what the goal of that report was rather than just -- needing to know more about what the goal of the report was. You could, having a variety of assessments gives you a lot of information that can be used toward helping someone meet that goal which is what I assume a report would be written on, not to end a sentence in a preposition.

ROBB SEWELL: Another question --

LISA STERN: You said that was the last question

ROBB SEWELL: Another one came in. This is like the most popular Q and A we've ever had. Has SDS and additional resources been updated to crosswalk with ONET as compared with DOT?

LISA STERN: I don't know if there's a specific crosswalk and again I would have to go back and take a look. I haven't, I didn't look at all of the most recent assessment tools, I just know what's still in existence and what people still use. The only way I would say to be able to crosswalk some of that stuff is get results and use them within the ONET system that is offered or through the suite offered and you could do the crosswalk having the information from the specific job description to the job categories and using ONET as a whole, as a search feature in terms of looking for the jobs. That will do its own crosswalk in terms of related jobs and occupations. But I don't know that there's an online automatic crosswalk that's available. But there might be, maybe someone else listening knows and I don't.

ROBB SEWELL: I think that was truly our last question. As I mentioned earlier, we will be E-mailing everyone tomorrow with all the information, the links that were mentioned as well as the other resources that Lisa had mentioned during the Q and A.

LISA STERN: I'm going to send you those questions that you can send out

ROBB SEWELL: Excellent, very cool. So I will do that sometime tomorrow morning. I want to thank Lisa for such an amazing presentation and everyone for such a wonderful discourse. It truly was really enlightening. Thank you so much, Lisa, and as I mentioned earlier, this webinar has been recorded and an archive will be available sometime tomorrow by 9:00 tomorrow morning. Again, I just want to thank Lisa and thank everyone for participating today and wish everyone a great afternoon.

LISA STERN: Before we go, if there's a specific question that someone may want specific questions, such as the question regarding the autistic population, send them to Robb. I can't guarantee I will have the answers tomorrow but I will have answers that he can send them to the group

ROBB SEWELL: E-mail them and I will relay them to Lisa. Thank you everyone for today, and have a great afternoon.

LISA STERN: You, too. Bye.