

Cross Systems Assessment Strategies for Transition Planning

Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network

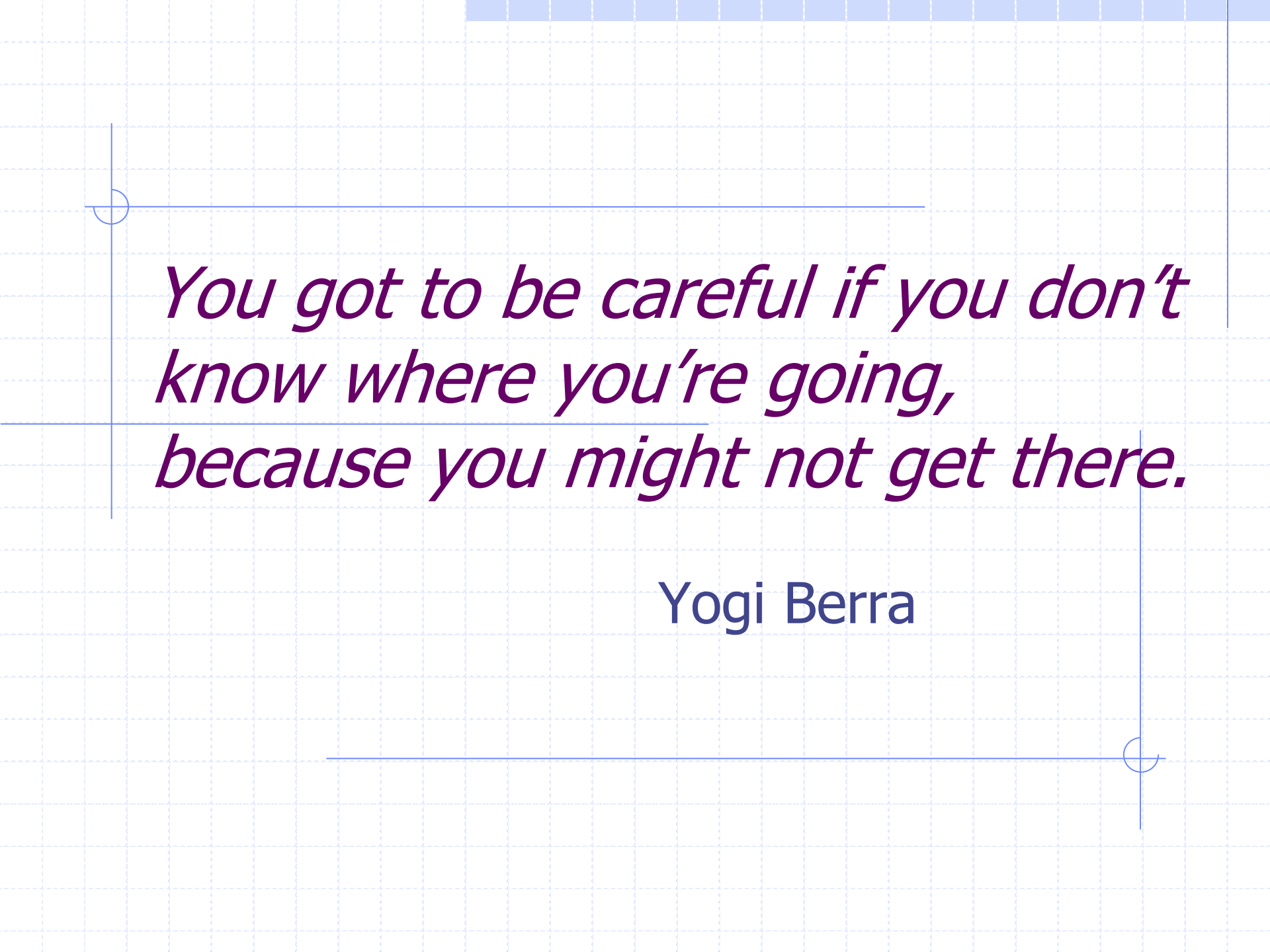
Pamela Leconte

Graduate School of Education & Human Development

2134 G Street, N.W.

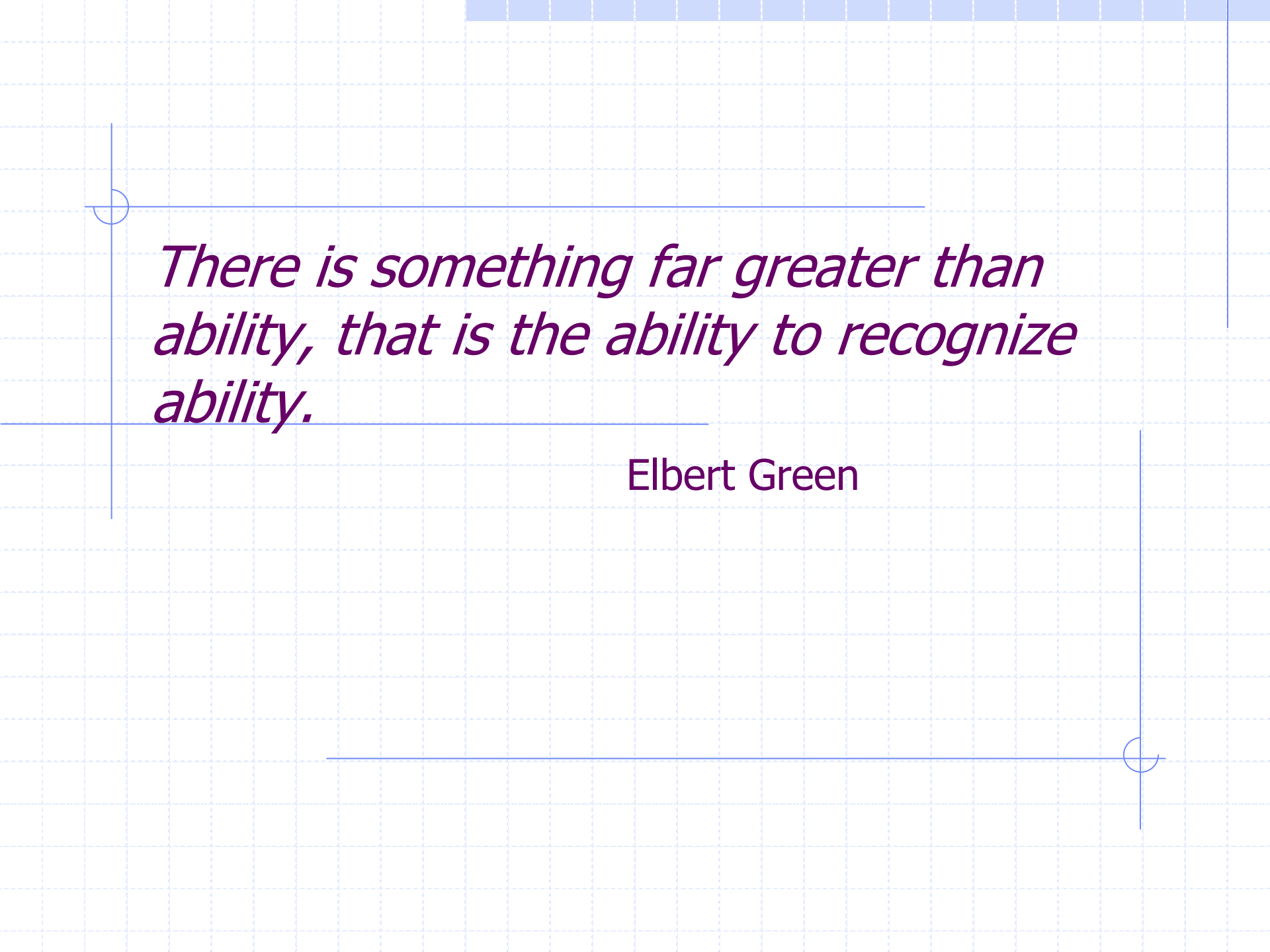
Washington, D.C. 20052

pleconte@gwu.edu 202-994-1534



*You got to be careful if you don't
know where you're going,
because you might not get there.*

Yogi Berra



*There is something far greater than
ability, that is the ability to recognize
ability.*

Elbert Green



Map or diagram your current transition process

1. Previously, you illustrated your “hoped for” process.
2. Now, map or diagram your current transition process—what is happening now—many months later.
3. Use one student or consumer as your guide—what should he or she actually experience?
4. Point out/identify where assessment for transition is taking place on your map or diagram
5. Beneath your map, identify people who are responsible for or participate in the assessments or at the assessment points.
6. Select one from your table to share with all of us.

*Background: The **truth** about disability in the United States*

- I. Most people with disabilities want to work
- II. Most people with disabilities are unemployed or underemployed
- III. Most people with disabilities live in poverty

Transition planning & implementation is failing.

*I. People with disabilities **want to work***

(and participate in the same activities, quality of living that others enjoy)

Truth: Most people with disabilities

- ☐ do not work,
- ☐ many who do work, are without fringe benefits or sufficient salaries,
- ☐ they work at low skill, low wage jobs, and
- ☐ face major policy, ***practice***, and attitudinal barriers to employment or post-secondary education.

II. People with disabilities are typically unemployed or underemployed

Truth: People with disabilities

- ☐ cannot identify their skills
- ☐ lack knowledge about careers, work, and jobs
- ☐ have had minimal attention paid to career development
- ☐ have had little work experience
- ☐ do not know how to connect with community, adult services or post-secondary options
- ☐ are not prepared for work.



Interest is learned!

Interests emerge from career exploration and work experience.

III. People with disabilities live in poverty

Truth: Of youth with disabilities

- ☐ 1/3 do not graduate from high school
- ☐ 2/3 do not receive needed job training
- ☐ 3/4 do not receive needed life skills training
- ☐ are isolated from peers or social groups after high school
- ☐ less than 10% of full-time college freshman report having a disability.

Assessment for transition and transition planning can change these truths.

Because we are failing to provide positive outcomes for youth with disabilities, we must

- ✓ Evaluate where we are and what we are doing –and are not doing
- ✓ Shift paradigms (meaning change systems, processes, practices, *and* procedures)
- ✓ Work together across systems, educational programs, and communities—build networks
- ✓ Provide assessment for *all*.

Shift paradigms = to change

You are already in the process of changing.

To change requires that we

- look inward, self-assess what & why we aren't changing
- start from zero
- give up something(s)
- take charge, become paradigm pioneers
- overcome paradigm paralysis
- examine systems—especially our own
- balance pioneering with formalizing—implement!

adapted from J. Barker, 1990; R. Quinn, 1988

If transition sounds so easy, why is it so hard?

- ❑ Many IEPs/ITPs & IPEs use “canned” or “boilerplate” transition goals—they aren’t individualized
- ❑ Many IEPs do not address transition at all, unless we consider a one word goal, e.g., “graduation” or “vocational education,” as acceptable
- ❑ Many schools and adult service (including VR) do not work together— or begin working too late (“this is too early,” “we don’t need to re-evaluate, she’ll be graduating”)
- ❑ All stakeholders are not included in transition planning
- ❑ Transition goals are not implemented (over 65% of states surveyed did not implement goals)

If transition sounds so easy, why is it so hard?

- ☐ We interpret legislation literally and narrowly
e.g., evaluating students before they leave h.s. for necessary documentation for adult services or post-secondary education, including necessary documentation in legal plans
- ☐ Responsibility is not shared
- ☐ We always have to worry about money
- ☐ We are not accountable to students (to everyone else, but not them)
- ☐ Systems and 'authorities' do not give us time, and
- ☐ We do not include assessment in transition goals and objectives

If transition sounds so easy, why is it so hard?

We forget assessment:

- ☐ do we have plans for it?
- ☐ what do we assess?
- ☐ when does it occur?
- ☐ how does it occur?
- ☐ who is responsible?
- ☐ is it customized for the individual student?
- ☐ does it take place initially and as an on-going *process*?
- ☐ do we do “whatever it takes” to assess?

Assessment is required by law:

Interpreted literally:

- IDEA 1997
- Workforce Investment Act, including the Rehabilitation Act Amendments
- DD Act


Interpreted broadly on behalf of individuals:

- IDEA 1997
- WIA, including Rehab
- Elementary & Secondary Education Act (NCLB)
- Carl D. Perkins CTE Act
- DD Act

When and where transition has not worked, it may have lacked 2 primary interventions:

1. Assessment prior to planning
2. On-going assessment throughout planning,
*instruction, career development, employment, and
post-secondary preparation.

** Instruction includes self-determination (e.g., self-led IEPs), vocational/career tech education, academics, social skills, etc.*



"Everyone knows that the IEP is where the real work begins."

(An NEA representative, National Collaborations Conference, January 2002, Washington, D.C.)

Wrong!!

We begin with assessment.



*We have to acknowledge the importance of **assessment** in transition planning, instruction, and services:*

- ✓ Make assessment available to all
- ✓ Help students, parents, and professionals implement it effectively
- ✓ All stakeholders understand the value—and values-based process of assessment
- ✓ All stakeholders take responsibility for assessment as part of transition planning and provision
- ✓ Students, parents, teachers, counselors and others must ask for it—demand it
- ✓ Students should enjoy it and gain positives from it, and
- ✓ Researchers should address it and include it in outcome studies.

Assessment makes a difference:

Assessment

- ✓ **Is necessary for making decisions**
- ✓ **Can have a profound effect on a person and his or her future**
- ✓ **Can create and foster positive change and progress**
- ✓ **Is powerful**
- ✓ **Is empowering.**

"Pockets of Excellence"

We have pockets of excellence but throughout the U.S. we do not have any consistency or equality in the provision of transition or assessment for "transitioning" students.

Perhaps, Pennsylvania can expand their knowledge, transferred via communities of practice and networks to become the first statewide pocket of excellence!



Do No Harm!!!

To Do No Harm....how do we change?

Start from zero if we have to—or mold what we do into a process:

1. Change from a deficit to an asset framework
2. Re-define and acknowledge intelligence
3. Implement universal design & universal design of learning
4. Re-define assessment
5. Always ask “what is” and “what” before asking “how to”
6. Work within a self-determination, career development, contexts.
7. Accept and use assessment as an intervention
8. Strive for authenticity.

1. Change from "defect" to "asset" framework

- ☐ Look at the whole person within a whole world context
- ☐ Let student preferences and needs guide us
- ☐ Focus on individualizing
- ☐ Fight to provide person-centered services and programming
- ☐ Inform policy makers and implementers by "showing" them and interpreting research

2. *Re-define & acknowledge intelligence*

- ❑ The ability to solve problems, or to create products, that are valued within one or more cultural settings (Gardner, 1985)
- ❑ Our intellectual abilities are inextricably bound to the contexts in which we live—we cannot separate them (Gardner, 1993)
- ❑ Successful intelligence is to “think well” in 3 different ways (Sternberg, 1991)

Triarchic and Successful Intelligence:

(this has been intuitive to many of us)

- Analytical: Componential—information processing: meta-components, performance components, knowledge-acquisition components
- Creative: Experiential—dealing with new tasks, automatic information processing to solve problems
- Practical: Contextual—functioning to adapt to the external world: adapting to, shaping, or selecting new environments

One way, analytical, is valued in schools and by policymakers. This way of being smart may not be the most valued in real life.

Robert Sternberg, 1991

3. *Implement universal design*

Access for *all* in

- ☐ *assessment*, instruction, career development, and transition
- ☐ opportunities and options available in learning, working, living....

Access to old and new, low and high technology

- ☐ dizzying speed of new technology often create new barriers for people with disabilities and others who are different...

Implement universal design (continued)

Access to all in terms of

- ☐ Disability
- ☐ Language (and communication)
- ☐ Culture
- ☐ Ethnicity
- ☐ Age

Universal design provides supports, assistive technology, etc. to fill gaps created by barriers in design.

Universal design allows access plus participation and successful completion = success.

4. *Re-define assessment*

Reframe how we think:

- ❑ To assess means “to sit beside” (Latin)
- ❑ To assess means “to prize” (French)
- ❑ To assess means “to learn” (Latin)

Re-define assessment (continued)

Assessment is a *process* of gathering information to make decisions

All stakeholders participate in the process of information-gathering and decision-making

Choose a level of assessment

Level One—Screening: For everyone

The initial process designed to arrive at a decision for providing additional services. This assessment typically consists of interviews, limited psychometrics (e.g., questionnaires, inventories), and reviewing background information.

If more information is needed or questions emerge, Level Two should be initiated.

Choose a level of assessment:

Level Two—Exploratory: For some

This intermediate process involves detailed review of background information, in-depth vocational interviewing and counseling, and/or additional psychometrics or career exploration. It may also include transferable skills analysis, job matching, and labor market investigation, and/or community mapping.

If more information is needed or questions emerge, Level Three should be initiated.

Choose a level of assessment:

Level Three—comprehensive career assessment (vocational evaluation): for individuals facing the greatest transition, career, and vocational challenges or barriers.

This process systematically uses real or simulated work as the focal point for assessment and career exploration. One purpose is to assist individuals in career and vocational development. The profiler(or vocational evaluator) synthesizes data from all team members, including if necessary, medical, psychological, economic, cultural, social and vocational information.

5. Always ask "what is" and "what" before asking "how to "

- ☐ We cannot plan unless we assess "where the person is"—just as we start instruction by identifying where to start/where the person is
- ☐ We cannot make any progress (in career development, academics, self-determination, transition, successful outcomes) unless we know where to begin
- ☐ We cannot plan unless we determine/assess "where the person is" within the context of preferences and needs, the world of work, community and work demands—"where the world is"

Always ask "what is" and "what" before asking "how to " (continued)

- ❑ We typically plan around “instruments” we have available or those which require minimal preparation
- ❑ Planning around instrumentation rather than
 - “what” the person needs,
 - what attributes they possess, and
 - what ecologies they inhabit and seekleads to piecemeal profiles and fragmented planning

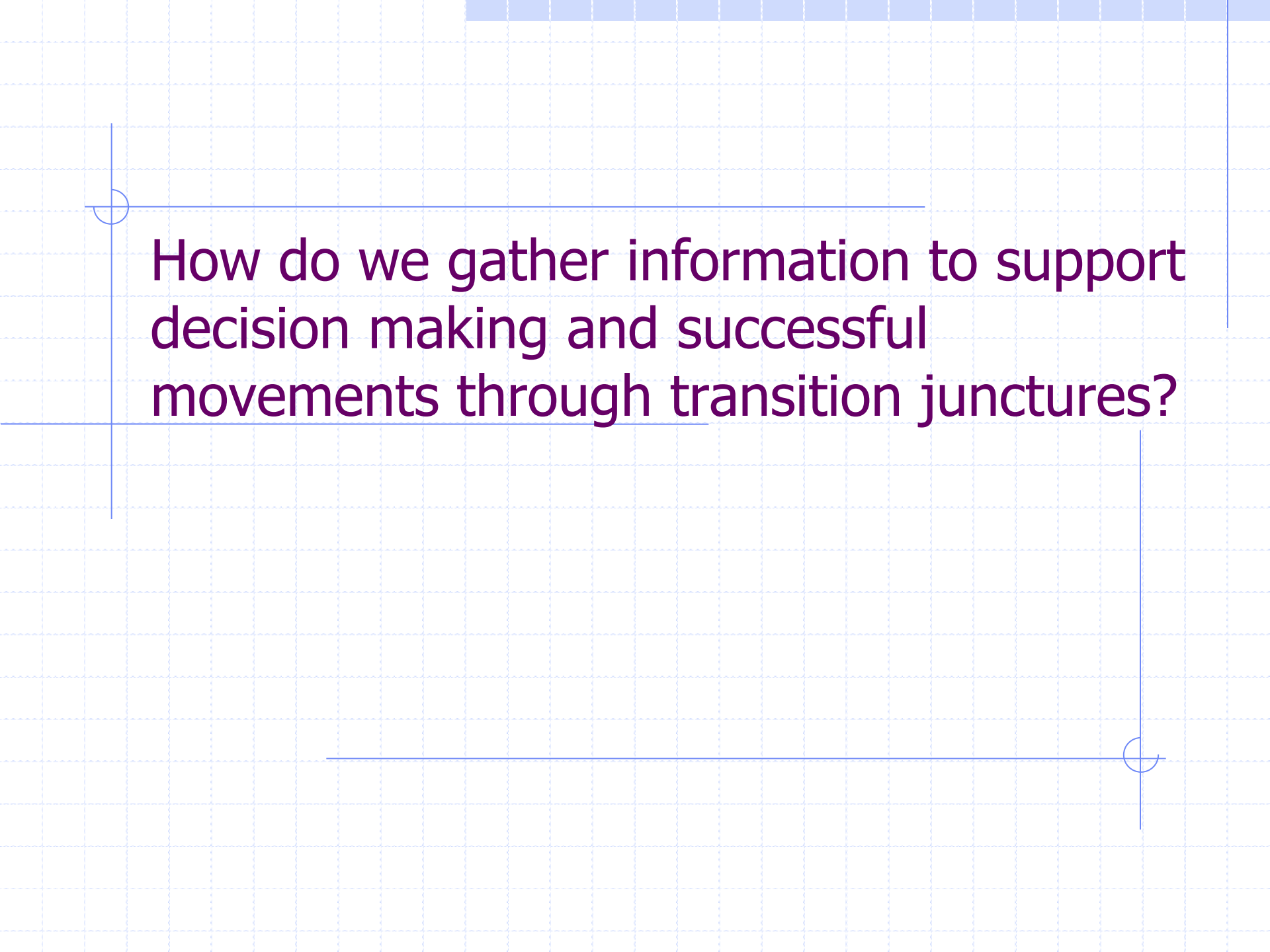
Assess for "Present Levels of Performance" (an IEP term)

We must assess all aspects or categories

- ☐ Academic levels/basic skills
- ☐ Levels of self-determination
- ☐ Levels of career development
- ☐ Status of transition planning & options
- ☐ Status & stability of support systems
- ☐ Availability of options & opportunities (if they aren't there, create them)
- ☐ Assessment (where we are in the on-going process)

Transition Points = Decision Making Junctures—assess within contexts

- Throughout the career pathways process
- Throughout the career development process
- Within a context of universal design
- Within a culture of positivism and honesty
- Within a self-determination mode
- With educational and occupational success as a desired outcome
- *For a desired quality of life*



How do we gather information to support decision making and successful movements through transition junctures?



6. Assess within self-determination context:

Define self-determination...



6. Work within a self-determination context

Definitions:

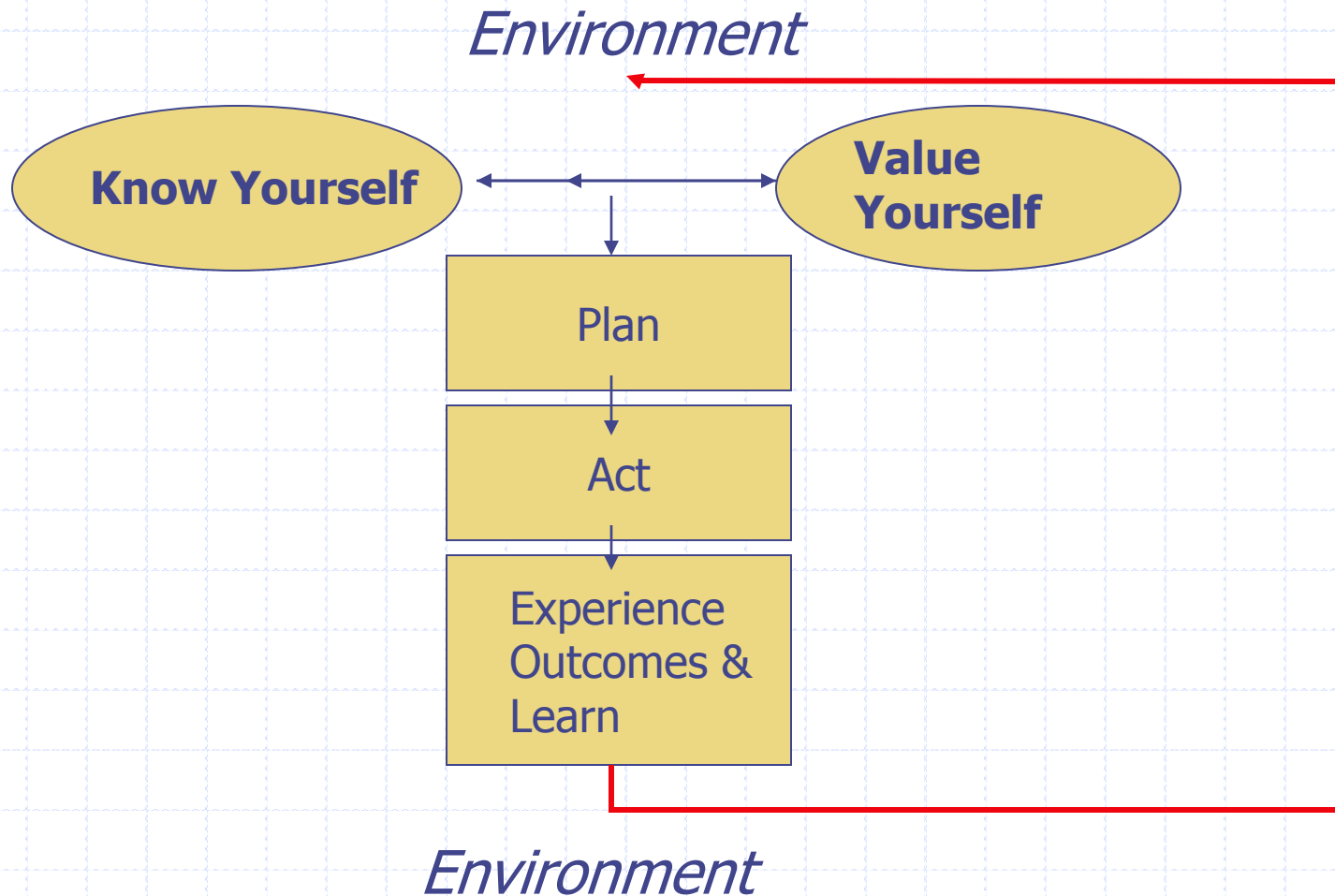
Ability to define and achieve goals based on a foundation of knowing and valuing oneself

(Field & Hoffman)

The capacity to choose and to have choices to determine one's own actions

(Deci & Ryan)

Self-determination (Field & Hoffman)



Self-determination context

- ❑ View this as a process of decision making and transition points
- ❑ Continually assess “where the student is” in the process
- ❑ Balance self-determination with *interdependence*

Self-determination requires interventions

Interventions to promote self-determination:

- ◆ Personal self-determination
- ◆ Leadership development
- ◆ Systems change

(Ward & Powers, 1999)

- ◆ Mentoring and role models

Barriers to self-determination

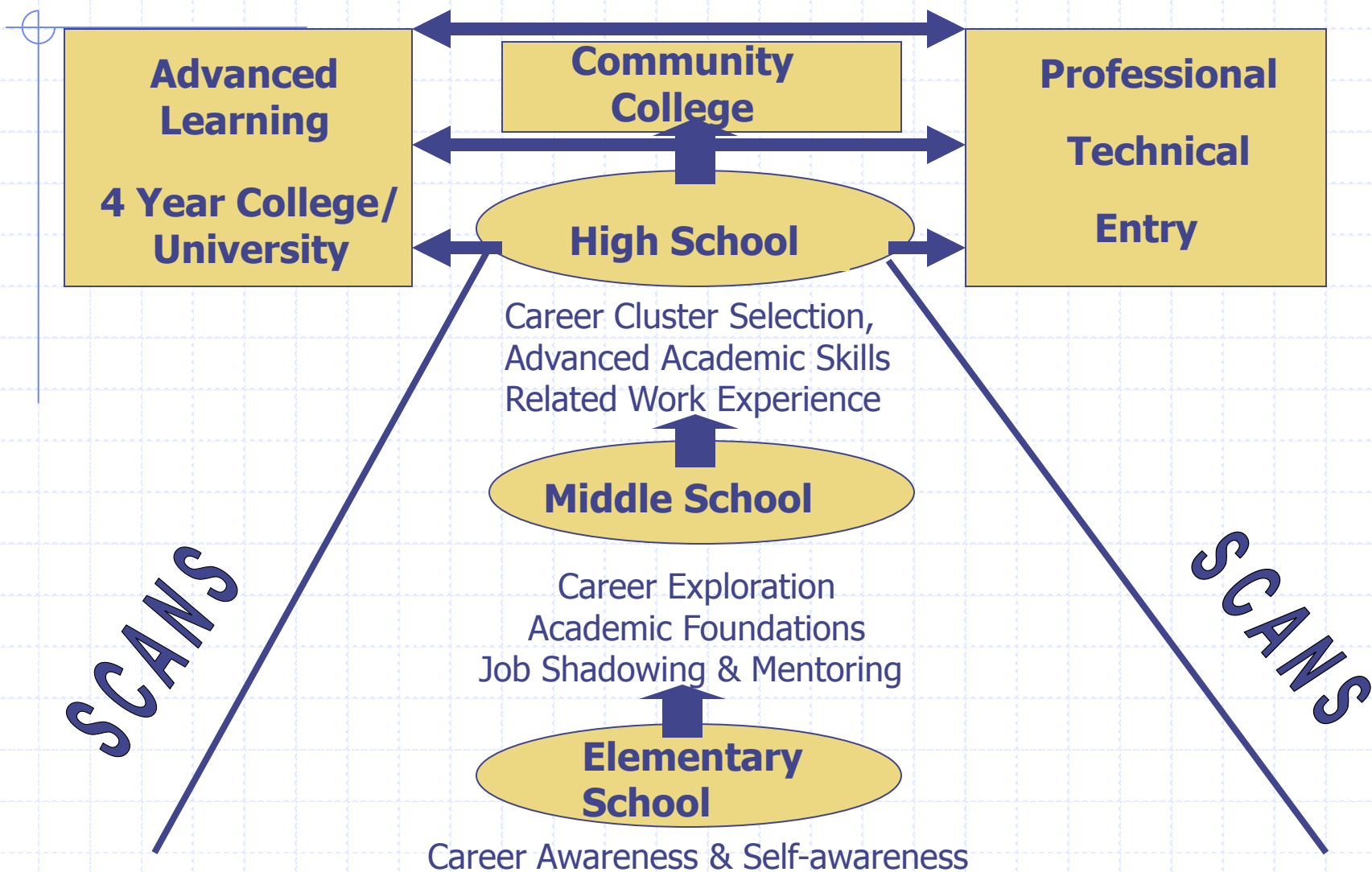
Among the barriers to self-determination (and self-advocacy) are

- ☐ Lack of self-knowledge by all stakeholders
- ☐ Inflexible systems
- ☐ Over-protection
- ☐ Low expectations
- ☐ Lack of stable or sufficient support system
- ☐ Few opportunities for choices
- ☐ Fear
- ☐ Resistance by stakeholders

Assess within a career development context

Stages of career development (refer to handouts on career development)

- ☐ Career awareness
- ☐ Career exploration
- ☐ Career preparation
- ☐ Career assimilation
- ☐ Career growth and expansion



7. Accept and use assessment as an intervention

***Assessment is an intervention
in and of itself.***

Definition of intervention:

the action or process of “coming between” or altering a result or course of events; action being taken to improve a situation.

***Individuals change as
a result of assessment!***

When and how is assessment an intervention?

- ◆ The act of participating in assessment makes every aspect of the process an intervention.
- ◆ From selection or referral to wrap-up and interpretation of findings and recommendations for the initial process (career assessment, vocational evaluation, etc.)
- ◆ Throughout the on-going assessment process during transition

How do we deal with "unrealistic" goals?

- ✓ We ask, observe, interact and listen—to advocate.
- ✓ We identify a person's dreams, strengths, preferences, needs, options, etc.
- ✓ We provide opportunities for exposure to different types of careers, occupations, and jobs
- ✓ We provide opportunities to actually try these
- ✓ We help identify steps that a person should take to achieve their goals and realize their dreams.
- ✓ We profile (write, communicate, interpret, and recommend) a person for vocational and career purposes as well as for transitional ones.

Our decisions are only as good as our information.

- ❑ We cannot make decisions without assessment
- ❑ We should not make decisions based on
 - inadequate information
 - inaccurate information (valid)
 - out-dated information (current)
 - irrelevant information (relevant)
 - unverified (non-triangulated) information

8. Strive for authenticity

Authentic assessment: is a process that facilitates appropriate decision-making by asking

- How are we doing?
- How can we do better?
- Where are we?
- Where are we going?

Characteristics of Authentic Assessment

1. People perform, create, produce or “do”
2. Individual performance is the focus
3. Tasks to perform are part of a larger context (e.g., curriculum, job, transition activity)
4. People doing the rating use human judgement
5. Higher order thinking and problem-solving skills are tapped
6. There is no right answer
7. Activities are closely integrated to self-assessment.

Authentic assessment (continued)

It is a process that provides real and meaningful feedback for improving

- Learning
- Instructional practices
- Performances and behavior
- Educational and vocational or career options
- Linkages with “real world” performances, requirements, and experiences.

(adapted from Herman, Aschbacher, & Winters, 1992)

Authentic assessment (continued)

All assessment, including that for vocational, career, and transition purposes is authentic when one uses

- ◆ prior knowledge, recent learning, or relevant skills to solve realistic, authentic problems
- ◆ demonstrates the ability to
 - Perform
 - Use processes of learning
 - Apply knowledge in natural environments and situations

We must use the real world or use methods, environments & situations that are as "real" as possible.

Community-based assessments, such as

- Situational assessment
- On-the-job evaluations
- Job try-outs
- Assessment during supported employment
- Community mapping

Work samples

Simulated work tasks

How do we keep track of assessment?

How do we prove we are doing assessment?

- Document
- Be specific
- Document
- Be specific
- Include when, who, why and the results
- State how results are being used in transition plan.

The who and the what: Assess the individual and all attributes necessary

- Motivators
- Interests
- Values
- Abilities and “can do’s”
- Learning style preferences
- Multiple intelligences
- Worker traits and behaviors
- Aptitudes
- Potential barriers to transition goals
- Goals
- Strengths
- Needs
- Functional levels
- Level of self-determination
- Level of career development & maturity
- Self-concept & esteem
- Assistive technology needs

The who and the what: Assess the individual's ecologies:

Present, Past, and Future

- ✓ Environments
- ✓ Circumstances
- ✓ Situations
- ✓ Relationships
- ✓ Personal Support Systems
- ✓ Resources (vocational, community, financial, governmental, educational, etc.)

Assessment Framework:

The Individual and his or her attributes
+
Present, past, & future ecologies
=
Congruence or Positive Matches

Known as compatibility or discrepancy analysis process.

How to assess: Methods of Assessment

Include a variety of

- techniques (e.g., observing behavior, interviewing),
- Strategies (e.g., manipulating the environment, integrating assistive technology)
- Activities (e.g., exploring career information)
- Tasks (e.g., work samples)
- Tests or instruments (e.g., surveys, inventories) that are used to gather relevant information to assist evaluatees in setting goals, planning careers, and making decisions.

Traditions: Methods

- Labor market surveys
- Job & training analyses
- Community resource analyses
- Cultural analyses
- Transferable skills analysis
- Review of background information and records
- Vocational interviewing
- Employment histories
- Psychometrics
- Work sampling
- Physical capacity assessments
- *Observation and recording behavior*

Traditions: Methods (continued)

➤ Community-based assessments:

- Job shadowing
- Situational assessment
- On-the-job evaluations
- Job Try-outs
- Functional Skills assessments

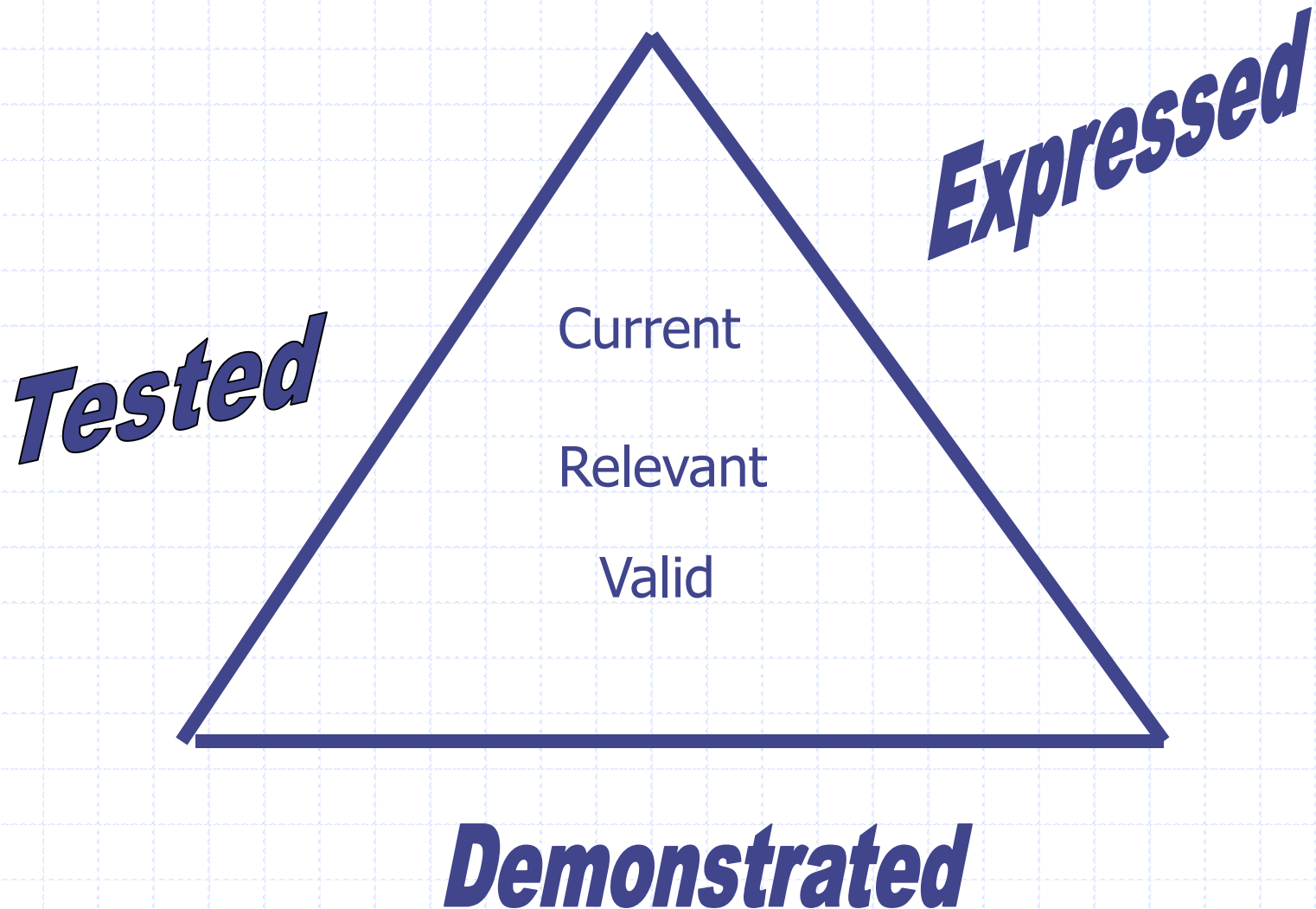
➤ Commercially-produced evaluation systems:

New Concepts,
MECA
VALPAR
VIEWS
KEVAS
SAGE, etc.

Traditions: Methods (continued)

- Computerized exploration and assessments
- Computerized assessment batteries
- Web searches for labor market information, research on the individual and potential matches
- Use of computerized data bases: www.doleta.gov, O*NET, OASYS, etc.
- On-going feedback, interaction with the evaluatee
- Vocational profiles
- V.E. Reports
- “Conferencing”

Triangulation of methods and information

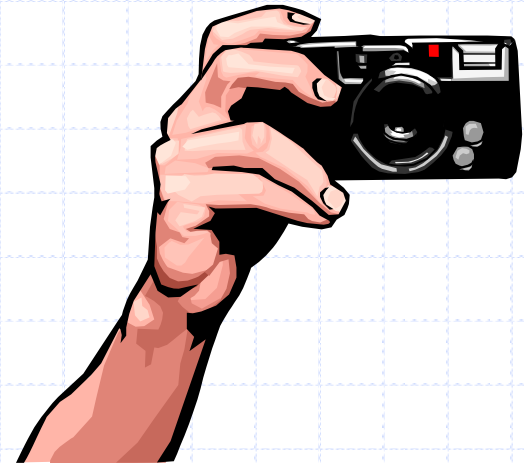


New Practices:

- Support network analysis
- Portfolios (e.g., Positive Personal Profile from TransCen)
- e-portfolios
- ***Community mapping***
- *E-assessments via the web (interests, temperaments, values)*
- Transition assessment
 - parent, sibling, family questionnaires
 - teacher questionnaires
- Transition profiles-transfer from schools to adult service providers
- Self-determination assessments
- Multiple intelligence assess.

Community Mapping

Community mapping requires that students, educators and others investigate via hands-on strategies what is in the community.



Community Mapping

- Originated from contextual teaching and learning research
- Anchors learning and assessment in diverse contexts
- Acquaints educators with culture, resources, barriers and potential facilitators and partners within communities


Community Mapping



Community Mapping



Positive Personal Profile


TRANSCEN inc.
career and workforce development

developed by George Tilson, Lisa Cuzzo & John Coppola
Copyright 2001
451 Hungerford Drive, Suite 700
Rockville, MD 20850
www.transcen.org

POSITIVE PERSONAL PROFILE

talents

work experience

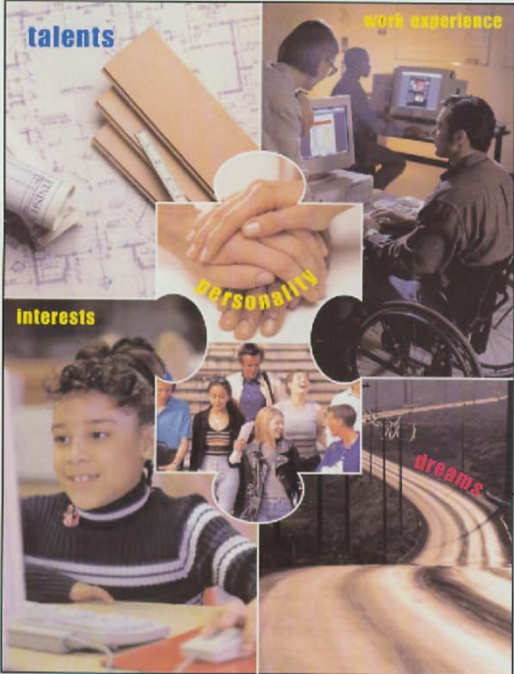
personality

interests

dreams

student name _____

school _____



E-assessment

1. Searching for labor market information
2. Researching recommendations
3. Exploring career information
4. Linking to other professionals and resources
5. Identifying transferable skills
6. Identifying work and job requirements
7. Locating training and educational programs
8. Conducting evaluatee (self-reported) assessments (e.g., interest, aptitude, values, temperaments)

continued

E-assessment:

9. Accessing existing databases (e.g., O*NET)

10. Developing and using work samples (e.g., web design, digital graphic arts, digital music composition)

11. Interviewing:

- ◆ Evaluatees and/or their families
- ◆ Counselors
- ◆ Evaluatees conduct informational interviews with employers

(continued)

E-assessment:

12. Communicate with collaborators
13. Share findings and recommendations
14. Translate findings and recommendations into digital portfolios or resumes
15. Observe and record observations
16. Conduct distance screenings via polycom and related technology.

E-assessment

Primary Rule:

Make sure that e-assessment is accessible to ALL!

- Bobby: <http://www.cast.org/bobby/>
- WAI: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>
- EASI: <http://www.rit.edu/~easi/dislearn>

Resources for post-secondary documentation:

- ❑ HEATH: National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities: www.heath.gwu.edu
- ❑ AHEAD: Association for Higher Education and Disability: www.ahead.org
- ❑ Virginia's College Guide for Students with Disabilities www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/sped/transition/bpit.shtml
- ❑ College Prep 101: <http://collegeprep.okstate.edu/>
- ❑ College Prep Resources: www.washington.edu/doit/resources/college-prep.html

Resources for post-secondary documentation:

- ❑ Learning How to Learn: Getting into and Surviving College When you have a Learning Disability, J. Cobb
www.cwla.org/pubs
- ❑ Unlocking Potential: College and Other Choices for People with LD and AD/HD, J. Taymans, L. West, & M. Sullivan
www.woodbinehouse.com

Map or diagram your planned transition process with assessment points

1. Earlier, you mapped your existing transition process.
2. Now with your group/team, map or diagram your planned transition process—what will begin to happen soon.
3. Use one student or consumer as your guide—what should he or she actually experience?
4. Point out/identify where assessment for transition will take place on your map or diagram
5. Beneath your map, identify people who are responsible for or participate in the assessments or at the assessment points.
6. Select one from your table to share with all of us.

Plot out your plan of *action*

1. Appoint someone to record
2. Create a timeline
3. Identify current team members, leave spaces for others
4. Identify transition goals and objectives
5. Identify transition assessment junctures/points.
6. Identify who will participate? And lead?
7. Identify the primary profiler.
8. Identify when you will transfer information or translate results into the transition plan?

Plot out your plan of *action* (continued)

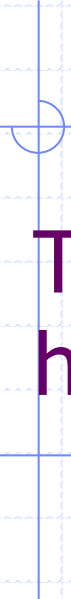
9. Include dates of when the assessment will occur.
10. Include dates and places for where assessment will occur.
11. Identify frequency of assessments
12. Identify what should happen next.
13. Repeat the process/cycle.
14. Plan a schedule of when you will meet throughout the next year (start by semesters if you wish).
15. Commit to small working groups to develop parts of the process, training sessions, obtain resources, or try out strategies or activities.
16. Leave with your email addresses/listserv, "speed dial" numbers/telephone tree, and fax numbers, and who to call for back up.

Learner Outcomes:

- ✓ What quality of life do people with disabilities have?
- ✓ How can we change that?
- ✓ What is assessment (for transition)?
- ✓ Why is assessment for transition important?
- ✓ What is triangulation?
- ✓ Did you learn a new assessment strategy?

Learner Outcomes (continued)

- ✓ Do you have a rough map of your transition and transition assessment process?
- ✓ Do you feel more comfortable translating assessment information into meaningful transition goals & objectives?
- ✓ Do you have more specific information on
 - ✓ How your group/team members can participate in assessment?
 - ✓ What assessment information they can provide?
 - ✓ What your next steps will be?



The strongest principle of human growth is
human choice.

George Eliot

