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A FRAMEWORK FOR VOCATIONAL
COUNSELLING WITHIN THE
ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PERSONNEL RESEARCH
COUNCIL FOR SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH

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S U M M A R Y

A framework for vocational counselling within the organisational context is presented. The aims and procedures of this counselling are related to those of client-centered vocational counselling and to some extent to those of personnel placement. The approach and pitfalls pertaining to vocational counselling within the organisational context are discussed.

The opinions and conclusions generated at a workshop held by the NIPR on this issue are presented.

O P S O M M I N G

'n Raamwerk vir beroepsvoorligting in organisasieverband word aangebied. Die doelstellings en prosedures wat hierby ter sprake kom, is verwant aan dié van kliëntgesentreerde beroepsvoorligting en in 'n mate ook aan dié van personeelplasing. Die benadering en probleme eie aan beroepsvoorligting in organisasieverband word bespreek.

Menings en gevolgtrekkings word verskaf wat uit 'n besprekingsessie, gehou deur die NIPN, na vore gekom het.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aims

This report is aimed at

- (a) describing the procedure followed in handling the general counselling cases referred by employers to the NIPR, and
- (b) to describe opinions expressed and conclusions drawn at a workshop held by the NIPR in October 1978 on careers counselling by outside consultants in cases where the employer wants to use the results as well.

1.2 Background

The NIPR has worked in personnel selection and vocational counselling for more than thirty years. The Institute's first selection tasks were carried out on request by the South African Air Force after the second world war. The vocational counselling service was developed initially in the early 1950's. Procedures for these two services have been developed, investigated and modified over the years. The range of the selection tasks carried out for the CSIR and client organisations as well as formal selection research studies is large. The educational level of applicants ranges from illiterate to post-graduate. The scope of the vocational counselling service has also expanded over the years. From having initially only focussed on White school leavers at the Matric level the service now includes counselling for all those experiencing vocational difficulties.

In the last couple of years, requests have been made by the public for a new kind of service. Organisations that have wanted to gain additional knowledge about an employee's intellectual potential and special aptitudes have sent them for vocational counselling at the Institute. The fact that these counselling clients had not initiated the contact with the Institute but were sent by their employers often only became apparent during the interview. As the vocational counselling initiated by a private individual differs from employee counselling requested by an organisation, the Institute saw the need to explore the possibility of developing a new kind of counselling service. It appears that employee counselling

may become much more important in the future. As a research institution the NIPR is mainly interested in establishing the relevant procedures, irrespective of whether a service is to be rendered on a regular basis by the Institute directly.

In order to make clear the distinctions between the different functions as seen by the Institute in the fields of selection and counselling, these functions are described separately:

1.3 Personnel selection

The objective of personnel selection is to assess the applicant's suitability for the position applied for. This task often entails determining who the most suitable candidate is out of a number of candidates for the position under consideration.

The procedure for this assessment at the NIPR is as follows:

When the client organisation or CSIR institute makes the appointment a detailed job description is requested by the NIPR which we have to receive prior to the assessment of applicants. It is the organisation's task to inform the candidate what he can expect as regards the amount of time spent in the testroom and with the interviewer at the Institute. The tests to be included in the test battery administered to the candidate as well as the areas covered in the interview are determined on the basis of an analysis of the job description and other salient information given by the client organisation. The tests included in the battery will obviously vary, but usually include, at matric level, at least a biographical questionnaire, tests of reasoning ability, tests of verbal abilities, tests of specific aptitudes and abilities as well as one or several personality tests.

Feedback is not usually given to the candidate on his test results. A selection report is sent to the client organisation within two weeks after the assessment. It contains information and the interviewer's comments on the candidate's test results, education, work experience, personality, motivation, aspirations and finally a recommendation regarding his suitability for the position under consideration.

1.4 Client centered vocational counselling

The aim of this procedure is to aid the client in making a satisfactory career choice. As stated by Visser: "An attempt is made to provide clients whether they are at the point of entry into the labour market or at some crossroad in their working lives, with information about themselves and about particular study or work environments. By learning to recognise and accept the limitations, assets, motivation, personality characteristics and attitudes - especially to work and careers - clients ... [are] helped to develop the insight necessary to solve or at least alleviate their occupational difficulties. An evaluation is made of the client's potential and vocational maturity ... and guidelines and possible solutions or alternatives are ... [presented]. The service at the NIPR is essentially a one-stop procedure. [In this respect counselling services at educational institutions are in the advantageous position of developing an ongoing relationship with clients]. All clients are, however, invited [by the NIPR] to return should they require more information or further discussion" (1977, p.8).

When the client has made an appointment, he is sent information about the aims of and procedure for vocational counselling. He is requested to complete a biographical questionnaire and to submit this to the Institute on the date of testing.

The tests of special aptitudes included in the battery are determined on the basis of the client's measured interests. The battery will usually also include tests of verbal and non-verbal reasoning, tests of language abilities, personality tests and interest questionnaires. The areas covered in the interview will depend on the client's unique pattern of aptitudes, abilities, interests, vocational needs and present financial, employment and domestic situation.

Feedback is given to the client on all his test results. A report is sent to the client within two weeks of the assessment. It includes information as well as comments and suggestions on the areas discussed above.

2. THE NATURE OF VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING WITHIN THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

2.1 The aim of vocational counselling within the organisational context

The aim of vocational counselling initiated by an organisation for an employee, is to link the manpower utilization needs of the organisation to the career needs of the particular employee.

Many of the requests for counselling employees by organisations can be dealt with successfully within the framework of existing services at the Institute. The objective of and procedure for internal selection need not differ markedly from that of the selection of candidates who wish to join the organisation. The difference would mainly be that information would be available on the candidate's standard of work performance in his present position.

An organisation that would be prepared to sponsor an employee who is experiencing occupational difficulties or personal problems in seeking vocational guidance (or any other professional service) at the Institute would be welcome to do so. The organisation would normally not receive any feedback on such an assessment and interview, but might well benefit from this service indirectly, in that the employee could be helped in resolving or alleviating personal or occupational difficulties that usually have an adverse effect on his work performance.

The selection interviewers and counsellors at the Institute explored how the requests for a new and different kind of vocational counselling could be best satisfied in a professional and an ethically acceptable way. An experimental procedure for such a counselling service was introduced in September 1978. An information sheet and questionnaires pertaining to both the organisation and the employee were drawn up and the format for the counsellor's report was finalized (See Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4).

2.2 The scope of NIPR's vocational counselling within the organisational context.

The main objectives for the NIPR's vocational counselling within the organisational context are:

- (a) to assist the organisation by increasing their knowledge of their employees' special aptitudes and abilities, as well as the employees' major fields of interest and vocational needs,
- (b) to assist the employee in clarifying vocational needs, aspirations and career goals, to give him increased self-knowledge and self-insight through feedback on, and discussion of, his test results and profile of measured interests.

Vocational counselling of this kind can only be carried out in collaboration with a well-functioning personnel department. Neither the organisation nor the personnel department need be large, but there must be satisfactory policies and procedures for recruitment and selection, induction and training, performance appraisal and a personnel record system. The personnel record system should contain information on the employee's work experience, education and special skills. The information assessed through vocational counselling is useless to the organisation if it cannot be related to the organisation's specific plans for manpower utilization and development.

Problems related to the non-existence or inadequacy of certain personnel functions cannot be solved by counselling the employees. The Institute or other outside professional consultants cannot "deal" with employees who are considered by their organisations as "being" problems.

Organisations on the other hand might experience problems with employees that are placed in the wrong position, lack adequate training and experience to carry out their jobs, or are demotivated for some other reasons. A psychologist can in such a case assist an organisation by assessing the employee's intellectual abilities for purposes of counselling or selection, but she cannot make management decisions for an organisation as regards transfers, promotions or disengagements.

The Institute does not object to giving vocational counselling sponsored by the organisation to an employee as part of a "golden handshake", after the disengagement has taken place. It does object to counselling

an employee when the organisation is contemplating disengagement, but has not yet informed the employee of this possibility, especially where the counselling appears to be assisting management in effecting the disengagement.

The scope for vocational counselling within the organisational context does not include remedial counselling or psychotherapy. Alcoholism, drug abuse, depression, marriage or family problems cannot be dealt with in this context. Counsellors may, however, assist the counsellee in identifying such problems and motivate the counsellee for treatment by a doctor, clinical psychologist or counsellor working in the field of marriage guidance.

It can be argued that there are both advantages and disadvantages in bringing in a counsellor to give vocational counselling to the employees of an organisation. One important disadvantage is that however well the counsellor gets to know the organisation's structure and functions, she can never be fully aware of the organisational climate or internal politics. The foremost advantage is her unbiased and unprejudiced relationship to both employer and employee.

2.3 Career development and personal development

A person's career development and personal development have to be seen as parts of an integrated whole. The career stage reached by a counsellee must therefore be related to the life-stage he is in. If not, the counsellor cannot assist in alleviating conflicts that might arise between career and personal development, nor can he or she fully assist the counsellee in clarifying present vocational needs or motivation.

The conflict between career and personal life is particularly apparent among professional women. A research study on working women in the professional sphere is presently being carried out by the Institute. Reports on this subject can be expected during 1980 (van Rooyen).

A longitudinal study on the career adjustment and needs of aging research workers of both sexes is also being carried out (Skawran).

2.4 Midcareer counselling

An employee who appears to make no progress in his job and whose work performance tends to decline, may be experiencing a midcareer crisis. The employee facing such a crisis may be helped through counselling to verbalise his feelings of dissatisfaction and to clarify in what way his vocational and personal needs have changed since his initial entry into the career.

Raubenheimer (1979) has carried out case studies and follow-up research on midcareer counselling cases seen by the Institute.

2.5 Counselling of managers

Changes in a career can take place through moving to a job in another company, or through moving on to something else in the same company. When a professional worker is unexpectedly transferred to a managerial position he may experience a crisis in his career. From a task or production orientated job he must change his orientation to the management of other people, which will invariably make new demands on him. The ability to integrate company resources to achieve managerial objectives is not acquired overnight. The changes that the trainee manager has to make relate to personal aspirations and demand that he acquires insight into his weaknesses and special skills, learns to live with a certain degree of ambiguity and is able to maintain a sufficient confidence level to function effectively.

The feasibility of developing tailor-made training courses, to facilitate the entry of professional workers into managerial positions has been explored by Segil (report in press).

3. WORKSHOP ON COUNSELLING IN THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

3.1 An outline of the workshop

A discussion orientated workshop, on vocational counselling within the organisational context, was held at a symposium on vocational counselling and career development convened by the Institute at the CSIR Conference Centre in Pretoria (Lätti, 1978).

The NIPR's policies and procedures for this kind of counselling were presented to the participants. A number of aspects relating to these policies and procedures were discussed.

The size of the workshop group was limited to 45, so as to give all the participants the opportunity of joining in the discussion if they so wished.

Some participants stated that they would have preferred more examples of practical application (Lätti, 1978), but most of them did, however, show a great deal of enthusiasm and willingness to put forward opinions in the discussion.

3.2 The participants

The majority of the workshop participants are involved, one way or the other, with the development of manpower in South Africa (See Table 1 below).

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF OCCUPATIONS AMONG WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS : N = 34

Personnel	Training	Manpower development	Universities and colleges	Psychologist, counsellor and guidance officer	Other
15	6	1	4	6	2

Some of the participants spoke from the point of view of personnel management whereas others, who by nature of their jobs, were mainly concerned with the counsellee, stressed the employee's vulnerable position when offered counselling within the organisational context. The different viewpoints gave rise to a lively and stimulating discussion.

3.3 The workshop questionnaire

A copy of the workshop questionnaire (see Appendix 5) was handed out to all the participants after the discussion. It contains the same questions that were presented in the workshop and which were handled in the form of slide projection during the discussion. The participants were requested to summarise their viewpoints in this questionnaire. They were told that this would enable the NIPR, in turn, to summarise and take into account the views held by the participants of the workshop, and to provide appropriate feedback to the participants. The responses to the questions discussed in the workshop have been categorised and are presented in Tables 2 to 9.

3.3.1 The position of the counsellor

A counsellor who is on the staff of an organisation has the advantage of being well acquainted with the organisational structure and functions as well as the relevant organisational climate and internal politics. The possible danger inherent in any management-directed counselling programme is, however, according to Miller (1974) "that ... [this] approach may appear to abridge individual freedoms or to create greater dependency [on the organisation]". The training of managers might be construed as setting up conditions where it would appear that the manager rather than the individual is responsible for careers ... This is much less healthy than creating the freedom and support for the employee to manage his own career" (p. 347).

The participants were asked if they saw a need within their organisations for bringing in a counsellor from outside to test and interview an employee within a career planning context, i.e. the planning of a logical sequence of training, jobs held, and other work related experiences that will enhance the employee's career development.

TABLE 2

ATTITUDES TOWARDS OCCASIONALLY BRINGING IN AN EXTERNAL
COUNSELLOR : N = 34

In favour of doing this occasionally	In favour of doing this but with certain reservations	Not in favour of doing this	Undecided
16	4	10	4

The majority of the group members thought that there was a need for bringing in an external counsellor. Quite a number of respondents prefer this function to be carried out by experts within the organisation. Six of the ten participants who did not think that there was such a need within their organisations, added that the organisation had its own facilities for testing and counselling their employees.

3.3.2 The employees' attitudes towards career planning

The attitude of the employee in an organisation towards career planning (in general or systematic efforts of management) will obviously influence the usefulness of any outcome of the discussion held between employer and employee, or between counsellor and employee regarding his future career.

The participants in the workshop were asked what they thought the attitude of the employees within their organisation would be towards participating in a career planning exercise and receiving vocational counselling (see Table 3).

TABLE 3

VIEWS ON HOW THE EMPLOYEES WOULD REACT TO AN OFFER OF RECEIVING VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING : N = 32

Would welcome it	Attitude would depend on way offer presented	Attitude would vary	Attitude would be negative	No need for this
14	4	6	5	3

A majority of the participants thought that the employees in their organisations would welcome such a service, but it was stressed that their attitude would to a very large extent depend on how this would be put across by management.

3.3.3 The questionnaire sent to the organisation

A questionnaire is sent to the organisation by the NIPR (see Appendix 2) prior to performing the counselling. The questions pertain to the personnel policies and procedures adhered to by the organisation as well as to such aspects as the economic sector the organisation belongs to, its size and whether there is any qualified psychologist or psycho-technician on the staff.

The participants were asked whether they thought any of these questions could be considered by the organisation as being an intrusion on the confidentiality of certain information pertaining to the organisation (see Table 4).

TABLE 4

VIEWS ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO THE ORGANISATION : N = 32

Not intrusive	Considered intrusive	Will depend on outlook	Some questions will not be answered honestly	Intrusive if the NIPR is appointed by the employee in the first place
25	3	2	1	1

Only three of the participants thought that the questions could be considered intrusive. The necessity of giving the counsellor background information about the organisation was stressed in the discussion. Some participants suggested that these questions were comparatively meager in terms of the confidential nature of the information requested from the employee.

3.3.4 The options for a career outside the organisation

The options for a career outside the organisation are often discussed by the counsellor and the employee in the interview. The counsellor does not make any recommendations regarding employment at any particular organisation, but aids the employee in exploring the various career fields in which the employee's interests might be satisfied, and where he might successfully apply his education, experience, skills, abilities and aptitudes.

The participants were asked whether they thought that the discussion of the options for a career outside the organisation (held between counsellor and employee) is fair to the organisation (see Table 5).

TABLE 5

VIEWS ON THE FAIRNESS OF THE COUNSELLOR AND EMPLOYEE
DISCUSSING ALTERNATIVE CAREER OPTIONS OUTSIDE THE
ORGANISATION : N = 34

Fair	Fair if the company agrees	Depends on purpose of interview	Not fair
17	12	2	3

The majority of the participants thought that it was fair to the organisation if the counsellor also discussed the options for a career outside the organisation with the employee. It was, however, stressed that the organisation should be informed about this possibility before arrangements are made for an interview.

3.3.5 The content of the reports sent to the organisation and to the employee

All information pertaining to a counselling client that has been assessed through testing and the counselling interview is always treated with a high degree of confidentiality.

However, if the information yielded by these test results and the psychologist's recommendations regarding the counselling client's future career are restricted to the client alone, it is not possible for those who direct or manage his career within the organisation to use this information in his interest in planning his future career.

There are various ways in which to achieve a balance between the demands of confidentiality and the need for utilizing the information contained in the report. The NIPR has chosen to give copies of the same report to both the counselling client and the client organisation. In this way the counselling client knows exactly what information has been given to the organisation.

The participants were asked if they agreed with this policy or if they thought the report should differ in some respects (see Table 6).

TABLE 6

VIEWS ON WHETHER THE EMPLOYEE AND THE ORGANISATION SHOULD RECEIVE IDENTICAL REPORTS : N = 30

Content should be the same	The organisation should decide what information the employee is given	Personal aspects not related to the job should not be disclosed in the report
27	1	2

Most of the participants thought that the organisation and the employee should receive copies of the same report. Some of these respondents did not offer their reasons for supporting such an approach. Many suggested that the employee should decide on the extent of revelation of confidential information. It was further suggested that if certain aspects of the interview were not referred to in the report, the employee's needs would be satisfied without the company gaining undue insight into aspects of the individual's personal development which are not related to his career within the company.

3.3.6 Access to information contained in the report

When deciding who within the organisation should have access to the information contained in the report it is useful to consider:

- Who is directly concerned with the career development of the employee?
- Who is able to put this information within its relevant context?

And last but not least:

- Who is able to keep this information confidential?

The participants were asked who they thought should have access to any part of this information, in the organisation (see Table 7).

TABLE 7

VIEWS ON WHO SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE COUNSELLING REPORT : N = 32

No one but a representative of the personnel department and the employee	No one without the employee's permission	Only people who are fully trained in the interpretation of such information	Only certain details should be passed on to the supervisor at the discretion of the person responsible in the personnel department	This is a matter of agreement between the partners before the exercise is carried out	Only people concerned with the employee's career planning	Only management	The senior manager responsible for making decisions and the supervisor should be given relevant information	The supervisor
6	1	3	10	2	3	1	4	2

The views varied as regards who should have access to the information contained in the report. The diversity of suggestions for how to cope with this particular question suggests that there is indeed a fine balance between the possible use and misuse of information when a copy of the report is given to the organisation. If the information is kept completely confidential the usefulness of the entire exercise will be limited to gained self-insight by the employee. It stands to reason that some information regarding the employee's aptitudes, abilities and measured interests must at least be given by the personnel department to those in management position who take the final decisions on placements and transfers. Otherwise the employee's legitimate expectations, that his particular interests and abilities should be taken into account when deciding on his future career within the organisation, will be frustrated.

3.3.7 The joint discussion

The option for a joint discussion between the counsellor, the counselling client, a representative of the personnel department and the employee's immediate superior, taking place after copies of the report has been received, is outlined in the information sheet given to the counselling client and the client organisation prior to the psychological assessment (the psychological testing and interview) (see Appendix 1).

This joint discussion serves a dual purpose:

- (a) The counsellor is given the opportunity of clarifying any of the interpretations or recommendations contained in the report that might prove unclear or ambiguous to the counselling client or client organisation.
- (b) There are indications that those organisations who intend using the information contained in the report for other purposes than career planning, tend to hesitate in confirming the appointment for the psychological assessment, when faced with the prospect of participating in a joint discussion with the employee and the counsellor.

The participants were asked if they thought such a joint discussion would be useful (Table 8).

TABLE 8

VIEWS ON THE USEFULNESS OF THE JOINT DISCUSSION BETWEEN EMPLOYEE, COUNSELLOR, A PERSONNEL OFFICER AND THE EMPLOYEE'S IMMEDIATE SUPERIOR : N = 34

Very useful	Depends on the organisational climate, the specific situation and the calibre of the supervisor	Could be threatening to the employee and would need careful handling by the counsellor	Would ensure counsellor's credibility and implementation of decisions reached	Higher level management should be included	Career development of the employee is entirely between him and his employer	Immediate supervisor should be excluded	Not useful
15	6	5	1	4	1	1	1

The majority of the participants were in favour of such a discussion. Some expressed the view that the feasibility of such a discussion would depend on the organisational climate as well as on the specific situation at hand. It was suggested by some that higher level management (who usually make decisions regarding the employee's future career development) should also be included. Whether the supervisor should be included or not would depend on his competence in managing people. It was stressed that such a discussion would need careful handling and demand a high degree of professionalism from the counsellor.

3.3.8 Avoiding misuse of the report

All managers, be they general managers or personnel managers, do not have a thorough understanding of the purposes and the limitations of psychological testing and vocational counselling. The responsibility for ensuring that the contents of the counselling report given to the organisation is not misused must therefore lie with the counsellor.

The participants were asked how they thought misuse of the report could best be avoided (see Table 9).

TABLE 9

SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW MISUSE OF THE COUNSELLING REPORT CAN BE AVOIDED : N = 25

Clarify aims of the psychological assessment beforehand	The whole process must be followed through to the joint discussion	By educating the employer	Cannot be avoided	A written release of the report by the employee should be made a requirement	It should be guaranteed that the employee can only be fired for poor work performance and not poor test results	If the employee can discuss options outside the organisation (with the counsellor) the employer should also be free to dismiss the employee
10	4	1	5	1	1	3

Many of the participants stressed the importance of clarifying the purpose of the testing and the counselling interview beforehand. Some stressed the importance of following the whole procedure through to the joint discussion (see §.3.7). One participant suggested that a written release from the employee should be made necessary before anyone within the company could have access to the report. Other suggestions included setting performance standards to be met by the employee by a certain date, in the case of a poor performer. The idea was that an employee could thus not be fired for achieving badly on aptitude tests, only for poor work performance. It was not made quite clear who was to set these standards although it appears obvious that management would set them and might negotiate with the employee if it so chooses. Some participants felt that the counsellor cannot stop the company from firing an employee and that it was in fact the company's privilege to do so, just as it is the employee's privilege to leave the company if he so wishes.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

4.1. Conclusions

Taking into consideration the smaller organisations in particular, with regard to their inability to carry the costs of employing a psychologist on a full-time basis, as well as the advantages of bringing in a counsellor from outside the organisation in general, it is envisaged that the requests for the NIPR and other professional consultants to undertake counselling for organisations on an ad hoc basis will continue.

A counsellor undertaking such a task needs to have a fairly broad experience within the field of industrial psychology or personnel management. He or she should also be prepared to handle a multitude of different kinds of counselling cases and be able to lead the joint discussion, referred to in this report, effectively.

The co-operation between counsellor and personnel management is essential to ensure that the information obtained through the psychological assessment is not misused, and that satisfactory follow-up and application of results occurs.

4.2 Implications for future research

The findings emerging from research carried out on client-centered counselling for various groups experiencing occupational difficulties can also be interpreted within the organisational context. It is therefore suggested that future research in this field should not concern itself unduly with the technicalities of counselling various groups, but should rather focus on exploring how the relationship between employer and employee can be improved to enhance a better understanding of each other's needs and to increase the compatibility of organisational and vocational goals.

The Institute will continue to offer vocational counselling services to organisations that request this, given that they fulfil the requirements as outlined in this report. The counselling clients' files, containing their test results, the counselling report as well as the notes taken by the counsellor during the joint discussion, will be kept by the NIPR. Follow-up research on these cases will be carried out when a sufficient number have been collected. This research will concentrate initially on satisfying both employer and employee regarding the benefits of such a service.

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The information sheet sent to the organisation and the employee.



Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
National Institute for Personnel Research

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VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING WITHIN AN ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

THE OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of the career planning exercise is to link the needs of the employee for career development and personal growth with the company's (or organization's) need for best manpower utilization. This can be partly achieved by means of establishing the level of qualification and employment at which the employee is most likely to succeed and to find satisfaction in terms of his/her cognitive strengths and weaknesses, interest pattern, personality, motivation, level of aspiration and vocational needs.

THE REPORT

A written report is submitted to the employee as well as to the company after the psychological assessment at the NIPR. This report contains a summary of test results, an interest profile, and comments and suggestions relating to the client's career based on the biographical information, test results and his/her relationship to academic achievements, work experience and leisure activities as well as personality, motivation and level of aspiration. Reference is made to training and study courses which seem to be most relevant to the employee's future development and growth.

However, it must be stressed that the NIPR does not make any decisions for the employee or for the company. The plans for the future career development of the employee should be worked by him/her in conjunction with a representative of the personnel department and his/her immediate superior.

PROCEDURE

Prior to the psychological assessment at the NIPR, the company is requested to fill in and submit a questionnaire pertaining to the organization as well as to the employee concerned.

The employee is requested to fill in a biographical form and to send this form to the NIPR in time for it to reach the NIPR before the day of testing.

The testing may take a full day, from 8 am until 4 pm depending on how many tests are given; tea and a hot lunch are provided. The personal interview may take place on the same day, but is often held on the next day or some other time to suit both the employee and counsellor. The report follows two or three weeks after the interview.

The counsellor's participation in a joint 60-90 minute discussion between the employee, a representative of the company's personnel department and the employee's immediate superior is included in the fee. The venue for this joint discussion will depend on the location of the company.

People whose home language is neither English nor Afrikaans, and who are not fairly proficient in one of these languages, will experience difficulty with the tests and inaccurate results can be expected.

FEES AND BOOKINGS

Bookings (Telephone the NIPR, Johannesburg, 39-4451) should be made approximately a month in advance, to allow time for the exchange of information, and the fee of R60,00 should reach the Institute before the testing date. Cheques and postal orders should be crossed and made payable to the National Institute for Personnel Research. Correspondence should be addressed to the Director.

The Institute is situated on the corner of Empire Road and Jan Smuts Avenue, north of the Witwatersrand University playing fields.

Clients should wait in the reception area on the first floor.

Please do not hesitate to contact one of the counsellors in the Personnel Selection and Vocational Guidance Division should you have any queries regarding the aim of or the procedure for the career planning exercise.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PERSONNEL RESEARCH

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMPANIES AND ORGANISATIONS
REQUESTING PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THEIR
EMPLOYEE(S) IN A CAREER PLANNING CONTEXT.

1. Name of company or organisation _____

2. To which industrial sector does your company or organisation belong?

3. Approximately how many employees does the company have? _____

4. Does your company or organisation have a Personnel Department? _____
5. Is there a
- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------|
| | (a) Industrial Psychologist | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | (b) Psycho technician | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | or | |
| | (c) A staff member holding a degree with
Psychology as a major subject | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- on your staff?
- 6.(a) Are performance appraisals carried out on a regular basis
in your company?
- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Once a year | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Twice a year | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| More than twice a year | <input type="checkbox"/> |

6. (b) Are all your staff appraised on a regular basis?

Yes

If not please specify those who are not -----

7. Please describe briefly the internal and/or external training programmes carried out on a regular basis in your company or organisation.

8. How is the initial selection and placement of your staff carried out?

9. Does your company have a structured plan for the utilisation and development of manpower (please elaborate)? -----

Please submit the following information on the employee you wish to be assessed at the NIPR:

1. Name -----

2. Age -----

3. Qualifications -----

4. Position held at present -----

5. Number of years with company -----

6. Please list chronologically the jobs that the employee has held with the company, placing the present position last.

Job Title	Length of Service	
	From	To

7. Please elaborate on any plans your company or organisation might have for the employee concerned, regarding which position he or she can be offered

(i) Immediately _____

(ii) After an adequate period of training or experience (please be specific) _____

(iii) In the future (eg. in a higher level or managerial position)

Please submit copies of the following documents together with this questionnaire to the NIPR:

- (a) The job description for the position presently held by the employee.
- (b) Job description for the position to which the employee can be transferred or promoted, now or in the future.
- (c) Those parts of your organisational chart that pertain to the job description.
- (d) A summary of any strengths or weaknesses emerging from the employees latest performance appraisal.

The content of these above listed documents may be discussed in the interview between the counsellor and the employee if it is felt that this would be helpful in clarifying the issues involved.

ADDRESS: NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PERSONNEL RESEARCH
P O BOX 10319
JOHANNESBURG, 2000.

For Attention: Division for Personnel Selection and Vocational Guidance

COUNCIL FOR SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH
 NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PERSONNEL RESEARCH

BIOGRAPHICAL INVENTORY
 (Career Counselling)

SURNAME : -----
 FIRST NAMES : -----
 DATE OF BIRTH : -----
 HOME LANGUAGE : -----
 NATIONALITY : -----
 MARITAL STATUS : -----
 TELEPHONE NO : Home ----- Business -----
 HOME ADDRESS : -----
 RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION -----

LANGUAGE: : In the table below indicate your proficiency as
 1. Good 2. Average 3. Below average

Language	Reading	Writing	Speaking
English			
Afrikaans			
Other (specify)			

If you have ever done any aptitude or personnel selection tests before,
 give date, place and reason for testing

CONFIDENTIAL

This form must not be shown to unauthorised persons, or used except with the permission of the National Institute for Personnel Research

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1. In the table below fill in the names of all the schools you have attended

Name of school	Town or district	Date (year)		Standard passed	Language medium
		From	To		

2. How did you like your schooling?
3. Which subject did you like most?
- Why?
4. Which subject did you like least?
- Why?
5. Were you a prefect?
- class captain?
6. Which standard(s) did you fail at school?
- Which did you repeat?
7. If you have matriculated, give the following information:
- a) Date of matriculation
- b) University pass or School Certificate (A or B stream)
- c) Name of Examining Board (eg T E D; N S C; J M B; etc)
-

8. Please complete the following table

Subject	Grade (Higher or Standard)	Symbol obtained in end of year examination					
		Std 8		Std 9		Matriculation or last exam result	
		First attempt	If repeated	First attempt	If repeated	First attempt	If repeated

9. List any other qualifications you have obtained (eg. speech, music, ballet)

11 b) Describe any plans you have to improve your qualifications

12. List any educational awards (prizes, bursaries, scholarships, etc) you may have won during your high school or post-school academic career

13. NATIONAL SERVICE

- a) Have you completed your National Service? (Yes / No)
- b) Or are you serving at present? (Yes / No)

In either case, give :

dates (month and year) From _____ to _____

unit _____

rank _____

capacity _____

- c) Are you due to do National Service (Yes / No)

If so, when? (month and year) _____

in what unit? _____

for how long? (12, 18 or 24 months) _____

- d) Are you exempt? _____

On what grounds? _____

- e) Have you applied for deferment? _____

On what grounds? _____

14. OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY

- a) What career did you intend following when you left full-time school?

- b) What alternative careers have you seriously considered/ are you still seriously considering?

2. Where applicable, give your age when

your parents were divorced _____years

your father died _____years

your mother died _____years

your father remarried _____years

your mother remarried _____years

3. If you were brought up by someone other than your parents, give details.

16. HEALTH.

1. If any member of your family (including yourself) is in poor health, give details.

2. What illnesses or operations have caused you to be away from school or work for a period of more than a week?

3. Are there things which do not agree with you e.g. food, climatic conditions, travelling, noise, etc?

4. Have you undergone any unpleasant experience? If so, describe.

5. Give details of any accident in which you have been involved. (Include accidents at home, at school, at work, during sport, and traffic accidents including those accidents which caused no injury.)

6. Most people are subject, at times, to minor upsets. In the list below, a number of the most common of these upsets is given. In the brackets after each complaint, write

0 - if you never experience it

1 - if you experience it occasionally

2 - if you often suffer from it

Colds	()	Hayfever	()
Stomach pains	()	Sweating hands	()
Constipation	()	Fainting	()
Diarrhoea	()	Dizziness	()
Breathlessness	()	Muscular trembling	()
Sleeplessness	()	Tiredness	()
Bilious attacks	()	Nightmares	()
Muscular pains	()	Headaches	()
Motion sickness	()	Migraine	()
Allergies	()	Nail-biting	()
Asthma	()	Stuttering	()

Other (specify) -----

17. LEISURE.

1. Do you actively participate in sport? (Yes or No) _____
2. Name (a) the games at which you are best

 (b) the games you enjoy most

3. List any teams that you have played for recently, and any other sporting distinctions (medals, cups, prizes, championships, team captaincies etc.).

4. What have been your hobbies or other spare-time activities? _____

5. How do you spend your free time at present? _____

6. What else would you like to do if you had the time/facilities? _____

7. How much do you read, including books, magazines and newspapers? (State hours per week.)

8. Give the names of a few books that you have read recently
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
9. Write down the names of newspapers and magazines which you read regularly.

10. Do/did you belong to any societies or clubs? If you serve(d) on a committee, give details. _____

18. CAREER

1. What career do you believe your father would like/have liked you to follow?

2. What career do you believe your mother would like/have liked you to follow?

3. Is there anything which might prevent you from entering the career of your choice?

5. Below are listed 12 possible reasons for choosing a career. Encircle for each item A, B or C to indicate how important that item would be for you in selection a particular occupation.

A = Very important

B = Somewhat important

C = Not important

I should like to enter a career which will

allow me to use by best abilities and aptitudes	A	B	C
---	---	---	---

provide me with the opportunity of earning a great deal of money	A	B	C
--	---	---	---

permit me to be original and creative	A	B	C
---------------------------------------	---	---	---

give me social status and prestige	A	B	C
------------------------------------	---	---	---

enable me to work with ideas and theories	A	B	C
---	---	---	---

allow me to be physically active	A	B	C
----------------------------------	---	---	---

assure me a stable and secure future	A	B	C
--------------------------------------	---	---	---

enable me to work with people rather than with things	A	B	C
---	---	---	---

leave me free from supervision by others	A	B	C
--	---	---	---

give me a chance to exercise leadership	A	B	C
---	---	---	---

provide me with adventure and excitement	A	B	C
--	---	---	---

give me an opportunity to be helpful to others	A	B	C
--	---	---	---

Now go back and rank in order of their importance to you, those items which you have marked 'A' (Very important). Opposite the item which is MOST important to you, put the figure 1. Place a 2 opposite the next most important, then a 3, and so on.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIALCAREER PLANNING REPORT

Surname: First names:
Age: Sex:
Date of Testing: Referred by:
Highest qualification at time of testing:
Present Position / Occupation:

This report contains a summary of biographical information, test results, an interest profile, and comments and suggestions relating to the client's career based on these results and their relation to academic achievements, work experiences and leisure activities, as well as personality, motivation and level of aspiration.

An attempt is made to establish the level of qualification and employment at which success and satisfaction are most likely to be achieved. Reference is made to training and study courses which seem to be most relevant to the client's future development and growth. However it must be stressed that the NIPR does not want to make any decisions for the client or the company/organisation. The plans for the future career development of the client should be worked out by him/her in conjunction with his/her personnel manager and immediate supervisor.

TEST RESULTS — The test results are compared with those of others with a similar level of education. (See Comparison Group, below.) Relevant group is underlined. The graph provides a guide to the level of education and occupational achievement likely to be attained, as well as an indication of relative strengths and weaknesses.

	Intellectual Abilities		Number Ability	Verbal Abilities		Special Abilities			70 68 66 64 62 60 58 56 54 52 50 48 46 44 42 40 38 36 34 32 30	
	Abstract Reasoning	Mental Alertness	Arith. Probs. Computation	Read/Comp	Vocab	Mech Comp	Blox	Spot-the-error		
								Speed		Acc.
9 Exceptional										
8 Superior										
7 Above Average										
6 Average-Plus										
5 Average										
4 Average-Minus										
3 Below Average										
2 Poor										
1 Very Poor										
Comparison Group	Metric 1st Year Univ. Stud.	Std 8-9 Matriculation (White/Black) 1st Year Univ. Students (White) English Graduates Other.....				Metric (Boys) Apprentices	Metric		Std 7-9 Metric College Students	
	Black 1st Year University Students									
TEST BATTERY	INTERMEDIATE (for those with 9-11 years of education) HIGH LEVEL (for those with 12 years of education or more)									
Interpretation of Tests	The test measures									
Abstract reasoning	ability to draw logical conclusions from non-verbal data (Not related to formal schooling)									
Mental Alertness	ability to apply previously gained knowledge to new situations (General intelligence)									
Arithmetical Problems	ability to deal effectively with problems involving arithmetical reasoning (Not mathematical ability)									
Computation	ability to do routine numerical calculations									
Reading Comprehension	verbal skills									
Vocabulary										
Mechanical Comprehension	ability to apply knowledge of general physical and mechanical principles to problems of a practical nature									
Perceptual Ability (Blox)	ability to recognise visual-spatial relations									
Clerical skill	speed and accuracy in a routine task									
(Spot-the-error)										

COMMENTS ON TEST RESULTS

Comments on how the client has applied himself in the past in terms of his aptitudes and abilities.

INTEREST PROFILE (Kuder Preference Record)

This interest profile is based on a questionnaire, and measures preferences for various types of activities. The higher the measured interest, the greater the likelihood that a career in this field will prove satisfying. However, the realism of the interest should be examined — it may be relevant to recreation rather than to a career choice. This is particularly true of the outdoor, artistic, musical and literary categories.

Remember that this represents the pattern at the moment and that interests change.

NB It is important not to confuse interest with ability.

Perf.	OUT	MECH	COMP	SCI	PERS	ART	LIT	MUS	SOC. SERV.	CLER	Perf.
100											100
95											95
90											90
85											85
80											80
75											75
70											70
65											65
60											60
55											55
50											50
45											45
40											40
35											35
30											30
25											25
20											20
15											15
10											10
5											5
0											0
FIELD	Occupations which involve										
OUTdoor	working outdoors with plants and animals, sporting activities etc.										
MEChanical	using tools, machinery, equipment										
COMputational	working with figures										
SCientific	discovering new facts; solving problems										
PERSuasive	meeting and dealing with people; managing or organising; promoting projects; selling										
AESThetic	being creative; designing; decorating										
LITerary	reading, writing, dealing with words										
MUSical	playing or listening to music										
SOCial SERVICE	working with people in a helpful or supportive capacity										
CLERical	doing routine office work requiring precision and accuracy										

INTEREST PROFILE — Rothwell-Miller Interest Blank —

This profile is based on an interest inventory which measures preferences for various types of occupation. The higher the measured interest, the greater the likelihood that a career in this field will prove satisfying. However, the realism of the interest should be examined — it may be relevant to recreation rather than to a career choice. This is particularly true of the outdoor, aesthetic, musical and literary categories.

Remember that this represents the pattern at the moment and that interests change.

NB It is important not to confuse interest with ability.

Tot	OUT	MECH	COMP	SCI	PERS	AESTH	LIT	MUS	SOC. SERV.	CLER	PRAC	MED	Tot
0													0
5													5
10													10
15													15
20													20
25													25
30													30
35													35
40													40
45													45
50													50
55													55
60													60
65													65
70													70
75													75
80													80
85													85
90													90
95													95
100													100
105													105
110													110
FIELD	Occupations which involve												
OUTdoor	working outdoors with plants and animals, sporting activities etc.												
MEChanical	using tools, machinery, equipment												
COMputational	working with figures												
SCientific	discovering new facts; solving problems												
PERSuasive	meeting and dealing with people; managing or organising; promoting projects; selling												
AESThetic	being creative; designing; decorating												
LITerary	reading, writing, dealing with words												
MUSical	playing or listening to music												
SOCial SERVICE	working with people in a helpful or supportive capacity												
CLERical	doing routine office work requiring precision and accuracy												
PRACTical	doing tasks requiring manual skill but little theoretical knowledge												
MEDical	working in hospitals or with sick people												

COMMENTS ON INTEREST PATTERN

Comments on interest pattern and the career fields in which he/she is most likely to find satisfaction.

PERSONALITY

Comments regarding personality, traits relevant to interpersonal relationships, general adjustment, level of aspiration and motivation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Comments on the client's suitability for the career field and level of qualification considered at present or for the future in terms of his or her: educational background, work experience, test results, level of application achieved, interest pattern, personality traits relevant to interpersonal relationships, general adjustment, level of aspiration and motivation. A first choice, second choice, alternatives, in-company or ex-company are discussed.

COUNSELLORS SIGNATURE.

WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

Please try to answer all the questions put to you in this questionnaire.

Do not answer merely with a "Yes" or with a "No" but give your reasons.

It is not necessary for you to give us all the information requested below (though this would be highly appreciated!), but please indicate the size of your organisation in terms of number of employees and to which sector of industry your company belongs.

Your name -----

Your designation -----

Number of employees in your company -----

Industrial sector to which your
company belongs -----

1. Do you see a need in your company for occasionally bringing a consultant from outside the company to test and interview an employee within a career-planning context?

2. What do you think the attitude towards participating in such a career planning exercise would be among the employees in your company?
3. Do you think that any of the questions in the questionnaire that is sent to the company could be considered as an intrusion?
4. The options for a career outside the company are also often discussed with the employee in the interview. Do you think this is fair to the company?

- 5(a). Do you think the company and the employee should receive copies of the same report or should these reports differ in some respect? How?
- 5(b). Who should have access to the information (or any part of the information) contained in the report apart from a representative of the personnel department and the employee?
6. Do you think a joint discussion regarding the future career development of the employee, between the employee concerned, a representative of the personnel department, the employee's immediate superior and the counsellor after the psychological assessment would be a useful exercise?

7. How do you suggest that the counsellor can avoid that her assessment and report be used for any other purposes than they are intended eg. as a false reason for firing the employee?
8. Additional comments regarding the method presently employed by the NIPR when undertaking a career planning case or on the ethical or practical problems involved:

