

THE PROFESSIONALISM OF THE VOCATIONAL EVALUATOR:  
CHANGING ROLES, CHANGING RESPONSIBILITIES

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ABSTRACT

Professionalism is measured by "status, methods, character, or standards," according to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (1969). Vocational evaluation is evolving toward professional status, as practitioners and educators seek to establish standards and methods of "best practice" which define the profession's unique character. In this evolutionary process the role and responsibility of the vocational evaluator is changing. Factors to consider in this change are: (1) the political climate both external and internal to the evaluation setting; (2) the diverse scope of information needs of referral agents; (3) the severity of disability as measured by the functional limitations of persons referred; (4) the technological advancements in the methods of testing and reporting vocational information; (5) the diversity of evaluation settings; and (6) the content and availability of training for practitioners.

At present most practitioners work in either secondary education-linked or rehabilitation community-linked settings. While they perform similar vocational appraisal functions, diagnosis and prescription, they are influenced differently by these factors of change. Yet, the impact upon the profession as a whole is significant and far-reaching. These factors are presented for consideration regarding present service delivery, program planning, and especially, staff development (from the perspectives of both practitioners and educators). Recommendations for proactive involvement for advocating the professionalism of vocational evaluation are presented.

Vocational Appraisal: The Profession

Vocational evaluators continue to strive to identify vocational evaluation as a distinct profession. In actuality and by definition, as supported by the organization most commonly identified with vocational evaluation, the Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association (VEWAA), it represents multi-level process of assessment or appraisal. Specifically, **assessment** is "a generic term for the process of measurement of an individual's level of functioning" (VEWAA Glossary, 1983, p.1). It is important to note that vocational assessment is one type of appraisal, as the VEWAA Glossary definition stipulates "...the following areas: vocational, personal, social, medical, intellectual, etc." (1983, p.1). To clarify the distinctions between the specific service of vocational evaluation and the broader service system of vocational assessment, the following definition is presented (VEWAA Glossary, 1983).

**Assessment** is common to human service programs. The relationship of vocational evaluation services within assessment is as follows:

Level I - **Screening** - initial process designed to arrive at a decision for provision of additional services. Typically this level involves interviewing and a limited amount of psychometric testing.

Level II - **Clinical** - intermediate process which involves a detailed case study, in-depth vocational counseling, and/or use of psychometric test information. This may include identification of transferable skills and job matching.

Level III - **Vocational Evaluation** - a comprehensive process that systematically utilizes work, either real or simulated, as the focal point for assessment and vocational exploration, the purpose of which is to assist individuals in vocational development. Vocational evaluation incorporates medical, psychological, social, vocational, educational, cultural, and economic data into the process to attain the goals of evaluation (pp. 2-3).

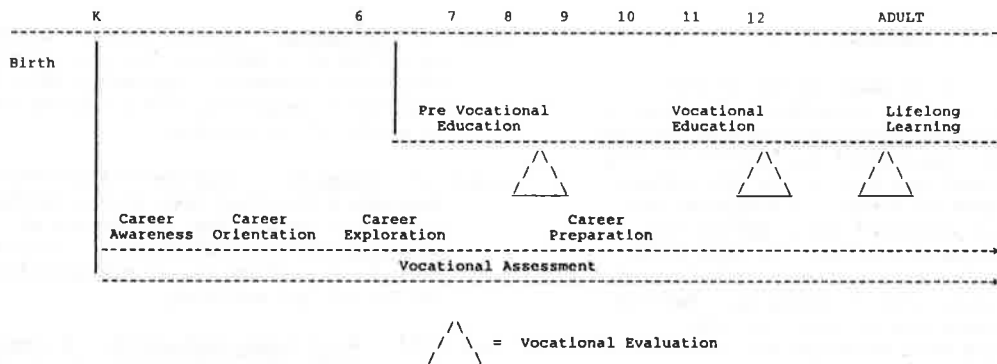
For the purposes of this paper and to avoid misunderstanding based on current usage and practice, **vocational appraisal** will be the term used to describe any process of measurement of an individual's level of vocational functioning.

This stratification defines **processes** and **purposes**. A critical element in these levels which is missing in the professional definitions is timing: frequency and duration of the processes. Assessment at Levels I and II should be of short duration and of sufficient frequency to be termed ongoing and occurring as needed. Level III vocational evaluation is a process defined by a formal beginning and end; in other words, it is a time-limited service. It may be repeated several times during the vocational career of an individual, especially as major lifetime benchmarks are reached (e.g. high school entrance, high school exit, college graduation, career shifts/changes). The scope and intensity of testing, data collection, and self-appraisal in vocational evaluation make it a difficult process to use as an ongoing measure. It is costly in terms of resources and time to use effectively in a continuous manner.

Once defined, appraisal can and should be a continuum of experiences which may occur throughout the vocational development and career life of an individual.

The lifeline depicted in Figure 1 represents possible periods when vocational evaluation may be indicated and provided. For each individual, these benchmarks may be configured differently by timing and sequence (when and for how long). Conversely, vocational assessment is a career long process which examines and refines career paths and vocational development. In fact, some professionals from the field of special education might refer to it as "career assessment" (Sitlington, Brolin, Clark, Vacanti, 1985). This depiction of the process of

FIGURE 1  
"EXPECTED" Continuum of Services



Note: Services are depicted on a continuum to illustrate an expected flow and progression of services and clarify differences in levels and purposes of assessment. Such a rendition is mythical, as in reality each individual participates in life processes and requires a dynamic mosaic of services which occur at different times and in different sequences for each individual.

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vocational appraisal should help to reduce the confusion surrounding the assessment-evaluation issue.

#### Vocational Evaluators: The Professionals

The confusion of defining services carries over to the practitioners of vocational assessment and vocational evaluation, who work in a variety of settings. The problematic semantics of "assessor" as a professional title have forced many practitioners to call themselves "vocational evaluators," although their skills include the more broad assessment ones as well as those which are specific and unique to vocational evaluation. One can consider, by way of analogy, a physician who practices neurology identifies him or herself as a neurologist, describing the highest skill level of his or her medical training. Similarly, a vocational evaluator identifies with his or her most refined skill, vocational evaluation, although he or she is an assessor in the broadest terms of the vocational appraisal process. The focus on the title "vocational evaluator" makes it difficult for many both outside and within this field to understand that these practitioners can provide a broad scope of vocational appraisal services, including screening, clinical assessments, and vocational evaluations.

This limited understanding of title contributes to the confusion about the roles and functions of vocational evaluators. In fact, the roles have been constricted by such thinking. This confusion has carried over to include the scope of practice. How the service is perceived, its value, and ultimately, the stature of practitioners have been negatively affected. Individuals who practice vocational evaluation and vocational assessment have assumed lowered self images among professionals as a result of not having a clear, universally understood identity.

While somewhat depreciating and frustrating for those involved, this confusing phase is one of many in the evolution of a profession and is not unique to vocational appraisal (Vollmer &

Mills, 1966; Gilley, 1986). Action is needed by those who identify with this profession to advocate for its continued progress toward professional status. To do this, vocational evaluators must understand the differences in terminology and make a concerted effort to educate other professionals and the public.

From an historical perspective, the term professional has evolved in definition from one "who has taken the vows of a religious order" to "one who professes to be duly qualified" (Hughes, 1965, p.2). This claim separates the one who knows, and "can do," from the one who does not know, and "cannot do." To carry this argument further, Hughes continues,

Professionals profess. They profess to know better than others the nature of certain matters, and to know better than their clients what ails them or their affairs.... The professionals claim the exclusive right to practice, as a vocation, the arts which they profess to know, and to give the kind of advice derived from their special lines of knowledge. This is the basis of the license, both in the narrow sense of legal permission and in the broader sense that the public allows those in a profession a certain leeway in their practice. (1965, p.2).

In keeping with this definition of a professional, it can be concluded that vocational evaluators demonstrate an exclusivity of skill and practice which separates them from other rehabilitation, education, and allied health personnel. Just as the unique element of vocational evaluation is its focus on work, which distinguishes it from screening or a clinical assessment, so, too, are evaluators distinguished by their knowledge of occupations, their ability to analyze work into tasks, elements, and environments, and their skill of synthesizing the personal and environmental data of individuals into vocationally relevant

needs. Yet, specific referral questions to guide this effort too frequently are lacking. It is imperative and incumbent upon the vocational evaluator to identify information needs at the onset. This may involve consultation and training of referral agents by the vocational evaluator. Due to staffing patterns and program changes, this effort should be ongoing. Regular contacts with all parties involved using direct, investigative questioning are necessary to plan for, conduct, and record accurate and appropriate outcomes.

It is at the planning stage in the process that a decision as to level of assessment should be made. Whereas semantics may dictate that a person has been referred for a vocational evaluation, in actuality the data needs, once identified, may be addressed through a less intensive, less time-consuming, and less costly assessment, such as a simple screening, clinical testing, or a series of community job try-outs.

To be able to identify outcome needs and customize the process accordingly is a strong capability of the vocational evaluator. This skill distinguishes this professional from others in the vocational appraisal field. Identified as "individualized vocational evaluation planning" under the Critical Knowledge and Performance Areas of CCWAVES, planning, and inherently, selection of appropriate services, is recognized by that certifying body as fundamental to the competent practice of vocational appraisal.

Many settings are not providing appraisal services to these divergent referral agents. To be effective and to be of service, it is important for vocational evaluators to identify information needs accurately, plan the assessment or evaluation process adequately, and address the final report for outcomes that specify direct actions to be taken, in the most positive terms possible. The notions of "unemployable," "no potential," and "no services recommended" are not acceptable as outcomes. The vocational success demonstrated by many individuals previously so labelled warrants the elimination of these "non-results." If the professional evaluator does not find a good match between his/her service and an individual client, he/she is responsible for having investigated alternative resources enough to recommend a specific, different service for the client.

Vocational evaluators, to be effective and successful as professionals, need to become acquainted with both referral sources and with potential outcome resources, not just "what is" but "what could be." Recommendations they write may exceed the present services available in a local facility, school, or community, especially if those recommendations are feasible for development and implementation within timelines (even extended ones) to serve that individual. But, it falls upon the evaluator's shoulders to communicate the need for new or alternative services to the individuals who have the power and authority to initiate changes.

#### Severity of Disability

Advancements in medicine to diagnose and

treat many formerly untreatable health problems have brought many new, and more severely disabled persons into vocational appraisal settings. These impairments can be congenital or traumatic, physical or psychological. Individuals with multiple handicaps are being referred and served; often intervention begins early in one's vocational development. For all of these harder to serve individuals, vocational potential is a realistic and necessary question.

As the severity of disability presents more complicated medical and/or psychological histories, it is important not to focus on the complications but to establish functional capacities. Labels abound, and it is too easy to focus on the stereotypical characteristics of each label. Presenting problems at time of onset do differ with each individual; recovery and resultant gains differ also.

It is important for the vocational evaluator to gain knowledge of the basic etiology and treatment indicated, such that a thorough and intelligent case review can be conducted. Subsequently, a knowledge of effective techniques to assess (or refer for assessment of) functional capacity is necessary to serve these persons in a meaningful and professional manner. Once a list of these capacities is recorded, the evaluator needs the skill to configure them to match job requirements. This requires evaluator knowledge of the handicapping conditions and capacities, functional assessment techniques, and familiarity with a myriad of job requisites and demands.

These new challenges in vocational appraisal services demand that vocational evaluators upgrade their skills to guide more complex vocational decision-making. This represents a progressive change in vocational evaluator responsibilities, for which training options have lagged behind significantly. Administrative support must be solicited and confirmed to meet this training and service demand.

#### Technological Advancements

Concurrent with an understanding of functional assessment capacities, vocational evaluators need to acquaint themselves with technological advancements related to assessment and to possible treatment strategies to include in recommendations.

The proliferation of commercial work sample systems and computerized data base software packages dominate the market when one is thinking "technology." More important than the hardware or the software is the "brainware," that the vocational evaluator brings by creatively thinking of all forms of technology and their applications to the assessment process.

Technology includes everything from the most simple devices called work jigs to assist workers to perform all physical operations of a job, to sophisticated communication devices. Understanding technology as used in restorative services is important so the vocational evaluator can intervene and/or recommend consultation with professionals (e.g. physiatrists,

psychologists, psychiatrists, work hardening specialists, speech/hearing specialists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, rehabilitation engineers or technologists, etc.). Technological intervention can occur at any point in the vocational appraisal process; before, during, or after.

Evaluators must communicate with others on the rehabilitation team that technology must be incorporated into every aspect of the rehabilitation and appraisal processes if programs are to be truly accessible in terms of physical, attitudinal, and instructional barriers. If an evaluator feels that a client can benefit from a different or improved method of performing, then they should consult with others on the team as well as with the client. Often clients are referred for vocational evaluation services prior to referral for assessment and treatment by a rehabilitation technologist or engineer. It is far more equitable to use technology assessment data and interventions before vocational evaluation occurs. A close partnership between evaluators and technologists is preferred if clients are to gain maximum tools to engage in work.

Work hardening and cognitive retraining are examples of technological advancements which have proven effective with many physical and traumatic head injuries. The latest pharmacological advancements do have an impact on psychologically disabled persons, as different drugs change chemical balances in the body. These changes affect behavior and performance. Evaluators need to remain current as to the commonly prescribed drugs, their side effects and contraindications, and their maintenance needs, as they impact upon vocational potential of the user.

#### Diversity of Setting

In the past approximately fifteen to twenty years, vocational appraisal has taken place primarily in two settings: rehabilitation-linked settings (sheltered workshops rehabilitation centers, hospitals), and a variety of school settings. With the proliferation of new assessment terminology spawned from researchers and educators in both rehabilitation and education (special and vocational), it is difficult to recognize the need to isolate such assessment processes by outcome, by environment, or by technique.

The same fundamental measurements are conducted by qualified professionals trained to observe and record, whether the service is called employability assessment, supported employment assessment, transitional assessment, community-based vocational assessment, environmental assessment, school-based vocational assessment, or curriculum-based vocational assessment, etc. The factors which determine which assessment label to use are the purpose, scope, and expectations of all involved. Consensus as to why will determine what, how, where, and when. Once again the vocational evaluator's skill in planning is critical and fundamental to the success of the assessment. Thus, evaluator's should serve on planning teams

for services both in schools and in adult service settings.

#### Training Available

Throughout the professionalization process, the need for training practitioners is fundamental. A true profession demands that its practitioners be professionals; practitioners need training to achieve and maintain professional status.

Yet the confusion about language, and the administrative ambiguity from federal to local levels surrounding commitment to vocational appraisal services contribute to an inadequate training initiative, both in pre-service and in-service capacities. Master's level education programs exist primarily on short-term (three years) grant cycles; renewal procedures are fraught with tension as competition for dwindling dollars is keen. The Rehabilitation Services Administration has provided the primary source (the sole source for many years) of training funds and programs for vocational evaluators, yet the service is appropriate and needed in educational settings. More recently, special education has contributed a very small amount of funds to such training in pre-service or for Master's degrees. Vocational education which has not had preservice authority for several years has devoted some funds for in-service activities. There is a very evident need for coordination of training funds and activities as well as a need by the profession to advocate for additional sources of training dollars.

The vagaries of funding priorities combined with untimely grant funding procedures contribute to tenuous faculty and student commitments to formal training by necessity, not by choice. This hesitancy carries over into practice, as evaluators, many of whom have been trained on-the-job, look to more stable and lucrative career options when considering post-graduate study.

In-service training opportunities are limited, in part due to funding and lack of consensus on continuing education unit sponsorship. The role of the local university in coordinating training opportunities for employed vocational evaluators is unclear; the continuing education unit process promoted by CCWAVES is unfamiliar to other rehabilitation and education training professionals. Thus at local, regional, and national conferences, there is great confusion as to how to document and manage the continuing education process. In fact, in most rehabilitation-sponsored professional conferences, all rehabilitation personnel are expected to apply for continuing educational units which fall under the rehabilitation counselor system.

Advocacy of the profession is strongly needed to resolve these training issues. As Hughes contends, "...the characteristics and collective claims of a profession are dependent upon a close solidarity among its members, constituting in some measuring a group apart with an ethos of its own. This in turn implies

information.

While vocational evaluators, as professionals, may profess in a variety of settings, such as rehabilitation centers, hospitals, schools, colleges, private for profit practices and the like, their critical knowledge and performance areas should be universal. Ultimately, the practice of vocational appraisal is universal and independent of setting for the most part.

#### Vocational Appraisal: Professionalism

In the professionalization process, discussion proceeds from profession to professionals to professionalism. Professionalism is defined as those attributes and characteristics displayed by persons employed in the occupation (Ritzer, 1973). The recognition and expectation by others of these practitioner attributes and characteristics are fundamental indicators of professionalism. Several measures of professionalism are "status methods, character, and standards," (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 1969). As Hughes affirms, "every profession considers itself the proper body to set the terms in which some aspect of society, life, or nature is to be thought of, and to define the general lines, or even the details of public policy concerning it," (1965, p.3).

It can be concluded that it is incumbent upon the vocational evaluator to initiate and lead all efforts regarding professionalization. Such initiatives range from direct service activities through policies and legislative concerns. Part of this leadership involves establishing and maintaining standards of practice.

Vocational evaluators are seeking standards through their national certification process as established by the Commission on Certification of Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Specialists (CCWAVES). This independent body represents professional organizations connected with vocational appraisal and its practice, supervision, growth, and development. The process of credential review involves the attainment of specific educational and work experience requirements. It is coupled either with continuing education or with knowledge testing, which determines those persons recognized and ultimately certified as possessing, at minimum, entry-level competencies for the practice of vocational appraisal.

It may be ambitious and a somewhat "blind leap of faith" to assume that these certified persons include all the professionals who practice vocational appraisal. Rather, they may represent a vanguard of committed practitioners who identify professionally, although perhaps not exclusively, with this profession.

During this embryonic phase in the evolution of the profession of vocational appraisal, there are a number of factors contributing to its growth and which are responsible for the accelerated changes in its practice. Factors to consider in this phase are: the political climate, both external and internal, to the assessment setting; the diverse scope of information needs of referral agents; the severity of

disability as measured by the functional limitations of persons referred; the technological advancements in the methods of testing and reporting vocational information; the diversity of settings; and the content and availability of training for practitioners.

These factors challenge the traditional foundations of vocational appraisal and its practitioners. The vocational evaluator who was trained or "initiated" into vocational appraisal twenty years ago has tools, theories, and applications (methods) that are outdated. It is time to retool.

#### External Political Climate

At the federal level there have been major changes in the administration and funding of vocational programs for special needs populations. In present vocational rehabilitation legislation, P.L. 99-506, the term and the service, vocational evaluation, are inferred but not stated. However, assessment is emphasized in the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984, P.L. 98-524. In fact, it is targeted as an essential supplemental service. The transition emphasis in special education legislation over the past four years has directed attention to the need for vocational assessment services. More recently, youth programs sponsored by the Job Training Partnership Act are requiring vocationally relevant assessment prior to placement in training programs. Concurrent with the combined thrusts of these federal mandates, administrative policies have been disseminated from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) which target transition and call for new approaches to vocational appraisal. Despite these federal initiatives, translation of policy into programming and actual service delivery has fallen short of expectations, at least those held by vocational evaluators.

Now, administrative initiatives and funding demand that it is time "to put the house in order," to address these implementation problems and resolve issues. Yet, as so often befalls many such "housekeeping" efforts, "the furniture has been rearranged and no one knows where to sit." In other words, the fiscal resources and service models have been rearranged. Sadly, the new models have supplanted rather than supplemented other useful services, such as the various approaches which fall under the purview of vocational appraisal.

In fact, promotion of decentralized and transitional services has appeared to diminish the role of vocational appraisal. There are even national level spokespersons and trainers who advocate for the dissolution of traditional appraisal services, e.g. vocational evaluation, and who are encouraging replacement with screening techniques, e.g. interviews and job try-outs, performed by entry level practitioners who are not formally trained in assessment skills but acquire them on the job.

This climate of disarray has impacted negatively upon both the practice and the esteem of trained professionals of vocational

appraisal. Similarly, the development of professionalism has been impeded. A growing number of vocational evaluators in rehabilitation have expressed the concern that their practices and roles have been devalued, and, in some cases, they are being asked to abandon their commitment to most appropriate vocational appraisal practices.

Reversal of this wave of negativism requires redefining the services that comprise vocational appraisal and renewing a strong professional identity among practitioners. Vocational evaluators need to reassert their capabilities to perform all services along the vocational appraisal continuum. This means that they should inform the public of their abilities to screen, assess clinically, and provide comprehensive vocational evaluation services as determined by the needs of individuals, not programs. Recognition of this renewal and assertion are part of the change process which vocational evaluators are undergoing. Consultation, coordination, staff development and program monitoring are job responsibilities which have been added to the role of vocational evaluators. These are tasks that they should embrace with enthusiasm and for which they should seek or demand training

#### Internal Political Climate

This external political climate is, in part, due to problems vocational evaluators have made or fallen prey to within their own environments. Specifically, the outcomes of the vocational appraisal process, in terms of vocational potential of individuals has often been too negative. The limitations and inabilities of evaluatees often outnumber assets according to final vocational evaluation reports. What a person cannot do is overstated, whereas what he/she can do is not emphasized. In addition, recommendations for services do not include decentralized options, such as supported employment programs or other creative opportunities. A number of techniques, such as situational assessment, are not used to their fullest potential either.

Often the politics of this internal situation are not easy to fathom or resolve. If the only problem were the perspectives of the vocational evaluator, in other words, the report author, it would be easier to address through training and supervisory efforts. However, it is not uncommon for the evaluator's host agency or the referring agent to impose expectations on the vocational appraisal process which are self-fulfilling. Work adjustment programs are filled with referrals from vocational evaluation units within the same agency. Referring counselors, attorneys, or family members shape the outcomes of vocational appraisal by the data they provide and the messages they convey throughout the process. Unfortunately, vocational evaluators unwittingly conspire in this miscommunication process, partly because they have not been trained to watch for such problems.

Economics shape the vocational evaluation or other appraisal processes, too, in that evaluation units need repeat business to survive. Thus, outcomes must serve the "client" who is

purchasing the service as well as the individual client who is participating in it.

Issues of accountability and professional liability present another type of political pressure upon the vocational evaluator. To countermand any legal ramifications of service provision, the vocational evaluator and his/her sponsoring agency should participate in all credentialing activities and relevant training to prepare for expert testimony. Liability insurance coverage should be secured by the professional and his/her employer. Vocational evaluators must advocate actively for these basic requirements.

Awareness and the ability to operate as a practitioner and a professional are critical to successful practice in such political environments. Both in-service training and professional organization affiliation are methods for remaining current regarding political and policy changes and their impacts on service delivery. Support from colleagues can be very helpful in dealing with politics in local, state, and regional environments. Affiliating with fellow professionals promotes the aggregate power "to change things"; there is, indeed power in numbers. Communication channels need to be strengthened among vocational appraisal professionals in all fields, such as rehabilitation, education, allied health, and employment training. The onus is upon the professional to initiate and maintain these efforts, and one of the most effective methods is through professional associations.

#### Diverse Scope of Information Needs

Given the many "publics" vocational evaluators serve, it is important to recognize the diversity of information needs of referring agents. Rehabilitation in the public and private non-profit sectors has a well-defined service model (although it is adjusting and expanding at present) that deals with the "gestalt" of the person. It seeks to serve all needs which interfere with successful vocational outcomes, which may not be as tied to economics as they are to quality of life. In schools, vocational appraisal services are conducted to help insure appropriate placement of students for successful vocational programming, to plan vocational development and to facilitate the transition from school to work. Implied in this process of earlier vocational intervention is the expectation that successful assessment, training, and placement will diminish the need and costs for adult support services. Private-for-profit rehabilitation, the Workers' Compensation Commission, and the Social Security Administration, conversely, focus less on services and more on settlement issues. The economics of wage earning potential, wage loss, and costs of successful return to work are critical for these agencies.

Persons referred for vocational appraisal from these different perspectives are in need of somewhat different services and outcomes. This challenges the vocational evaluator to create individual appraisal processes to meet those

deep and lifelong commitment" (1965, p.3). A professional identity, supported by practicing members, represents a strong lobby for recognition at all levels, federal, local, and among colleagues, as well as serving as a strong lobby for change.

Vocational evaluators, by identifying with the profession and with one another, need to develop a strong support network to address issues and effect change. It has been said that knowledge begets power, and such power is needed to change federal priorities to reassert the role of vocational appraisal in all vocational services in all settings. With federal and local support, money and programs can be targeted for training opportunities as often as needed in all environments.

Specific issues identified as potential training topics for professional skill development in this paper include comprehensive knowledge of appraisal theory and applications, effective report writing and communication, planning for services and programs, marketing, use of technological advancements and community resources, and advocacy.

#### The Professionalization Process: A Summary

Vocational appraisal is a new term to describe an existing service encumbered by a variety of labels dependent upon setting. This process has application for any or all persons seeking to identify and describe the vocational functioning of an individual. A new term is suggested to remove the bias of setting which many of the other terms engender. It also seeks to reduce confusion and to promote the universality of the practice, independent of labels or settings.

In the evolution of profession, this phase of growth, self-appraisal, and resulting ambiguity is a common one. The overall process is challenging to establish a professional identity with standards and methods of practice which promote the status of practitioners to that of professionals. Training is the single most critical factor which addresses change in responsibilities and roles in a positive and ultimately "professional" way. Advocacy is needed to promote training and professional development. By aligning themselves with professional associations, evaluators can enhance the image of the profession, help create an expectation of or identity for the profession by the public, promote and monitor the "character" and ethical practices in the profession, and effect positive changes in service design and delivery.

Vocational appraisal proponents need to coalesce the semantics, the practitioners and advocates in all settings, and their research efforts, particularly as they relate to the efficacy of the assessment process, to determine that assessment results at all levels predict positive vocational outcomes and, that assessment results and recommendations are used in planning and program implementation. Practitioners must make the extra effort to write about exemplary practices and communicate needs

for training and make recommendations for improvements within the profession -- it is far better for professionals to self-appraise and critique than to allow problems to advance to stages where others find it necessary to criticize the field. Although it seems a lot to ask of professionals who contribute one hundred per cent to their jobs, the professionalization of vocational appraisal will advance only by the active involvement and creative leadership of practitioners and educators at local, state, regional and national levels. Without such commitment the future of this profession is unclear.

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