THE NEW WORKER

cec ASSOCIATES INCORPORATED est. 1983

Spring 2012

Ecological Validity in Vocational Assessments

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Evaluation of work options for individuals with and without occupationally significant medical conditions requires comprehensive investigation, which is often performed within the constraints of limited time and money. To be useful, such investigations must be as accurate as personnel or rehabilitation assessments can make them. To evaluate occupational skills and vocational potential with standardized measures requires not only thoughtful preparation of skilled practitioners, but also time, money, and subject cooperation.

Moreover, assessment of an individual's vocational prospects carries with it the recognition that the behaviors being measured in the laboratory setting may not always be generalizable to "real-world" activities and competencies. Vocational rehabilitation and career assessment professionals must endeavor to fully appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of psychological and vocational assessment tools as data-gathering and decision-making methodologies.

It takes a good deal of knowledge and judgment to properly use psycho-vocational measures to evaluate and predict the occupational capabilities of individuals who are, for whatever reason, attempting to make a career change. Having confidence in and knowing the limitations of what tests and measures actually predict in terms of expected behavior outside the laboratory setting are fundamental principles in good assessment practice.

Ecological validity is the degree to which the behaviors observed and recorded in a study reflect the behaviors that actually occur in natural settings. Ecological validity is associated with "generalizability," that is, the extent to which the findings from a study realistically mimic (or extend to) activities and behaviors in life. The control created by the laboratory setting can potentially alter ecological validity.

The more control educational and vocational psychologists, for example, exert in a laboratory study (e.g., creating quiet surroundings for intelligence and aptitude test taking), the less ecological validity one can typically anticipate, as the laboratory environment and behaviors measured within it

simply do not replicate variables in the real world. Thus, even if the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) measures the constructs of word knowledge, math computation, and writing abilities, one must question to what extent SAT performances predict success in college, when in fact, college environments require students to manifest so much more (often personality characteristics) in those environments for success, if success means acquiring a four-year degree.

Furthermore, one must question how generalizable achievement in college classrooms is to real-world settings. Anyone with the responsibilities of hiring, training, and supervising recent college graduates for workplace success has more than likely questioned whether scholastic test performances and college grades have anything to do with workplace competencies. Ecological validity may be the keystone between assessment and practical application, but it entails more than predicting behavioral outcomes from tests and measures.

Ecological validity in the personnel and vocational rehabilitation assessment processes requires an understanding of the relationship among tests, inventories, and other available procedures employed in a laboratory setting, as well as the capacity of those procedures to predict behaviors in the workplace. Ecological validity may involve reducing laboratory controls to more accurately replicate natural environments. A brief history of psychological and vocational measurement may facilitate a better understanding of how one might increase ecological validity in the assessment process.

A Brief History of Test Development

Validity is the single most important attribute of a good test, according to Howard B. Lyman in his classic, *Test Scores and What They Mean*, now in its sixth edition. Further, attempting to predict success in real-world challenges from performances on standardized tests and measures is as old as applied psychology itself. The English biologist Sir Francis Galton may have been responsible for launching the testing movement as early as the late 1800s. His student, Karl Pearson, carried the work forward.

The American psychologist James McKeen Cattel opened a testing laboratory at the University of Pennsylvania in 1888 and coined the term "mental test" in 1890. Galton, Pearson, and Cattel were concerned with the development of standardized questionnaires and rating scales that would be used to measure sensory discrimination and reaction time as well as speed of movement, keenness of vision and hearing, memory, and other performance capabilities as methods of determining the intellectual levels of college students, obviously one population that could be readily available for experimentation.

Alfred Binet criticized early testing as being too dependent on "sensory" data and focused unduly on simple, specialized abilities, perhaps voicing an initial concern for what would become known as ecological validity. Binet and his associates are credited with developing the first "intelligence" test, and in 1916, the Binet-Simon scale was published. Today, the progeny of these early "mental tests" are now known as IQ tests. Whether or not these measures truly and accurately measure something called intelligence (the ratio between mental age and chronological age) remains the subject of considerable debate. In the years since, some believe that multiple types of intelligence have been identified, including crystallized intelligence, fluid intelligence, and emotional intelligence.

Howard Gardner of Harvard University has proposed that there are at least nine types of intelligence and that traditional intelligence tests favor particular types of individuals (i.e., logical and

mathematical types). Whether traditional intelligence tests predict real-world outcomes may be even more hypothetical.

Nonetheless, when the United States entered World War I in 1917, a committee was appointed by the American Psychological Association to consider ways in which psychology, and specifically standardized measurement, might assist in the conduct of the war. Testing became a method of selection. Although intelligence tests were originally designed to sample a wide variety of functions that might estimate the subject's general intellectual level, it soon became apparent that such tests were quite limited in their application of competencies for industrial and military personnel. WWI witnessed the advent of group intelligence testing for the purpose of military selection and training.

In 1921, the Psychological Corporation (now Pearson Assessments) became the first major test publisher. Founded by Dr. Cattel and other experimental and applied psychologists, the Psychological Corporation spearheaded the development of psychoeducational tests and standardized measures. In 1932, the World Book Corporation published the first edition of the Metropolitan Achievement Tests for use in educational testing in New York City. In 1938, the first Mental Measurements Yearbook (which is still in existence) was published. In 1939, the Psychological Corporation published the Wechsler-Bellevue Intelligence Tests. In 1942, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory was first published, and in 1949, the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children was made available to psychologists.

Since that time, test construction and interpretation have improved with statistical refinements, such as "factor analysis," allowing for psychological testing to yield information regarding individual strengths and weaknesses. All factor analyses end with a factor matrix, and matrices allow for more psychological "insight" by predicting the "amounts" of relevant variables or factors one might need for success in a particular task. Test administrators could now measure several personality characteristics and multiple aptitudes, predicting different behaviors that might be required in various settings.

The availability of electronic analysis of variables allowed for even more refined techniques in making sense of collected data. Psychological tests became commonly employed aids in occupational decisions, including both individual counseling decisions and institutional selection and classification of personnel. Employment testing of job applicants with and without disabilities has become a primary means of focusing on each applicant's potentials and proper "fit" in the workplace.

Greater resolution of assessment data, in terms of ecological validity, remains the challenge of those with the responsibility of workplace personnel selection, training, and promotion. A test that measures what it claims to measure can be more useful when the test administrator has a good appreciation of job analysis.

Job analysis is a systematic process used to identify the tasks, duties, responsibilities, and working conditions associated with a given job. Job analysis reveals the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics required to successfully perform a job. This is usually gathered by direct observation of people currently in the job, interviews with experienced supervisors and job incumbents, questionnaires, personnel and equipment records, and work manuals. Job analysis is the basis for the creation of job descriptions, and when used properly, job descriptions can delineate what tasks are required and what worker characteristics are essential for job completion. Unfortunately, too many vocational assessment personnel rely heavily upon job analysis and job

description exclusively in determining the prospects of an applicant's success.

However, contrary to Shakespearean thought, experience tells us that the *past is not necessarily prelude*. After all, occupational change and the application of previously undemonstrated capabilities constitute the *sine qua non* of vocational rehabilitation.

The responsibility for the ecological validity of a test belongs to the user of the test, in this case, the professionals in vocational rehabilitation and job selection. Test makers are responsible for constructing the best test possible; vocational professionals are responsible for choosing to use tests that are ecologically valid, that is, those that measure what they need to measure to provide meaningful, predictive data.

The Significance of Ecological Validity for Employers

The ultimate question is whether any test can predict what it professes to predict. Does the SAT test predict college success? Can the Wonderlic Cognitive Ability Test (formerly the Wonderlic Personnel Test) predict the future success of a drafted Quarterback in the National Football League, as the owners of NFL teams believe it can?
NFL quarterback Vince Young was the subject of an article written by CEC Associates titled, "The Measure of… what?" That article focused on the ecological validity of administering the Wonderlic to NFL quarterbacks. Accepting that ecological validity is the functional and predictive relationship between a test taker's performance on a particular test and the test taker's behavior in the real world, we questioned the generalizability between the Wonderlic test results and playing quarterback in the NFL.

Young, a one-time quarterback of the Tennessee Titans, scored poorly on the Wonderlic and, therefore, according to football experts, should have been a questionable draft pick. We argue that the Wonderlic was misused and did not have sufficient ecological validity to predict quarterback success.

Job performance questions became an issue for quarterback Young, 2005 Heisman Trophy runner-up and Most Valuable Player in the 2006 Rose Bowl. As part of the NFL Scouting Report, Young and other potential 2006 NFL draft picks were tested with the Wonderlic. The test is a 12-minute, 50-question, standardized paper-and-pencil test purported to measure cognitive ability and, by extension, vocational potential. The average score for an NFL prospect is 19, and the average score for those tested in corporate America is 21. It was reported that Young received a score of 6 on the Wonderlic, a potentially disastrous score that many "experts" felt would lower his position in the first round of the draft—or knock him out of the first round entirely. (It was later reported that his low score was due to a scoring error, and he received a 16 after being given a chance to retake the test.) Young eventually went on to be chosen as the 3rd overall pick in the 2006 NFL Draft, but of what relevance is his Wonderlic score to his capacity to function effectively as an NFL quarterback?

Psychometric assessment has a long history of controversy in terms of assigning numbers, such as test scores, to the attributes of persons in order to predict their achievement potentials in a variety of fields, including education, work, and now sports. Most psychological and vocational tests measure behaviors that may or may not be relevant to performance of a particular task or achievement in a specific walk of life.

Among the multiple issues associated with relying upon psychometric instruments to predict outcomes such as job performance is the concept of ecological validity. Ecological validity can be defined as the functional and predictive relationship between the test taker's performance on a particular test and the test taker's behavior in a real-world setting, such as work.

The purpose of vocational or employment testing (apparently the purpose for Young and other potential NFL draft picks taking the Wonderlic) is so those administering the instrument can make accurate predictions from test results to real-world outcomes. The specific value will be in whether the test data predict the test taker's fitness and potential for success in a particular occupation. In the Young situation, it seems quite a stretch to argue that his performance on the Wonderlic would be a reliable predictor of his success as an NFL quarterback.

In fact, research has yielded empirical evidence that within the modern NFL draft era, no statistically significant relationship exists between measured intelligence, much less cognitive ability measured by the Wonderlic, and quarterback performance at either the collegiate or professional level (Mirabile, McDonald P., *Intelligence and Football: Testing for Differentials in Collegiate Quarterback Passing Performance and NFL Compensation*. The Sports Journal, Vol 8, No.2, Spring 2005). This finding, of course, does not even begin to address the underlying issue of whether the Wonderlic effectively measures intelligence.

The Duke Power Company Case

The use of quantitative measures of personal characteristics to predict an individual's compatibility with or potential in a particular vocation has been legally controversial since Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted to eradicate employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. The Wonderlic seems to have a history of misuse in determining appropriate employment for individuals administered the test.

Until 1965, when Title VII became effective, Duke Power Company had openly discriminated on the basis of race by allowing African-Americans to work only in the labor department, where workers were paid less than employees in other (i.e., Caucasian) departments. In response to Title VII, the company opened jobs in all departments to people of color, but required a high school diploma for employees transferring from labor jobs to other departments. However, it also required anyone newly employed in jobs outside the labor department to obtain satisfactory scores on two standardized measures: the Wonderlic and the Bennett Mechanical Comprehension Test.

Willie Griggs, a Duke Power Company employee, filed a class action lawsuit against the company on behalf of several fellow African-American employees. On appeal, a unanimous U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Duke Power Company's standardized testing requirement prevented a disproportionate number of African-American employees from being hired. The Supreme Court further ruled that the requirement prevented employees from advancing to higher-paying departments within the company.

The Supreme Court has interpreted section 703 (h) of Title VII as requiring employment tests to be job-related. In the landmark *Griggs* decision, the Supreme Court stated the following about testing under Title VII:

> Nothing in the Act [Title VII] precludes the use of testing or measuring procedures; obviously

> they are useful. What Congress has forbidden is giving these devices and mechanisms controlling force unless they are demonstrably a reasonable measure of job performance. Congress has not commanded that the less qualified be preferred over the better qualified simply because of minority origins. Far from disparaging job qualifications as such, Congress has made such qualifications the controlling factor, so that race, religion, nationality, and sex become irrelevant. What Congress has commanded is that any tests used must measure the person for the job and not the person in the abstract.

The argument here is not against the Wonderlic as a test of cognitive ability, but its application and, in fact, the potential for misuse of any professionally prepared test. The Supreme Court's language speaks to the importance of considering ecological validity when choosing to administer standardized tests and when considering the test results as an important tool in employee selection.

The Supreme Court ruled again in 1975 in the matter of Albemarle Paper Company v. Moody. Like with the employer of Griggs, Albemarle Paper Company used general ability tests: the Payday Examination to test nonverbal intelligence, and the Wonderlic Personnel Test (forms A and B), the purported measure of general verbal facility. The court noted that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) had issued "guidelines" for employers seeking to determine, through professional validation studies, whether their employment tests are job-related.

The EEOC has stated: Employers should ensure that employment tests and other selection procedures are properly validated for the positions and purposes for which they are used. The test or selection procedure must be job-related and its results appropriate for the employer's purpose. While a test vendor's documentation supporting the validity of a test may be helpful, the employer is still responsible for ensuring that its tests are valid under the **Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures**.

Ways to Increase Ecological Validity in Vocational Assessment

Since most tests may not have been developed for specific application, are there strategies that can be used to increase their ecological validity? Following are 10 ways to increase ecological validity in vocational assessment.

1) Using Better Outcome Descriptors

Vocational assessments could potentially have increased ecological validity if the outcome descriptor or criterion is well known. So, for example, if a vocational evaluation proposes to address the capacity to perform a particular job, a detailed job description would allow the evaluator to address the question or issue with greater fidelity.

2) Employing the Best Measures

Vocational assessments may have increased ecological validity if the measures employed are carefully chosen with predictive value in terms of the known outcome, criterion, or expectancy. Moreover, when assessing critical variables such as personality, whenever possible, objective measures with validity indices should be used.

3) Considering Academic, Medical, Vocational, and Other Relevant Documentation

Vocational assessments must consider an individual's pre-morbid or baseline functioning if they are to successfully report any changes in an examinee's behaviors or potentials following trauma or the onset of impairment.

4) Administering Measures of Test-Taking Effort

Vocational assessments have greater ecological validity if test administrators know that the examinee was setting forth good and/or consistent effort.

5) Predicting Vocational Functioning

As suggested in item 1, the assessment of work capabilities is generally more valid for specific jobs than when trying to predict someone's employability in general. Conclusions such as being "unable to perform any type of gainful employment" have a greater chance of being ecologically invalid. Use those measures that tap skills most related to those necessary for the job. **Because the relationship between neuropsychological test results and vocational functioning is far less than perfect, one must be cautious about drawing vocational conclusions from psychological and neuropsychological data alone.** Prediction of job functioning often requires assessment of abilities, aptitudes, work personality/temperament, and occupational interest, and therefore, traditional **neuropsychological assessment** alone may be insufficient. (Guilmette and Kastner in *Ecological Validity of Neuropsychological Testing*, pages 405-407).

6) Utilizing TSA plus Standardized Vocational Testing

For years, vocational evaluators have relied too heavily on the Social Security Disability Insurance model of assessing an individual's employability, namely, Transferable Skills Analysis, when attempting to determine whether an individual's acquired skills are transferable to alternative work, particularly employment that is less physically demanding. Dunn and Cain (2001) have pointed out that traditional assessment methods such as psychometric testing and work sampling may be more sensitive in identifying appropriate vocational goals and potentials, particularly at lower levels of physical work, e.g., sedentary work.

7) Avoiding the Use of Tests Indiscriminately or in Rote Fashion

Assess those abilities, aptitudes, interests, temperaments, cognitive capacities, and other characteristics that are more predictive of success in a particular occupation or a group of occupations. That is, always employing the same battery of tests without being sensitive to specific outcome criteria is likely a waste of time and effort. For example, for clerical, managerial, and professional occupations, numerical and verbal abilities are especially important. Visual-motor speed and perceptual functioning are often necessary for assembly or jobs requiring constructional skills. Test accordingly.

8) Recognizing the Value of Demographic Issues

Demographic factors play an important role in the prediction of work behavior, particularly years of education, age, occupational history, incentive to work, and pre-morbid

personality functioning. Injury severity and functional capacity are also important components of estimating employability. Relying upon test data alone may be misleading. One potentially significant demographic consists of those examinees who have had a background of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE).

9) Considering the Relevance of Cultural Factors

For decades, psychometric assessments have been considered culturally biased. Cultural factors must be considered in predictions resulting from psychometric data. The standard tests used in vocational evaluation for purposes of rehabilitation are Anglo-American for the most part. Tests and measures must be psychometrically sound and empirically validated, but even if they are, many argue that the scores and scales should be free from cultural bias and have the same meaning for clients from all racial and ethnic groups that are being studied in a multi-cultural society. Without recognizing potential bias in most standardized testing and without consideration of the cultural and ethnic limitations in standardized test results, career counselors and vocational disability evaluators will have significant difficulty attempting to find some degree of ecological validity in assessment data.

10) Coming Full Circle

Years ago, vocational assessment was conducted in work tolerance and work adjustment programs, in laboratory settings that involved "hands-on" tasks that replicated particular job demands. During the last decade, so-called assessment centers have become popular. An assessment center consists of a standardized set of behaviorally based exercises reflecting jobs that require communication, cooperation, negotiation, etc. Multiple trained raters observe various candidates in different exercises. The raters score candidates according to defined dimensions of performance specific to each exercise. After all the candidates complete all the exercises, the raters conduct a meeting on each candidate to discuss their performance on each exercise. The assessment center is touted as a "scientific" method to observe job candidates and to assess their skills, competencies, and behaviors.

Other Issues in Vocational Assessments:

The following are other issues that vocational assessment professionals should consider (in no particular order of importance):

- Vocational assessment often fails to consider the "big five" factors inherent in their use. The big five are:

    1. functional capability,
    2. working conditions,
    3. aptitudes,
    4. interests, and
    5. temperament/work personality.

- Vocational assessment is generally more valid for identifying specific jobs than for trying to predict someone's employability in general. Do not test indiscriminately by simply administering measure after measure in a standard battery. Rather, utilize measures that have a greater

likelihood of reflecting residual skills applicable to a particular job or set of jobs.

• Vocational assessment has greater ecological validity when one considers the relationship between test data and a specific job description, but often, the vocational evaluator working in a laboratory setting is making many assumptions about job requirements in the field.

• Vocational assessment should not rely upon neuropsychological data alone, if at all. Psychometric testing and work sampling reflecting the expectation may have greater ecological validity than making judgments from neuropsychological test performances.

• Vocational assessment conducted in the laboratory with standardized test conditions may fail to predict work behaviors required in the real world primarily because the environments of the laboratory setting and in the real world can be so much different. As a result, organizations, including the federal government, have employed assessment centers.

• Many people are not self-referred to vocational assessment, and a complicating factor may be an individual's motivation, or lack thereof, to pursue self-discovery and improvement. Vocational professionals need to be aware of the motivation level of the test taker and consider its implications as required.

• Many people have had negative experiences with testing and test results (i.e., educational testing and feedback). Test-taking anxiety is frequently a complicating factor in assessing the predictive value of test results.

• Gender and cultural issues complicate vocational assessment and should be considered in test performances and test results whenever necessary.

• Often the test administrator/observer is not the individual providing interpretation and feedback, and, as a result, discussing and analyzing "the moment" with the test subject can be lost. Vocational professionals should be experienced enough to assess "item content" of the test(s) they are using or reviewing.

• Very often, vocational success is not measured with standardized testing. Behaviors such as appearance, attendance, perseverance, reactions to criticism, supervisory relationships, co-worker relationships, and work habits are beyond the reach of standardized testing. On the other hand, these behaviors can be assessed if a skilled evaluator has sufficient time and money.

In sum, the most important factors in testing for vocational outcomes are:

- The choice of the test to be used,
- The procedure to be used to administer the test,
- The quality of the interpretation,
- Knowing what the criteria are by having good job descriptions, and
- Having confidence that the content of the chosen test battery can mimic the expectations of the real-world task or environment.

Speaking of Ecological Validity: Are Attractive People More

Successful Than the Rest of Us?

According to Daniel S. Hamermesh, author of a book titled *Beauty Pays: Why Attractive People are More Successful* (Princeton University Press), the evidence shows that they are, by quite a bit.

The premise of this book, based on economic data collected by a noted labor economist at the University of Texas, Austin, is that society favors the beautiful. Better-looking people:

- are more likely to be employed,
- work more productively and profitably,
- receive more substantial pay,
- obtain loan approvals,
- negotiate loans with better terms, and
- have more handsome and highly educated spouses.

Hamermesh also cites data that indicate attractive workers make $230,000 more over a lifetime than those not considered attractive, and that females do better than males in this equation. (The primary underlying reason appears to have a direct connect to Maslow's motivational level of esteem.)

What makes the pronouncement acceptable in the long run is that Hamermesh addresses the idea that "bad looks" are not a "*crucial* disadvantage," and that those who may not be assorted into the beautiful classification can, with the usual diligence, work their way to parity with the beautiful, at least in the workplace.

The Nine Types of Intelligence

In 1983, Howard Gardner, now a professor at Harvard, developed a model that differentiates intelligence into various specific modalities, rather than seeing it as dominated by a single general battery. While Gardner explains the Multiple Intelligences Theory at book length (*Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century*, New York, Basic Books, 1999), one brief excerpt here may help explain the reasoning:

The child who learns to multiply easily is not necessarily generally more intelligent than a child who has more difficulty with the task. The child who takes more time to master simple multiplication may:

1. ***learn best to multiply through a different approach,***
2. ***excel in a field outside of mathematics, or***
3. ***be looking at and understanding the multiplication process at a fundamentally deeper level, or perhaps as an entirely different process.***

The nine specific intelligences that Gardner names and defines are:

1. Naturalistic Intelligence: The human ability to discriminate among living things and be sensitive to other features of the natural world. (The first intelligence in the evolutionary process: Early man.)

2. Musical Intelligence: The capacity to discern pitch, rhythm, timbre, and tone.

3. Logical-Mathematical Intelligence: The ability to calculate, quantify, consider propositions and hypotheses, and carry out complete mathematical operations.

4. Existential Intelligence: The sensitivity and capacity to tackle deep questions about human existence, such as the meaning of life, why we die, and how we got here.

5. Interpersonal Intelligence: The ability to understand and interact with others.

6. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence: The capacity to manipulate objects and use a variety of physical skills.

7. Linguistic Intelligence: The ability to think in words and use language to express and appreciate complex meanings.

8. Intrapersonal Intelligence: The capacity to understand oneself and one's thoughts and feelings, and use such knowledge in planning and directing one's life.

9. Spatial Intelligence: The ability to think in three dimensions.

Some employers do intelligence testing as part of the process used to hire new employees. For those employers, Gardner's theory may provide useful insights into this specific use of intelligence testing.

No Jobs For the Unemployed?

While businesses can no longer legally discriminate by age, race, or sex, a new minority group has emerged: the long-term unemployed. A survey conducted by the National Employment Law Project (NELP) confirms that some employers, both in newspaper ads and online job postings, are adding the caveat: "Unemployed need not apply." Presumably, those who have been separated from the job market for a long period of time will not have the same level of skill or worker readiness as their employed counterparts, or so we are led to believe.

A number of unemployed people in Stamford, Connecticut recently appeared on *60 Minutes* to discuss how they have been discriminated against by the job market for being out of work. Those same individuals have sought job training at The Workplace, a state workforce development center, in southwest Connecticut. Joe Carbone, president of The Workplace, has begun an initiative called Platform to Employment, which assists the unemployed in their efforts to return to work. Participants attend classes and participate in mock job interviews. After completing classes, there is an option to participate in an internship with a business that is looking to hire.

Carbone's aim is to counter the effects of unemployment by rebuilding self-confidence and self-esteem. Of the discrimination against the unemployed, Carbone says it is "unfair" and "wrong."

Lawmakers in some states are fighting back, in the form of legislation that would protect the unemployed from discrimination. New Jersey has passed a law prohibiting advertising a job that "knowingly or purposely" requires an applicant to be employed, and Oregon, Maryland and the

District of Columbia are following suit. According to NELP, such legislation would recognize the rights of workers to pursue job opportunities for which they are qualified, "without having to navigate a catch-22 that requires them to have a job in order to get a job."

In Memoriam: Stephen N. Berk, Ph.D., ABN

In February 2012, our professional colleague and close friend, Stephen N. Berk, Ph.D., died of natural causes at his home in Audubon, Pennsylvania. He is survived by his beautiful wife, Karen, and his healthy and talented children, Jason and Matt.

Dr. Berk was a Board Certified Neuropsychologist who specialized in mental health issues, including the prevention, diagnosis, evaluation, and treatment of brain disorders. He also became deeply interested in the ecological validity of neuropsychological testing.

Although always modest and never one to profess his many accomplishments, we will share a very few of Dr. Berk's professional achievements.

- Past President of the Pennsylvania Psychological Association (PPA)
- Past President of the Philadelphia Society of Clinical Psychologists (PSCP)
- Member of the Council of Neuropsychologists of the American Psychological Association (APA)
- Assistant Professor of Psychology at Chestnut Hill College

Dr. Berk was a close advisor over the years to CEC Associates and a contributing planner and presenter for many of the workshops CEC conducted for regional rehabilitation and legal professionals. He was an important member of the advisory team to the graduate school at Villanova University when it began a master's degree program in rehabilitation counseling.

Dr. Berk was truly loved and respected. More than 400 people attended his funeral service. Dr. Berk will be acutely missed by all of his friends and associates at CEC.
