

## Discussing Assessment Results

**Applied From:** Talking With People About Their Test Results By Donald G. Zytowski, From the APA Handbook of Career Intervention, 2015 and a personal interview with Dr. Zytowski.

### Prepare for the discussion of results.

Take time in advance to familiarize yourself with the client's results. Note any key points that require emphasizing with the client and integrate them with any previous information (such as when the client reports why they are seeking career services).

### Involve clients in the communication of results.

1. Attempt to report results in the context of questions or issues raised by the client. (E.g. client states he does not like his accounting job, perhaps their Conventional Holland score was quite low... client feels he does not fit in a well-defined role, perhaps they may have an inconsistent Holland code).
2. Do NOT simply ask for their reaction to the results (this can tend to place the assessment in an authoritative role), instead advise them to think of the assessment as producing a hypotheses for them (the client) to check against such things as prior experience, feedback from others, or testing via planned activities (such as a job shadow or informational interview). The hypotheses can then be reviewed and occasionally modified.
3. SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK:
  - What kinds of things like this have you done in the past year?
  - How does this fit with things your friends/family say about you?
  - Do any of the occupations described jump out at you?

### Use simple, emphatic communication.

Do not use professional jargon, acronyms, etc. Instead use explanations similar to the following three categories:

- **Unadorned/Plain** - "Your interests are most similar to those of an accountant."
- **Extrapolative** - "You might find careers such as an auditor or book-keeper attractive."
- **Synthesizing** - "Your interests are like those of persons in the accounting profession, but in which social skills are also valued. You might be interested in seeing what those in the financial education and counseling do, or perhaps what those in the case management field do."

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**Ask Clients to recapitulate (summarize) their results in their own words.**

1. This can help the client incorporate test results into the development of their own self-concept. Listen for how the clients' self-statement make the assessment results sound, ensuring that it is reinforcing the assessments as a hypothesis, and not as authoritative direction.
2. For example, if a client states that "the test says I should be an accountant", you may encourage them to understand that they have similar interests to that of an accountant (or in the case of the confidence assessment, that they have confidence in abilities that many accountants do).
3. Another way you could check for understanding is to role-play as a parent or friend of the client, and have them tell you the results of their assessment as if they were explaining it to a family member or friend.
4. Still another method may to switch roles with the client, as if you are the assessment taker and they are explaining the results to you. In both cases you should listen for any misunderstandings in the interpretation and correct them as necessary.

**Stimulate continuing development.**

1. Help clients by assisting with steps or methods to further explore the options suggested in the assessment results.
2. You may ask the clients what they plan on doing next, and perhaps even suggest some possibilities (internet research, informational interviewing, etc.).
3. You may suggest such activities as listing some of the occupations suggested by the assessment results, and writing out pros and cons for pursuing each.