

How to Conduct Comprehensive Transferable Skills Analysis (TSA) in Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Counseling: The Human Services Outcomes (HSO) Approach

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Abstract

When used in counseling or vocational rehabilitation, the purpose of TSA is to identify new jobs that can be done with little or no additional experience or training. A long standing trend in TSA is to use computerized algorithms to identify occupations based on the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) and related tools. Such programs can be purchased, or the service can be obtained on a fee per case basis through the internet. While this approach can be quick and cost effective, it is based in part on outdated information. It can also result in failure to identify many viable career options that should be considered in counseling. The HSO approach integrates standard methods using the DOT, DOL's newer Occupational Information Network (O*NET), methods used in the Social Security Administration's disability determination process, and client collaboration in generating a realistic range of new occupations. Other resources are then identified to narrow the occupational base to be consistent with jobs available in the local economy. The HSO approach is described in detail, including tools to assist with assessing specific skills and residual functional capacity; step by step instructions for using inexpensive software, text resources, and internet alternatives to generate options; and a model for documentation of TSA results. This article is a 2010 update of the 2005 version and corresponds to establishment of the TransferMySkills.com division of HSO which bases services on the methods and principles discussed herein.

Introduction

Tina was a certified nursing assistant (CNA) working at a nursing home for the past 15 years. She injured her lower back assisting a 200 pound patient from bed to his wheelchair. Even after surgery to repair a ruptured disk she could rarely lift more than about 20 pounds without pain. She also needed to alternate sitting and standing from time to time. She could no longer do the work of a CNA due to the constant standing and walking, and the lifting requirements of most nursing home or home health aide jobs. After a worker's compensation evaluation, it was determined that she could not return to her prior work, but had developed strong skills in communicating with elderly persons, understanding their needs, assisting with activities of daily living (ADLs), and doing limited medical assessments, e.g., vital signs. It was found that these skills could be transferred directly to a lighter job of companion. She was able to find a job working for a wealthy elderly lady who needed someone to talk with during the day, help with meal preparation and some ADLs, and take her to medical appointments. Thus, using her transferable skills, Tina was able to find a job that required very little lifting and allowed her to sit when necessary and stand to the extent this was needed. In fact, she found that the companion job paid more than most of the CNA jobs she had in the past.

This article discusses TSA methods for identifying a client's work skills and applying them to new employment options. For most people, TSA can be useful when there is a need or desire to change occupations. This can happen after a job loss or

layoff, if one becomes physically or mentally disabled, or if there is interest in changing to a more satisfying career.

TSA is frequently used to resolve forensic issues, such as in assessing new work capacities of litigants in personal injury cases. These applications tend to encourage vocational consultants to use standard, peer reviewed TSA methodologies in their analyses and testimony, sometimes depending heavily on systems that can rapidly generate computer data. This approach is cost efficient; and it helps in meeting the requirements for admissibility of expert testimony and in withstanding cross examination in courts of law. [i] [ii] However, sole use of such methods can reduce validity of conclusions by encouraging overuse of the outdated U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) [iii] based work classification system and the DOL tools from which these TSA methods are derived. [iv]

In adjudicating Social Security claims during disability appeals hearings, regulations and guidelines require use of the DOT. Regulatory language regarding transferable skills (TS) also supports use of the same TSA methods described above. However, since judges may ask vocational experts' opinions on applicability of specific skills developed in prior jobs, as well as consider explanations by vocational experts regarding deviations from the DOT, this program can encourage substantial flexibility in generating TS options.

Effective TSA can be valuable to counselors in helping clients make good use of prior work and training experiences. In fact, rehabilitation counselors or consultants working in the public sector (e.g., State Vocational Rehabilitation [VR], VA) and their contractors may be obligated by law to consider transferable skills before authorizing or recommending funding for VR programs. Although there are alternative approaches to TSA in counseling, substantial focus in vocational rehabilitation continues to be on the established DOT model. This may be, in part, due to the ease in obtaining TSA data directly and quickly from computer programs or over the internet. However, since vocational rehabilitation (and career counseling in general) requires generating the most relevant options so that clients can make effective long term career decisions, our company believes that a comprehensive approach which combines a variety of TSA methods is necessary.

TSA DEFINITIONS [1] [v]

Skills are work proficiencies and knowledge obtained from past occupations, education, training, or other life experiences (e.g., hobbies) that require more than a brief period (i.e., greater than about 30 days) to fully learn and apply. Examples are proficiency in writing management reports, proficiency in reading blueprints, knowledge of real estate mortgage loan processing procedures, and knowledge of retail jewelry products. Skills should not be confused with *talents* or *aptitudes*, both of which involve specialized performance or learning capacities independent of what is learned through experience or training. Musical talent and math aptitude are examples. Talents and aptitudes may facilitate development of skills, but do not in themselves constitute skills.

Some people confuse skills with *job tasks*. Job tasks are what a worker does, e.g., operates a computer. However, the existence of a job task does not mean that the task is performed in a skilled manner. Job tasks, like operating a computer, may

require skills at different levels, such as typing, proficiency in quickly entering different types of data, proficiency in using spreadsheet software, and proficiency in writing and testing computer programs. On the other hand that same job task may require no skills at all if the worker only turns the computer on and off and views a few different screens. Sample statements of skills for several occupations are shown in [Appendix A](#).

Skills are *transferable* when they can be applied to more than one occupation that has physical, mental, and environmental demands consistent with a person's *functional capacities*. In rehabilitation work, the phrase *residual functional capacities* (RFC) refers to those physical and mental capabilities that a person retains after becoming disabled. For example, after her lower back injury, Tina could only perform light jobs that allowed for some flexibility to alternate sitting and standing.

Skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled occupations can be defined using DOT and Social Security Administration (SSA) criteria in terms of length of time needed to learn to fully perform the work and by the amount of judgment required. Unskilled occupations, such as basic assembly, are simple and repetitive, requiring little or no experience or judgment. Semiskilled occupations, such as receptionists, require some experience and/or training, and limited judgment. Skilled occupations, like registered nurses, require the most training, experience, and judgment. Level of skill of occupations can also be defined by the *Specific Vocational Preparation time* (SVP), i.e., the average length of time for a person to learn to fully perform the occupation through education, training, and experience. Skill levels are defined as follows:

- SVP 1 – Short demonstration only
- SVP 2 - Beyond short demonstration up to and including 1 month
- SVP 3 - Over 1 month up to and including 3 months
- SVP 4 – Over 3 months up to and including 6 months
- SVP 5 – Over 6 months up to and including 1 year
- SVP 6 – Over 1 year up to and including 2 years
- SVP 7 – Over 2 years up to and including 4 years
- SVP 8 – Over 4 years up to and including 10 years
- SVP 9 – Over 10 years

Occupations in the DOT at SVP 1 and 2 are generally considered unskilled, SVP 3 and 4 semiskilled, and SVP 5-9 skilled.

In rehabilitation work, when referring to transfer of skills to other occupations, it is generally understood that the new occupation(s) will be skilled or semiskilled, and

at a level of skill equal to or less than prior occupations. Skills cannot transfer to unskilled work, since by definition such work requires no skills.

Transferable skills can allow a person to immediately perform a new skilled or semiskilled occupation with only orientation or minimal instruction. For instance, a salesperson who works on his feet all day in a store can transfer sales skills to a sedentary telemarketer job. Only a brief period is needed to learn the product and company procedures. In other situations skills are transferable but more training or experience is required to fully perform the new occupation, even if the new occupation is at a skill level equal to or lower than prior work. Theoretically, an individual could utilize prior skills in more skilled occupations, but in that case, additional skills would clearly need to be developed. Tina, the CNA, could have become an LPN and used some of the skills she developed as a CNA. However, to become an LPN, a more skilled occupation, would have also required additional training.

CONDUCTING THE TSA

The following step-by-step procedure is suggested in doing TSA for assessment and counseling in vocational rehabilitation. In working with persons without defined "disabilities" and when TSA is used in the career consulting process, most emphasis can be placed on steps 2 and beyond. However, note that even when disability is not a focus, many clients have limiting factors related to normal aging, such as lifting or bending or handling, e.g., for a person with a "bad back", chronic tendonitis, knee problems etc., that should be considered in conducting TSA. In the steps below, emphasis is placed on use of objective data, multiple job classification systems and resources, creative thinking, and a collaborative process with the client.

1. Determine the Client's Residual Functional Capacities (RFC)

For TSA purposes, an individual's RFC can be described by categories that, to at least some extent, correspond to work requirements described in job classification systems. This is particularly helpful for jobs described in the DOT and in The Department of Labor's newer Occupational Information Network (O*NET) [\[vi\]](#), which is designed to replace the increasingly obsolete DOT.

For DOT titles, the frequency with which various capacities can be accomplished (e.g., lifting, climbing, stooping etc.) can be defined as follows:

Constant – more than 2/3 of the workday

Frequent – 1/3 to 2/3 of the workday

Occasional – up to 1/3 of the workday

Thus, if an individual is described as having a capacity to lift 10 pounds frequently, that would allow for lifting that amount of weight from 1/3 to 2/3 of the typical 8 hour workday.

Physical Capacities - For individuals with physical limitations, the *exertional capacities* of lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling, sitting standing, and walking are most basic. Generally, an individual's exertional capacity can be categorized as sedentary, light, medium, heavy, or very heavy. These categories are described in the checklist in [Appendix B](#) using DOT definitions, with slightly more specificity based on SSA regulations.

Sometimes a single level description, e.g., sedentary, may not be adequate. For example, Jack has a thoracic back injury. His orthopedist says he can lift 10 pounds frequently and 20 pounds occasionally. However, he needs to sit at least 6 hours out of an 8 hour workday and have the option to stand as needed, usually for a few minutes at a time after sitting for 15 minutes or so. Using the definitions, Jack's RFC with regard to strength allows for work with sedentary requirements as well as a limited range of work having light requirements. That is, the range of occupations open to Jack will be less than for one who is able to stand most of the day and lift up to 20 pounds (light work), but more than for one who only meets the full sedentary requirements, thus being able to lift no more than 10 pounds (sedentary work).

The O*NET system also provides categories for describing exertional requirements for occupations. These are shown in the cluster of O*NET defined *Abilities* required for various occupations, and also included in the checklist in [Appendix B](#). However, in O*NET, exertional abilities are described in different terms than descriptors for occupations included in the DOT. Also, in O*NET, exertional requirements are shown in ranked importance compared to all other abilities. For example, if Jack aspires to be a machinist, according to O*NET he would need to exert static strength and trunk strength. However, for machinists, these abilities would be relatively unimportant in comparison to other listed abilities but the actual amount of static and trunk strength required is unspecified. Such information is not as definitive as provided for DOT occupations, but it adds a different perspective from which to view required exertional capacities.

Non-exertional physical capacities do not directly affect the ability to use exertional capabilities. As defined for occupations in the DOT they include climbing, balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling, reaching, handling, fingering, feeling, talking, hearing, tasting/smelling, and use of vision. O*NET similarly includes categories that could be described as non-exertional (physical) such as time spent kneeling, crouching, stooping, or crawling, time spent bending or twisting the body, arm-hand steadiness, near vision, speech clarity, manual dexterity, multi-limb coordination, hearing sensitivity, depth perception, finger dexterity, extent flexibility, wrist-finger speed, far vision, gross body coordination, speed of limb movement, peripheral vision, visual color discrimination, gross body equilibrium, night vision, and glare sensitivity. These O*NET categories are incorporated in both *Abilities* and *Work Context* factors

For TSA purposes it is helpful to describe the client's non-exertional physical capacities in terms of the extent to which they can be accomplished. For example, because of his back condition Jack may only be able to stoop and crouch occasionally (up to 1/3 of the day), although he is capable of doing all other non-exertional tasks frequently (1/3 to 2/3 of the day) or constantly (more than 2/3 of the day). These descriptions can easily be compared to the requirements of occupations listed in the DOT. However, when using O*NET, categories of Abilities

or Work Context factors covering non-exertional requirements have the same limitations to those noted for exertional physical capacities. Non-exertional capacities covered for DOT and O*NET occupations are listed and described in the checklist in [Appendix B](#).

Environmental Capacities – These are defined in terms of environmental demands of occupations described in the DOT. They involve ability to work under conditions such as weather exposure, extreme cold, extreme heat, wet and/or humid conditions, noise, vibration, atmospheric conditions, proximity to moving mechanical parts (machines), exposure to electrical shock, working in high exposed places, exposure to radiation, working with explosives, exposure to toxic or caustic chemicals, or other specifiable environmental conditions. For DOT occupations, these demands are described in terms of whether or not they exist for each occupation, and to what extent. As for O*NET, most environmental requirements for occupations are described within the *Work Context* factors for each occupation in the ranked importance format described above. Many of these context factors are more specific and of practical relevance than the DOT factors in terms of day to day functioning of persons with disabilities in specific jobs. For example, O*NET context factors include the comparative importance of requirements for sitting and standing in occupations, a common issue for persons with orthopedic conditions. The complete list of environmentally related DOT and pertinent O*NET factors are included in the checklist in [Appendix B](#).

Mental Capacities - Mental requirements are described for occupations in the DOT under *Temperaments*. O*NET work context factors also include some job demands related to mental capacities. Again, these are presented in rank order of importance compared to all context factors for each O*NET occupation. The checklist in [Appendix B](#) lists the most pertinent DOT and O*NET mental requirements related to a client’s mental capacities. Other mental capacities typically used by examiners in Social Security disability determinations are also included in the checklist. These may be particularly helpful in TSAs for those with serious mental impairments.

Sources of Information to Use in Determining Residual Functional Capacities – It is preferable to base RFC findings on medical reports, and physical and mental capacity examinations. However, when those are limited or non-existent, for TSA purposes, it falls upon the rehabilitation counselor or consultant to estimate based on collaboration with the client, and available medical information.

Using the Checklist to Organize RFC Information – The checklist in [Appendix B](#) is included to insure pertinent areas are considered in the RFC assessment. It is not all inclusive, but it does incorporate most factors that will be needed to conduct a comprehensive TSA. Note however that the counselor or consultant can focus on items most significant to each client’s situation.

2. List the client’s skills based on prior experience and training/education

Use statements of work proficiencies and knowledge obtained from past occupations, education, training, or other life experiences that require more than a brief period (i.e., greater than about 30 days) to fully learn. You may use the brief statement format as shown by examples in [Appendix A](#).

3. Find potential DOT occupations to which skills transfer using Work Fields (WF)

Work Fields is a classification system created by the U.S. Department of Labor that places each DOT occupation in one or more categories representing the use of similar technologies or results achieved.^[i] Examples of categories are abrading, mixing, teaching, writing, and welding. Work fields are roughly equivalent to categories of very general skills needed to perform the DOT jobs listed in each category. Thus, identifying a work field for an occupation will automatically create a basis for identifying other occupations with some transferability. Note that some transferable skills methodologies also use the *Materials, Products, Subject Matter, and Services (MPSMS)* classification system.^{[ix] [xi]} This is a somewhat more heterogeneous system that classifies DOT occupations on the basis of materials processed, final products made, subject matter dealt with, and services rendered. We focus on WF rather than MPSMS because the limited research available suggests that WF may show a greater influence on transferability in subsequent job placement than MPSMS.^[viii]

Occupations utilizing prior developed skills can be accessed through work fields using any of the following sample approaches: [\[3\]](#)

Job Browser Pro Software [\[xii\]](#) - This program allows for automated search of occupations by work fields. Occupations found can then be narrowed by the user manually based on knowledge of the client's residual functional capacities compared to physical and environmental requirements of each occupation. Using the latest *SkillTRAN Job Browser* program, follow the steps in [Appendix C](#) for each prior job.

Occubrowse+ Software [\[xii\]](#) – This software increases speed of computer searching by allowing the user to input client residual functional capacities prior to doing an automated search for occupations by work field. Using Occubrowse+, follow the steps in [Appendix C](#).

Manual Method – For those who do not have the SkillTRAN Job Browser software, steps a-q in Appendix C can be done using the latest edition of the Classification of Jobs (COJ) with crosswalk to O*NET, by Field and Field (available through Elliott & Fitzpatrick, Athens, GA).^[ix] Specific O*NET information for occupations can be found at the O*NET website at http://online.O*NETcenter.org/. Local, State, and National wage and employment data, and long term outlook information can be found on the <http://www.hsoutcomes.com> Human Services Outcomes, Inc. website under links About Careers and Salaries and Employment/Wages by Occupation.

Internet Based Automated Methods – Several online programs exist that can, for a per-case fee, provide a list of DOT occupations using Work Field and MPSMS analyses. These programs narrow occupations based on counselor or consultant input of RFC and work history information. They also provide automated data suggesting where local jobs may be found. However, counselor or consultants must still sift through voluminous information to determine those occupations that truly exist in the local economy and are relevant to their client's needs. O*NET information is generally not integrated into these programs. [Http://vocrehab.com](http://vocrehab.com) and <http://skiltran.com> are a sampling of providers of this service.

Stand Alone Computer Programs – Programs such as OASYS [\[xii\]](#) and Lifestep [\[xiii\]](#) have historically been available to purchase for use on personal computers. They provide similar information to the internet-based automated methods plus additional features and search capabilities without the per-case fee. However, these programs are costly and could become obsolete when the DOT is no longer in use. Thus, unless very frequent TSAs are being done or they can satisfy other professional practice needs, it may not be cost effective to purchase one of these systems.

4. Find potential O*NET occupations to which skills transfer using CHOICES [\[x\]](#)

CHOICES, a comprehensive occupational exploration program now available online, provides the option to identify a clients transferable skills. These skills along with other client factors are used to find matching careers. CHOICES differs from the DOT- based systems in that O*NET data is the basis for identifying occupations to which skills transfer. Since O*NET includes many fewer occupations than the DOT (about 800 vs. 12,000), CHOICES tends to identify transferability to broader groupings of occupations rather than highly specific job. However, this may be more relevant in modern job settings where workers are often expected to function in broader, more varied work roles than the highly specialized jobs of the past. To do a CHOICES search, follow the steps in [APPENDIX D](#).

5. List other possible occupations

This should be based on counselor or consultant knowledge and experience, the list of skills in #2 above, the client’s RFC, and collaborative discussion with the client. This is an important step because the automated systems are based on assumptions and algorithms that sometimes (mechanistically) eliminate viable possibilities. For example, in Tina’s case, her skills from nurse assistant work at the medium strength level easily transferred to work as a companion at the light strength level. However, a WF analysis would not identify companion because it is not classified in the *Health Caring-Medical* work field that includes nurse assistant. Rather, it is located in the *Accommodating* work field. This demonstrates a weakness in the assumption that work fields equate to skill categories and that the categories to which an occupation are assigned will be inclusive of all possible occupations with transferability.

Discussion with the client can be particularly important to bring to light additional skills or those that are very strong, and could therefore be crucial in a search for a new job or career. Standardized and computerized methods tend to treat all skills as equal and thereby fail to take into account differences in strength of skills which can only be clarified in client-counselor interaction.

6. Do a final list of occupations to which skills transfer

Using all information from 1-5 above, list the occupations with DOT titles and numbers (and O*NET equivalents, if possible) to which skills are likely to transfer with very limited orientation and retraining. Typically this would involve the need for 30 days or less additional experience to fully learn the new occupation. Occupations can also optionally be listed to which skills transfer, but which will also require some additional experience, training, or education to reach the skill level of a fully productive worker.

DOCUMENTING THE TSA

The main purpose of TSA documentation is to provide highly usable information to the referral source or directly to the client with the goal of achieving direct job placement. Reports should be brief and include the following elements:

Methods used

Skills identified

RFC limitations

Occupations to which skills transfer, including DOT and equivalent O*NET numbers

Estimated jobs locally, outlook, and comments about job openings

A sample report is included in [Appendix E](#).

In summary, the most effective TSA process is technical, creative, collaborative, and multifaceted. It involves use of structured methods combined with subjective analysis based on counselor or consultant knowledge, experience, and ability to use internet and computer software resources, as well as full client involvement. When TSA does not include all elements and focuses mainly on a single standard approach, e.g., a computer based WF and MPSMS analysis, the results can limit or hinder the client's career planning process.

APPENDIX A

EXAMPLES OF SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

Registered Nurse

Proficiencies	Knowledge of
Measuring vital signs Obtaining medical information from patients, Communicating and performing treatments Educating patients Administering medications Medical documenting and record keeping	Medical terminology Medical support and nursing procedures First aid procedures

Nurse Assistant

Proficiencies	Knowledge of
Taking vital signs Record keeping Assisting elderly, ill, and disabled persons with activities of daily living, health, and personal care needs. Documenting medical records	

Secretary

Proficiencies	Knowledge of
Appointment scheduling	Computer office software
Serving and satisfying customers	Filing and filing systems
Giving and receiving complex information using oral and written communications	
Computer data input	
Typing	
Report and correspondence preparation	

Electrician

Proficiencies	Knowledge of
Wiring electrical circuits	Tools and equipment to test and repair electrical circuits
Assembling and installing electrical equipment	
Repairing wiring	

APPENDIX B

CHECKLIST FOR DETERMINING RESIDUAL FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY (RFC) [2]

PHYSICAL CAPACITIES - EXERTIONAL

1. What is maximum strength level at which client can perform?

Strength Level	Maximum person can lift or carry occasionally (up to 1/3 of 8 hour day)	Maximum that person can lift or carry frequently (1/3 to 2/3 of 8 hour day)	Maximum person can stand or walk during 8 hour day	Other
Sedentary	10 pounds	Negligible	2 hours or less	
Light	20 pounds	10 pounds	6 hours or more	Able to stoop occasionally
Medium	50 pounds	25 pounds	6 hours or more	Able to stoop and bend frequently
Heavy	100 pounds	50 pounds	6 hours or more	Same
Very Heavy	Over 100 pounds	Over 50 pounds	6 hours or more	Same

2. Sitting and Standing

Does the client need a sit/stand option?

At will?

Flexible, but not at will?

How much can client sit during 8 hour day (Time Spent Sitting [ONET Work Context Factor])?

How much can client stand during 8 hour day (Time Spent Standing [ONET Work Context Factor])?

3. Other - To what extent is the client able to perform each of the following using the C, F, O, N scale below?

C – constantly (over 2/3 of 8 hour day)

F – frequently (1/3 to 2/3 of 8 hour day)

O – occasionally (0 to 1/3 of 8 hour day)

N – Never

Exert force repeatedly and continuously over time without fatigue (Dynamic Strength [ONET Work Context Factor])?

Exert maximum muscle force to lift, push, pull, or carry objects. (Static Strength [ONET Work Context Factor])?

Use abdominal and lower back muscles to support part of the body repeatedly or continuously over time without 'giving out' or fatiguing. (Trunk Strength [ONET Work Context Factor])?

PHYSICAL CAPACITIES – NON-EXERTIONAL

4. To what extent is the client able to perform each of the following using the C, F, O, N scale below?

C – constantly (over 2/3 of 8 hour day)

F – frequently (1/3 to 2/3 of 8 hour day)

O – occasionally (0 to 1/3 of 8 hour day)

N – Never

Climbing

Climbing Ladders, Scaffolds, or Poles (O*NET Work Context Factor)

Balancing

Stooping

Kneeling

Crouching

Crawling

Reaching

Handling

Fingering

Feeling

Talking

Hearing

Tasting/Smelling

Making repetitive motions (Spend Time Making Repetitive Motions [O*NET Work Context Factor])

Keeping arms and hands steady while moving arms or holding arms and hands in one position (Arm Hand Steadiness [O*NET Ability Factor])

Using finger dexterity (Finger Dexterity [O*NET Ability Factor])

Making rapid limb movements (Speed of Limb Movement [O*NET Ability Factor])

5. To what extent is the client able to meet the following visual demands?

C – constantly (greater than 2/3 of 8 hour day)

F – frequently (1/3 to 2/3 of 8 hour day)

O – occasionally (0 to 1/3 of 8 hour day)

N – Never

Near Acuity

Far Acuity (Far Vision [O*NET Work Context Factor] and DOT)

Depth Perception (Depth Perception [ONET Work Context Factor] and DOT)

Accommodation

Color Vision

Field of Vision (Peripheral Vision [O*NET Ability Factor] and DOT)

Night Vision (O*NET Ability Factor)

6. To what extent can the client meet the following speech demands?

Ability to speak clearly so as to be understood by others (Speech Clarity [O*NET Ability Factor])

Ability to identify and understand speech of other persons (Speech Recognition [O*NET Ability Factor])

ENVIRONMENTAL CAPACITIES

7. To what extent can the client meet the following using the C, F, O, N scale below?

C – constantly (greater than 2/3 of 8 hour day)

F – frequently (1/3 to 2/3 of 8 hour day)

O – occasionally (0 to 1/3 of 8 hour day)

N – Never

Exposure to weather (Outdoors, Exposed to Weather [O*NET Work Context Factor] and DOT)

Extreme cold (non-weather) (Very Hot or Cold Temperatures [O*NET Work Context Factor] and DOT)

Extreme heat (non-weather) (Very Hot or Cold Temperatures [O*NET Work Context Factor] and DOT)

Wet and/or humid

Does the client need to work in an environmentally controlled indoor setting?

Indoors, Environmentally Controlled (O*NET Work Context Factor)

Indoors, Not Environmentally Controlled (O*NET Work Contest Factor)

Noise intensity

1 – very quiet

2- quiet

3 – moderate

4 – loud

5- very loud

Sounds, Noise Levels are Distracting or Uncomfortable (O*NET Work Context Factor)

Vibration (Exposed to Whole Body Vibration [O*NET Work Context Factor] and DOT)

Atmospheric Conditions (such as fumes, noxious odors, dust, gases, poor ventilation)

Hazards (Exposed to Hazardous Conditions [O*NET Work Context Factor]).

DOT covers these specific hazards:

Proximity to moving mechanical parts

Exposure to electrical shock

Working in high, exposed places

Exposure to radiant energy

Working with explosives

Exposure to caustic or toxic chemicals

Other hazards

Exposed to Contaminants (O*NET Work Context Factor)

MENTAL CAPACITIES

8. To what extent can the client meet mental demands of occupations using the U, G, F, P scale below?

(U) Unlimited or very good – ability to function is more than satisfactory

(G) Good – ability to function is satisfactory

(F) Fair – ability to function is seriously limited, but not precluded

(P) Poor or none – no useful ability to function in this area

Follow work rules

Relate to co-workers

Work in proximity of co-workers without being distracted or distracting others (Contact with Others [O*NET Work Context Factor])

Working alone or apart in physical isolation from others (Alone [DOT Temperament])

Interact appropriately with the public

Dealing with People (People [DOT Temperament])

Use judgment

Interact with supervisors

Deal with work stresses

Function independently

Maintain attention/concentration for extended periods

Understand, remember, and carry out simple instructions

Understand, remember, and carry out complex instructions

Perform activities within a schedule

Sustain an ordinary routine

Be aware of work hazards and take appropriate precautions

Set realistic goals and make plans independently of others

Work is high structured vs. unstructured (Structured versus Unstructured Work [O*NET

Work Context Factor])

Capacity to work under time pressures meeting strict deadlines (Time Pressure [O*NET

Work Context Factor])

Performing repetitive or short cycle work (Repetitive [DOT Temperament])

APPENDIX C

JOB BROWSER METHOD**For each prior job:**

- a. Find a DOT title that fits
- b. Determine the Strength level
- c. Determine the SVP level
- d. Eliminate any job not performed long enough to meet the DOT SVP level
- e. Go to the screen with the job title and full description (Detailed Job Specialty screen)
- f. Click on Quick View - Codes
- g. Write down the Work (Work Field) code(s)
- h. Close out all screens until you come to the first screen
- i. Click on Advanced Searches
- j. To search for transferable jobs by Work Fields, click on that button
- k. Click on the first 2 digits of the Work Field in the left column
- l. Click on the full Work Field in the right column
- m. If the client's RFC is no greater than Light, click on the Light/Sedentary button.
- n. Click on DOT on the upper left part of the screen
- o. Scroll down to occupations with the first digit of the DOT number. This helps assure that final choices will stay within the same occupational area (per the classification of DOT occupations) as prior work. [\[ix\]](#)
- p. Using only those DOT numbers, write down any occupation that:
 - Is at or below the SVP of the original occupation
 - Is consistent with the clients RFC (to check the requirements for DOT occupations, go to the Detailed Job Specialty screen for the occupation; then click on the Physical Demands and Temperaments buttons on the right.) If limitations in the

RFC also include items covered in O*NET, click on the O*NET Online tab in the upper left part of the screen. Once in O*NET, click on Details and then go to Abilities or Work Context to locate the importance rankings which include the limitations in the client's RFC. Note that importance rankings do not give the same type of information found for occupations in the DOT. For example, consider Jack's RFC as including a limited range of light work, allowing no more than 2 hours of standing in an 8 hour day, plus a sit/stand option. If the occupation of parts clerk came up on a Work Fields analysis, based on DOT data we could not determine whether it is or is not consistent with his RFC. The DOT information only tells us that parts clerks generally work at the light strength level in the national economy. However, using O*NET Work Context information, we find that the importance of time spent standing is slightly greater than time spent sitting. This suggests that typical parts clerks can sit and stand, but they are more likely to be standing than sitting during the day. Thus, by adding the O*NET information we might eliminate this occupation as an option.

- Can be substantively learned in about a month or less using the transferable skills

q. From p, eliminate any remaining occupations that no longer exist in the economy. For example, teletype installers would be obsolete. Then eliminate any remaining occupation for which there are too few available local jobs to result in realistic job placement. To research this using the SkillTRAN Job Browser, click on the DOT title and find the local labor information using the Employment Numbers button on the Detailed Job Specialty screen. Counselors or consultants can also use their own knowledge of the local job market plus such resources as the local Industrial Guide, and resources found on the <http://www.hsoutcomes.com> website under For Vocational & Rehabilitation Professionals, Employment/Wages by Occupation.

APPENDIX D

CHOICES METHOD

- a. Go to:
<https://access.bridges.com/portal/client/landingPage.do;jsessionid=C2DB7134013A2844D1D1349A36A51EB3?market=adult&siteId=0101399> and click on the Choices Planner arrow. This website is designed for Florida residents but can be used by anyone. To access job information for other States, use the instructions in i below.
- b. Point to Career Planning, then click on Florida Choices Planner
- c. Click on Work, Career Finder
- d. Click on Skills, Transferable Skills (left side)
- e. Click on Transferable Skills Checklist
- f. Click on Start choosing your skills, and complete the entire checklist
- g. Continue the sequence and note that other client factors such as education, physical demands (strength capacities, e.g., sedentary, light, etc.) can be added.
- h. When all factors are entered click See your matching careers. Note that these careers are based on O*NET information, not DOT information.
- i. Click on each appropriate occupation to access outlook information for Florida . For other states go directly to O*NET online at <http://online.onetcenter.org/> and/or use other resources found on the <http://www.hsoutcomes.com> website.
- j. As a supplement or alternative to the procedure in i, go to the first Job Browser screen, click on Advanced Searches, then SOC 2000/O*NET. Identify the general category of jobs which covers the Choices (O*NET) occupation, then click on the +, then again on the next + for the more specific group of occupations. One or more DOT occupations will then appear. Each of those can be researched by clicking on the DOT title. From the following screen (Detailed Job Specialty screen) find the local labor information using the Employment Numbers button.
- k. Eliminate any occupations which are obsolete, or for which there are few actual local jobs available.

APPENDIX E**SAMPLE DOCUMENTATION FOR CASE IN WHICH TSA IS PART OF A COMPLETE ASSESSMENT**

A transferable skills analysis (TSA) was completed for Mr. Smith using standard TSA methodology (DOT based Work Field analysis) and O*NET based analysis using CHOICES software. In addition, specific work skills were assessed from his prior employment, education, and prior training, and include: proficiencies in typing, computer data input; giving and receiving complex information, and knowledge of MS Word software.

Per prior information in this report, Mr. Smith is now limited to sedentary work with a sit/stand option (at will), with limitations to only occasional use of his fingers and hands. There are no other limitations.

Considering local labor market conditions, the following jobs were identified to which Mr. Smith's skills would transfer within his residual functional capacities and with minimal additional orientation or training:

DOT Occupation	ONET Occupation	Estimated Jobs Locally	Outlook	Comments
<p>Information Clerk DOT #237.367-022 Sedentary/Semiskilled</p> <p>Receptionist DOT #237.367-038 Sedentary/Semiskilled</p>	<p>Receptionists and Information Clerks</p> <p>43-4171.00</p>	<p>There are an estimated 3200 Information Clerk and Receptionist jobs in the greater Albuquerque area. About 1000 of these are at the semiskilled level, would utilize Mr. Smith's current skills, and would accommodate to his physical limitations. Most of these jobs are in health care, government, and education settings.</p>	<p>These jobs are increasing at a rate of about 20% per year.</p>	<p>Approximately 15 jobs are currently listed in Albuquerque through the NM Job Service, and newspaper ads in the Albuquerque Journal.</p>

Footnotes

[1] This section draws heavily from DOT related U.S. Department of Labor publications, and the Social Security Administration disability determination program regulations.

[2] If capacity is covered only in O*NET, or both in O*NET and DOT, that is designated in brackets. Non-bracketed items are DOT factors. Non-bracketed items in *italics* are neither ONET nor DOT factors, but will be relevant to a TSA. Note that only selected ONET factors are included based on assumed (by this author) utility and relevance in a TSA, and lack of redundancy with DOT factors.

[3] Methodology for work fields analysis is similar to T. Field's approach outlined in reference xi and to J. Field and T. Field's approach outlined in reference ix and other editions of Classification of Jobs (COJ).

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