DEFINING TRANSITION ASSESSMENT

Surprisingly, the term **transition assessment** was not included in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act's description of transition services until the 2004 reauthorization, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004). However, IDEA 2004 now states that transition assessments are needed to develop a coordinated set of activities within a results-oriented process based on student needs and taking into account student strengths, preferences, and interests and that a student's IEP must include "appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills" (P.L. 108-446, Section 614). IDEA 2004 also states that the coordinated set of activities includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other postschool objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation. Since the IDEA 2004 rules and regulations have not yet defined what is meant by transition assessment we will use the Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) of the Council for Exceptional Children definition, which defined transition assessment as:

> the ongoing process of collecting data on the individual's needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future working, educational, living, and personal and social environments. Assessment data serve as the common thread in the transition process and form the basis for defining goals and services to be included in the individualized education program. (Sitlington, Neubert, & Leconte, 1997, pp. 70–71).

DCDT's definition considers transition assessment as an umbrella term that covers **career assessment** (which relates to lifelong career development for all life roles), **vocational assessment** (which relates to work and employment), and ecological or functional assessment (which involves assessing students in the environment where a skill typically occurs). Greene and Kochhar-Bryant (2003) further differentiated transition assessment from traditional assessment, stating that transition assessment is ongoing, future focused, and person centered whereas traditional assessment is typically an annual process, focuses on current strengths and weakness, and is skill centered.

GOALS OF TRANSITION ASSESSMENT

While transition assessment encompasses a wide range of assessment possibilities, it focuses on three interrelated goals or purposes.

Goal 1: Helping Students Make Informed Choices

The first goal of transition assessment is to enable students to make informed choices that will enhance their postschool lives (Sitlington et al., 1997). This means that students must be provided with information and experiences that will assist them in determining their interests, needs, and preferences related to desired postschool outcomes in the areas of employment, postsecondary education, community housing, and community participation.

Goal 2: Helping Students Take Charge of the Process

The second goal of transition assessment is to have students assume the responsibility of coordinating their own assessment and transition process (Sitlington et al., 1997). This goal also requires students to become aware of their own interests, needs, and preferences, as well as desired postschool outcomes, but it also requires use of other self-determination skills such as problem solving, decision making, and self-advocacy.

Goal 3: Helping Students Understand Skills Needed for Postschool Environments

The final goal of transition assessment is to ensure that students and other team members have a thorough understanding of skills related to postschool adult-living domains that will lead to more appropriate choices when setting transition goals and selecting a course of study that will help achieve desired postschool outcomes (National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities [NICHCY], 1993). This final goal draws attention to the all-inclusive nature of transition assessment. Not only is transition assessment critical for helping students make plans and choices, but it also plays a crucial role in assessing students' ongoing performance in coursework and community experiences that are designed to help them achieve their desired postschool outcomes.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TRANSITION ASSESSMENT

Six characteristics must be considered when conducting a transition assessment.

DID YOU KNOW?

"Transition assessment and planning has expanded its focus beyond employment and careers to include community living, daily living skills, recreation/leisure, social skills, transportation, and financial skills" (Thoma, Held, & Saddler, 2002, p. 248).

DID YOU KNOW?

Thoma, Held, and Saddler (2002) found that special educators are not using transition assessment practices that facilitate student involvement and self-determination in the assessment process.

Transition Assessment Is Student Centered

First, transition assessment is student centered and self determined. For example, if a student states that he wants to attend a 4-year university but his parents want him to attend a local community college, then his team should help him develop a plan to enroll in a 4-year university. It is important to remember that it is the student's life that is being discussed, not the teacher's or the parent's. It is the educator's job to help students become self-aware, for self-awareness and knowledge of rights and responsibilities lead to self-advocacy (Test, Fowler, Wood, Brewer, & Eddy, 2005).

Transition Assessment Is Continuous

Second, transition assessment is an ongoing process. It typically begins with gathering information to help develop the transition component of the individualized education program (IEP; see Chapter 4) and continues throughout a student's high school career. A good transition assessment will help students and others both plan an appropriate course of study and evaluate performance based on instruction designed to help them achieve their desired postschool outcomes.

Transition Assessment Occurs in Many Places

Third, the ongoing process of transition assessment requires that assessment take place in a variety of natural environments focusing on future postschool outcomes. As students move toward making choices and learning the skills required to achieve each choice, there will be a need to evaluate their performance in employment situations, as well as in the other community settings (e.g., in restaurants, on buses, in theaters). In addition, exposing students to a variety of options in employment (Chapter 8), postsecondary education (Chapter 6), community housing (Chapter 9), and community participation (Chapter 10) will help them make informed choices and refine their desired postschool outcomes.

Transition Assessment Must Involve Other People

Fourth, transition assessment must be collaborative and interdisciplinary. Getting an accurate picture of students' strengths requires collecting information from parents, friends, employers, and case managers, to name just a few (Sitlington & Clark, 2001). Collecting ongoing information in natural environments also necessitates the assistance of several individuals, including the student. Thus, interagency collaboration (Chapter 5) is a must for high-quality transition assessment to occur.

Transition Assessment Data Must Be Understandable

Fifth, data gathered as a result of transition assessment must be useful and understandable to all people involved. In many cases, the use of ongoing, naturally occurring data is useful and understandable; however, there are times when students must be taught how to interpret the results of standardized vocational, interest, and intelligence tests (Pocock et al., 2002).

Transition Assessment Must Be Sensitive to Cultural Diversity

Finally, the transition assessment process must be sensitive to cultural diversity. To do this, teachers and others must (a) understand their own cultural and ethnic identities; (b) identify their own values that underlie their interpretation of each student's assessment data; (c) determine the "fit" between their cultural values and assumptions and those of the student and his family; (d) attempt to explain any differences between "mainstream" societal values and the values of the student's family; and (e) work collaboratively to reconcile differences to help achieve desired postschool outcomes (Owens & Blanchett, 2004). In addition, Sitlington and Clark (2001) have suggested some "commonsense guidelines" to help ensure fairness:

1. Be ready to respond to any past experiences with discrimination in assessments.
2. Consider using selected members of a family's cultural community if misunderstandings arise.
3. Talk with the student and family about the best way to communicate with them.
4. If a translation is necessary, spend time beforehand making sure the translator understands the purpose and context of any assessment.

DID YOU KNOW?

"The focus on compliance and bureaucratic imperatives in the current system, instead of academic achievement and social outcomes, fails too many children with disabilities. Too few successfully graduate from high school or transition to full employment and postsecondary opportunities, despite provisions in IDEA providing for transition services. Parents want an education system that is results-oriented and focused on the child's needs–*in school and beyond*." (President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education, 2002, p. 8)

THE APIE MODEL FOR TRANSITION ASSESSMENT

Transition assessment aims to help students (a) make informed choices, (b) take charge of the assessment process, and (c) understand the skills needed for postschool environments. To meet these goals, effective transition assessment must (a) be student centered, (b) be continuous, (c) occur in many places, (d) involve other people, (e) produce understandable data, and (f) be culturally sensitive. Therefore, it is clear that transition assessment must be an ongoing process that uses a variety of methods to gather many different types of information.

One assessment model that can be adapted to meet these needs is the **APIE Model**. The APIE model for transition assessment used in this chapter is adapted from the directive teaching process (Stephens, 1977) and the model for systematic instruction (Heward, as cited in Cameira, 1987). As shown in Figure 3.1, the APIE model consists of four basic steps: <u>A</u>ssess, <u>P</u>lan, <u>I</u>nstruct, and <u>E</u>valuate. By following this model, educators should be able to design and implement a systematic process for transition assessment that meets the needs of all students.

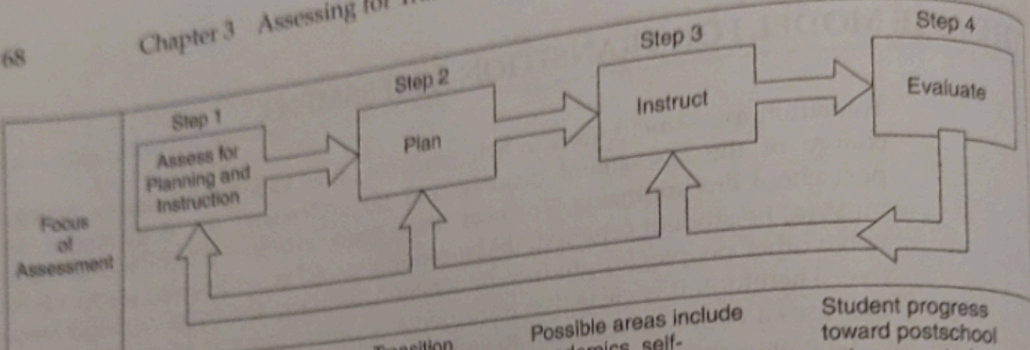
Step 1: Assess for Planning and Instruction

The first step is to assess each student to determine his or her individual needs, preferences, and interests in terms of desired postschool outcomes. This initial assessment must take into account the current resources available and future resources needed to achieve the student's postschool outcomes. To be effective, information must be collected from many individuals using a variety of assessment strategies.

The information gathered in Step 1 will be used for both planning the transition component of the IEP and a student's course of study, which specifies the instruction the student will need to receive in order to reach the desired postschool outcomes. Figure 3.2 provides a summary of some of the key questions that need to be answered during Step 1. Another question that must be answered is, What is needed to help each student achieve these goals in terms of (a) new student skills, (b) environmental supports needed, and (c) current resources available and future resources needed?

Guidelines for Selecting Transition Assessment Strategies. Since assessment plans are tailored to meet students' individual needs, Sitlington and colleagues (1997) suggested nine guidelines for selecting strategies to be used in the transition assessment process:

1. Assessment methods must be tailored to the types of information needed and the decisions to be made regarding transition planning and various postsecondary outcomes.
2. Specific methods selected must be appropriate for the learning characteristics of the individual, including cultural and linguistic differences.



What?	A student's needs, preferences, and interests; life dreams/postschool outcomes; current and future resources	Transition component of the IEP; course of study	Possible areas include academics, self-determination, social skills, health/fitness, community housing, community participation, and employment	Student progress toward postschool outcomes; student performance in instructional environments
How?	• Formal/standardized assessments • Interest inventories • Interviews/questionaires • Direct observation • Environmental analyses • Curriculum-based assessment	See Chapter 4	See Chapters 6–10	• Consumer satisfaction (see Chapter 11) • Task analyses • Work samples • Job analyses • Curriculum-based assessment • Portfolios
Who?	• Students • Families • Special educators • General educators • Vocational rehabilitation counselors • Guidance counselors • Employers • Job coaches • Adult service providers • Occupational therapists/physical therapists • Friends	See Chapter 4	See Chapters 6–10	Same as Column #1

Figure 3.1
Summary of APIE Model for Transition Assessment

3. Assessment methods must incorporate assistive technology or accommodations that will allow an individual to demonstrate his or her abilities and potential.
4. Assessment methods must occur in environments that resemble actual vocational training, employment, independent living, or community environments.
5. Assessment methods must produce outcomes that contribute to ongoing development, planning, and implementation of "next steps" in the individual's transition process.

- *Life Dreams*
  What are your hopes, aspirations, and life dreams?
- *Relationships/Belonging*
  Who are the key people who will be involved and what will your relationships be like?
  Where and how will you find a life partner?
  What future do you envision for your family life?
- *Home*
  Where do you want to live?
  Who do you want to live with?
  What kind of home, neighborhood, and community would you enjoy?
  What lifestyle do you prefer?
- *Career*
  How will you support your lifestyle?
  What kind of work interests you?
  What kind of work are you good at?
  What jobs do you enjoy?
  What is your career goal and how can you get there?
  How much money do you need and want to earn?
  What kind of setting do you want to work in?
  What kind of people do you want to work with?
- *Recreation*
  What kind of leisure would you like to be involved in?
  What and how can you make friends you enjoy?
- *Personal Growth*
  What kinds of knowledge do you wish and need to learn to realize your goals?
- *Health*
  How can you maintain a healthy lifestyle?
- *Education*
  How can you continue to develop skills you want or need?

Figure 3.2
Key Questions for Transition

Note. From *Where Did the Time Go? Transition to Adult Life* (p. 5) by D. Dileo, 2002, St Augustine, FL: Training Resource Network, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

6. Assessment methods must be varied and include a sequence of activities that sample an individual's behavior and skills over time.
7. Assessment data must be verified by more than one method and by more than one person.
8. Assessment data must be synthesized and interpreted to individuals with disabilities, their families, and transition team members.
9. Assessment data and the results of the assessment process must be documented in a format that can be used to facilitate transition planning (p. 75).

How Can Data Be Collected to Assess for Planning and Instruction? Transition assessments can be grouped into two categories called *formal* and *informal* (Flexer & Luft, 2001) or *standardized* and *nonstandardized* (Clark, 1996). Formal assessment procedures typically involve using a standardized procedure for administering, scoring, and interpreting an assessment. By clearly defining how an assessment is administered, scored, and interpreted, this allows a student's score to be interpreted relative to those of other students (e.g., norms), although not all standardized assessments are norm referenced. On the other hand, informal assessment procedures are less structured and do not allow comparison with other students. However, because informal procedures allow assessment of student performance over time, they are useful in designing and evaluating the effects of instructional interventions. In addition, they allow data to be collected from a variety of individuals using a variety of nonstandardized methods.

Standardized Transition Assessments. Clark (1996) listed 13 types of formal, standardized assessment procedures that might be used in transition assessment:

1. Learning style inventories.
2. Academic achievement tests.
3. Intellectual functional assessment.
4. Adaptive behavior scales.
5. Aptitude tests.
6. Interest inventories.
7. Personality scales.
8. Quality-of-life scales.
9. Social skills inventories.
10. Prevocational/employability scales.
11. Vocational skills assessments.
12. Transition knowledge and skills inventories.
13. Medical laboratory procedures.

It is important to keep in mind that formal assessments are designed to provide data about a student, relative to others, at a single point in time. Therefore, it is useful to supplement findings from formal transition assessments with information gathered from informal transition assessment procedures. Figure 3.3 lists some of the more widely used transition assessments.

Informal Transition Assessment Methods. Because transition assessment is an ongoing process that is student centered and student determined, collaborative, and future oriented, informal methods are used most often. These include interviews and questionnaires, direct observation of students in various settings (e.g., at worksites, in class, in the community, at home), environmental analysis, and curriculum-based assessment (CBA).

Comprehensive Assessments

1. *Life Centered Career Education* [LCCE] *Mild Curriculum Assessment System* (Brolin, 1997). This system includes four instruments: (a) The Competency Rating Scale is a teacher rating scale based on the 22 competencies and 97 subcompetencies in the LCCE: Mild Curriculum Guide; (b) the Knowledge Battery is a criterion-referenced assessment consisting of 200 multiple-choice questions covering the three LCCE: Mild Curriculum domains; (c) the Performance Battery contains a combination of open-ended questions, role-playing scenarios, card sorts, and hands-on activities to assess functional performance on the first 21 LCCE: Mild Curriculum competencies; and (d) the LCCE Self-Determination Scale is a 40-item self-report measure.
2. *Life Centered Career Education Moderate Curriculum Assessment System* (Loyd & Brolin, 1997). This system includes three instruments: (a) the Competency Rating Scale-M is a teacher rating scale based on 20 competencies and 75 subcompetencies in the LCCE Moderate Curriculum; (b) the Pictorial Knowledge Battery is a reading-free, criterion-referenced assessment consisting of 150 multiple-choice questions covering the first 18 LCCE Moderate Curriculum competencies; and (c) the Performance Assessment Battery is another reading-free, criterion-referenced instrument consisting of a combination of open-ended questions, role-playing, card sorts, and hands-on activities.
3. *Transition Planning Inventory* [TPI] (Clark & Patton, 1998.) This inventory is designed to provide educators with a comprehensive method for determining perceived transition needs in the following domains: employment, future education, daily living, leisure activities, community participation, health, self-determination, communication, and interpersonal relationships. The TPI includes three levels of assessment: (a) a general needs assessment of each domain; (b) a comprehensive informal inventory of more than 600 items; and (c) select informal assessment instruments corresponding to the nine domains.

Self-Determination Assessments

1. *AIR Self-Determination Scale and User Guide* (Wolman, Campeau, DuBois, Mithaug, & Stolarski, 1994). The main purpose of the AIR Self-Determination Scale and User Guide is to "provide an easy-to-use tool to assess and develop strategies for improving a student's level of self-determination" (p. 9). The scale was designed to be used with all school-age students, grades K through 12+. It can be used to (a) assess and develop a profile of a student's level of self-determination, (b) determine strengths and areas for improvement to increase self-determination, (c) identify goals and objectives, and (d) develop strategies to increase a student's capacities and opportunities. The scale measures *capacity* (i.e., ability, knowledge, and perceptions) and *opportunity* (at school and at home) related to three components of self-determination: *thinking, doing,* and *adjusting.* A five-point Likert-type scale (1 = never; 5 = always) is used to rate students and environments on self-determination components. There are three forms of the scale. The educator form is intended for use by teachers. The

(continued)

Figure 3.3
Sample Transition Assessments

student form can be used by students who have the requisite reading and comprehension skills. The parent form is intended for use with parents who could benefit by considering the self-determination of their sons or daughters. The forms were field-tested with students between the ages of 6 and 25.

Further information about the AIR Self-Determination Scale can be obtained from American Institutes for Research, P.O. Box 1113, Palo Alto, CA 94302. Telephone: 650.493.3550 csef@air-ca.org

2. *The Arc's Self-Determination Scale* (Wehmeyer & Kelchner, 1995). The Arc's Self-Determination Scale is a student self-report measure of self-determination designed for use by adolescents with disabilities, particularly students with mild cognitive and learning disabilities. The 72-item scale measures overall self-determination and the domain areas of autonomy, self-regulation, psychological empowerment, and self-realization. The scale includes four-point Likert-type scale items, story completion items (i.e., the beginning and ending of a story are provided and the student writes the middle section), items that require the student to identify goals and break the goals into smaller steps, and items that require students to make a choice between two options. The scale can be completed by the student independently or it can be read to the student. The scale can be administered to 15 students at one time, provided students' reading abilities warrant this and there are enough persons to provide necessary support to students during scale administration.

   For further information on The Arc's Self-Determination Scale, contact The Arc of the United States, 500 East Border Street, Suite 300, Arlington, TX 76010. Telephone: 817.261.6003. This scale may also be ordered from The Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191-1589. Telephone: 888.232.7323.

3. *ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Assessment* (Martin & Marshall, 1996). The ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Assessment is a curriculum-based assessment and planning tool intended for use with middle to high school students with emotional or behavior disabilities and mild to moderate learning problems. It may be adapted for older elementary students or for students with more severe learning problems. The ChoiceMaker assessment measures student skills and opportunities at school in three areas: choosing goals, expressing goals, and taking action. The assessment has three parts. The first part is a rating scale of student skills related to self-determination and opportunities at school to perform each of the self-determination-related skills. Student skills and opportunities are rated on a scale from 0 to 4. The second part of the assessment is an assessment profile. The student skills and school opportunities ratings are recorded on a profile where differences in scores are more readily apparent. The third part of the assessment, the ChoiceMaker Curriculum Matrix, provides objectives and corresponding goals for consideration as teaching priorities.

   Further information on the ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Assessment can be obtained from Sopris West Publishers, 1140 Boston Avenue, Longmont, CO 80501. Telephone: 800.547.6747.

Figure 3.3
Continued

4. *The Self-Determination Assessment Battery* (Hoffman, Field, & Sawilowsky, 2004). The Self-Determination Assessment Battery measures cognitive, affective, and behavioral factors related to self-determination. These factors are assessed from the perspectives of the student, teacher, and parent. The battery is based on the Field and Hoffman model of self-determination. The model focuses on those variables related to self-determination that are within the individual's control and are potential targets for instructional intervention. The model contains five components: Know Yourself, Value Yourself, Plan, Act, and Experience Outcomes and Learn. There are five instruments in the battery:

(a) The Self-Determination Knowledge Scale (forms A and B; Hoffman, Field, & Sawilowsky, 1996) is a multiple-choice and true/false format instrument designed to assess students' cognitive knowledge of self-determination skills as taught in the *Steps to Self-Determination* (Field & Hoffman, 1996) curriculum.

(b) The Self-Determination Observation Checklist is a 38-item behavioral checklist designed to be used by classroom teachers. Students are observed over a class period, and behaviors that have been found to be correlated with self-determination are checked.

(c) The Self-Determination Student Scale is a 92-item self-report instrument completed by the student that measures both affective and cognitive aspects of self-determination. The items contain a brief stimulus to which the student marks "That's me" or "That's not me."

(d) and (e) The Teacher Perception Scale and the Parent Perception Scale are 30-item questionnaires on which teachers or parents rate their student or child on a five-point Likert-type scale on a variety of behaviors, abilities, and skills associated with self-determination. The instruments in the battery can be used separately or together to assess student variables associated with self-determination.

Further information about the Self-Determination Knowledge Scale can be obtained from Pro-Ed, 8700 Shoal Creek Boulevard, Austin, TX 78757-6897. Telephone: 512.451.3246. It is also available from the Council for Exceptional Children. Telephone: 888.232.7733. Information about the Self-Determination Assessment Battery is available from the Self-Determination and Transition Projects Office, 469 Education Building, College of Education, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202. Telephone: 313.577.1638.

5. *The Self-Determination Profile: An Assessment Package.* (Curtis, 1996). This package is one of the New Hats curriculum sets designed to help youths and adults determine their preferences, activities, relationships, and routines as they are now as well as into the future. Students use card decks composed of illustrations to show what their life is now like and what they would like to do in the future. Various summary sheets are provided for student use, along with facilitator instructions.

The Self-Determination Profile: An Assessment Package is available from New Hats Inc., P.O. Box 57567, Salt Lake City, UT 84157. Telephone: 435.259.9400.

Interviews and Questionnaires. Interviews and questionnaires can be conducted with a variety of individuals. However, they all have a central goal—to gather information that can be used to determine each student's needs, preferences, and interests relative to anticipated postschool outcomes. In other words, what is currently known about the student and the student's family that can be used to help develop postschool outcomes and plan a course of study that will help the student reach his or her goals? Figures 3.4 and 3.5 provide examples of different questions that can be asked of students and their families to gather assessment information for planning and instruction. An important part of this data-collection process involves gathering information about the student's and family's current and future resources. For example, if a student's education choice requires enrolling in postsecondary education, it is helpful to know as soon as possible what financial resources the family might have or need. A second example might involve current and future transportation needs to get to work or to various activities and locations in the community. Finally, families can often suggest current and future employment options for their sons and daughters or other students in a high school program.

Direct Observation. Direct observation of a student should be conducted within the natural or school employment, postsecondary, or community setting (Sitlington et al., 1997). Sometimes called **situational assessment** (Sitlington & Clark, 2001), direct observations are often done by an expert in the environment such as a job coach, coworker, recreation specialist, and/or general or vocational educator. However, in keeping with a philosophy of self-determination students should be taught to record their own observational (or self-recording) data. Direct observation data typically include task-analytic data of steps in completing a task, work behaviors (e.g., on task, following directions, getting along with coworkers), and affective information (e.g., is the student happy, excited, frustrated, or bored?). For example, if, when observing at a worksite, a student quickly and accurately completes his tasks, interacts well with coworkers, and appears happy, this could provide evidence that this type of job is one that the student likes. However, if, after visiting a community residential setting, a student appears withdrawn, this may be an indication that the particular situation may not be suitable.

Environmental Analysis. Environmental analysis, sometimes referred to as **ecological assessment** and/or *job analysis*, involves carefully examining the environment in which an activity normally occurs. For example, a student may express an interest in attending karate classes at the local YMCA. In this case an environmental analysis could be conducted of the transportation needs and the expectations at the YMCA for attending (e.g., being a member, using the locker room, taking a shower). In a second example, if a student expressed interest in a specific type of job, an environmental job analysis could be conducted. The purpose of a job analysis is to compare the requirements of a specific job to the job seeker's skills (Griffin & Sherron, 1996). A critical part of the job analysis would be to help identify the types of accommodations that could be provided to help

Student Dream Sheet

Student Name: *Ernest Lee*
Initial Date: ______
School: *Shelby High School* Teacher: *Mr. Howard*

Review Dates: ______________

Anticipated Date of Graduation: *May 2005*

The following questions will be used to assist in transition planning activities and to determine postschool goals.

1. Where do you want to live after graduation? *In Shelby by myself*
   What kind of housing? *An apartment*
2. How do you intend to continue learning after graduation? *Go to college*
   What types of things do you want to learn after graduation? *Agriculture, reading*
   Where do you want this learning to occur? *A community college or technical school*
3. What kind of job do you want now? *Part-time job, earn a few bucks, just a teenage kind of job*
4. What kind of job do you want when you graduate? *Full-time job building things or working with wood, possibly truck driving*
5. Where do you want to work? *Anywhere near Shelby*
6. What type of work schedule do you want? *Anytime – any shift, weekends are OK*
7. What type of pay and benefits do you want from your future job? *$20.00 an hour, insurance, lots of good benefits like winning trips and stuff*
8. What types of chores do you do at home? *Whatever I need to do but I hate to cook and do dishes.*
9. What equipment/tools can you use? *Lawn care equipment, power tools, woodworking tools*
10. Do you have any significant medical problems that need to be considered when determining postschool goals? *No.*
11. What choices do you make now? *Almost everything*
12. What choices are made for you that you want to take charge of? *When to eat, curfew, how to spend my money*
13. What kind of transportation will you use after graduation? *A car that I own*
14. What do you do for fun now? *Ride around with my cousin, listen to music, hunt, fish, camping out in the woods*
15. What would you like to do for fun in the future? *Same stuff I do now, deep-sea fishing, big game hunting, races*

Figure 3.4 *(continued)*
Sample Student Dream Sheet and Student Mapping Form Completed by Family

Student Mapping Form for Parents

Student Name: *Ernest Lee*
Initial Date: ____________
Review Date: ____________

Parent(s)/Guardian Name: *Grandparents*

Anticipated Date of Graduation: *May 2005*

What are your dreams for your child? List them no matter how big they are.
Good job, marriage, kids

What are you fears for your child?
Drinking and doing drugs
Dropping out of school
Getting a girl pregnant

What are your child's needs?
Job skills

List at least three things that you would like your child to work on during the time he or she is in high school.
Carpentry skills, personal finance management, job-seeking skills

What one thing could we teach your child at school that would make life easier at home?
Cooking skills, clean his room, come in at his curfew time

What do you see as postschool goals for your child in each of the following areas?
Employment: *A good job that he likes in a place that will be patient with him and train him*
Education: *Trucking school or carpentry classes*
Residential: *Live with us (grandparents). Maybe live by himself if one day he has a good job*
Recreation: *Whatever he wants*

Figure 3.4
Continued

Note. From Shelby City Schools/Cleveland County Schools (revised, 2001). Reprinted with permission.

General Questions for Assessment Planning

1. What are your greatest dreams or goals?
2. What are your greatest fears?
3. How can school/agency resources help you to reach your goals?
4. Is there anything the school/family/agencies are doing for you now that you could/should be doing for yourself?

Educational Questions

1. Why do you think you're successful in some classes?
2. Why are you experiencing difficulty in other classes?
3. What modifications do you need in your classes to succeed?
4. How do you learn best?
5. What specific skills are you lacking that could be taught to you in school?
6. What further educational training do you wish you could get?
7. How will you pay for further educational training?

Career Questions

1. What would you like to be doing 2–5–10 years from now?
2. What skills will you need to get the job you want?
3. What kinds of things do you think you're good at? What are you not good at?
4. What kind of vocational training/education would you like to have after high school?
5. What would your ideal job be?
6. What kinds of information/classes/training do you need to have in order to reach your career goals?
7. What hobbies, interests, recreation activities do you have that you could use in a career?
8. What job shadowing or job try-outs would you like to try in order to explore possible careers?
9. What kind of work experience have you had?

Community/Residential Questions

1. Where do you want to live after you graduate?
2. What kind of transportation will be available to you after graduation?
3. What kinds of chores/jobs do you do at home that will help you as an independent adult?
4. What kinds of domestic skills do you need help with (cooking, household management, etc)?
5. If you moved to a new community, how would you locate housing, recreational opportunities, transportation, medical, and legal resources, etc.?
6. How will you manage your money after you graduate?
7. What money/banking skills do you have?

Medical/Legal Questions

1. Do you have a family doctor/dentist?
2. Do you have any medical needs that will require support beyond high school?
3. If you run into a legal problem, how will you handle it? Who will you go to for help?

Figure 3.5
Student Transition Assessment

(continued)

4. Who would you contact in case of emergency?
5. What would you need to know about first aid if help wasn't readily available?
6. If you don't understand the terms of a contract, who can you go to for help?
7. What kinds of insurance will you need, and how will you pay for it?

Recreation/Leisure Questions

1. What do you like to do for fun?
2. What are your hobbies and interests?
3. Is there anything you wish you could learn how to do that you don't know now?
4. Are there any school activities you think you might like to get involved in?
5. What recreation opportunities are offered in your community that might interest you?
6. What recreation resources might you look for if you moved to a new community?
7. Would you rather spend leisure time alone or with others?

Social/Interpersonal Questions

1. How do you handle conflicts or solve problems?
2. Who do you/would you like to go to when you have a problem or need help at home? at school? in the community?
3. Do you have someone you trust to talk with when things aren't going well?
4. Who do you include in your circle of friends?

Figure 3.5
Continued

Note. From North Dakota Transition Project (1995). Bridging the Gap: Charting a Successful Transition from School to Living and Working Independently Within the Community: North Dakota Transition Guide. Minot, ND: Minot State University. Reprinted with permissions.

the student perform the necessary functions of the job (e.g., job restructuring, modifying equipment, acquiring an adaptive device, reorganizing the work space, hiring a personal assistant; Griffin & Sherron).

Curriculum-Based Assessments. Curriculum-based assessments (CBA) are typically designed by educators to gather information about a student's performance in a specific curriculum (McLoughlin & Lewis, 2005). The purpose of a CBA is to develop instructional plans for a specific student. To gather data for use in determining specific instructional needs, an educator might use a task analysis, work sample analysis, portfolio assessment, and/or criterion-referenced tests. In fact, in the area of transition to adulthood, as early as 1988 Albright and Cobb introduced the concept of **curriculum-based vocational assessment** (CBVA) to encourage the field of vocational education to begin to use informal assessment procedures. CBVA was described as a continuous process designed "to answer questions about instruction and special services needs of individual students as they enter into the [sic] progress through specific vocational education programs" (p. 14). Albright and Cobb argued that the CBVA process should be based on

Transition Assessment for Parents

Dear Parents,

As your son or daughter moves closer to graduation, it is important to begin to plan for his/her future. At the next meeting we will develop a transition plan. The transition plan will identify future goals for your son/daughter and ways to support him/her in reaching these goals. We would like to see all our students become productive members of society. Your input and involvement is critical. Please take a few minutes to complete this transition assessment. Think of your son/daughter as an adult after graduation and identify your dreams and goals for him/her.

Employment:

I think my son/daughter could work in:

_____ A full-time regular job (competitive employment).

_____ A part-time regular job (competitive employment).

_____ A job that has support and is supervised, full or part time (supported employment).

_____ Military service.

_____ Volunteer work.

_____ Other: ____________________

My son's/daughter's strength(s) in this area are:

My son/daughter seems to be interested in working as:

When I think of my son/daughter working, I am afraid that:

To work, my son/daughter needs to develop skills in:

Education:

Future education for my son/daughter will include (check all that apply):

_____ College or university.	_____ Adult basic education classes.
_____ Community college.	_____ Compensatory education classes.
_____ Vocational training.	_____ Life skills classes.
_____ On-the-job training.	_____ Other: ____________________

My son's/daughter's educational strengths are:

To attend postsecondary training, my son/daughter will need to develop skills in:

Residential/Living:

After graduation my son/daughter will live:

_____ On his/her own in a house or an apartment.

_____ With a roommate.

_____ In a supervised living situation (group home, supervised apartment).

_____ With parents.

_____ With other family members.

_____ Other: ____________________

(continued)

My son's/daughter's strength(s) in this area are:

When I think about where my son/daughter will live, I am afraid that:

To live as independently as possible, my son or daughter needs to develop skills in:

Recreation and Leisure:

When my son/daughter graduates, I hope he/she is involved in (check all that apply):

_____ Independent recreational activities.

_____ Activities with friends.

_____ Organized recreational activities (club, team sports).

_____ Classes (to develop hobbies, and explore areas of interest).

_____ Supported and supervised recreational activities.

_____ Other: ____________________

During free time, my son or daughter enjoys:

My son's/daughter's strength(s) in this area are:

When I think of the free time my son or daughter will have after graduation, I am afraid that:

To be active and enjoy leisure time, my son or daughter needs to develop skills in:

Transportation:

When my son/daughter graduates, he/she will (check all that apply):

_____ Have a driver's license and a car.

_____ Walk, or ride a bike.

_____ Use transportation independently (bus, taxi, train).

_____ Use supported transportation (family, service groups, car pool, special program).

_____ Other: ____________________

My son's/daughter's strength(s) in this area are:

When I think of my son/daughter traveling around the community I worry about:

To access transportation my son/daughter needs to develop skills in:

Review items in the following three areas. Please identify areas in which your son or daughter needs information/support.

Social/Interpersonal

_____ Making friends

_____ Setting goals

_____ Family relationships

_____ Handling legal responsibilities

_____ Handling anger

_____ Communicating needs/wants

_____ Relationships with the opposite sex

_____ Counseling

_____ Other: ____________________

Personal Management

____ Hygiene	____ Money management/budgeting
____ Safety	____ Time/time management
____ Mobility/transportation	____ Personal care
____ Domestic skills	____ Other: ____

Health

____ Ongoing care for a serious medical condition	____ Information on drug/chemical abuse
____ Sex education	____ Other: ____
____ AIDS awareness	

Note. From *The Colorado Transition Manual* by S. J. McAlonan, 1993, Denver; Colorado Department of Education. Reprinted with permission.

student needs and be integrated into ongoing instruction. They viewed CBVA as a novel application of the "assess–teach–assess–teach" feedback loop, much like the APIE model used in this text.

Who Can Be Involved in Assessing for Planning and Instruction? A wide variety of people can be involved in this process. Figure 3.1 provides a starting point for determining which people to gather data from as well as people who can gather data for you. Sitlington and colleagues' (1997) nine guidelines for selecting assessment methods, described earlier, can help you decide who to involve in this step of the transition assessment process. For example, Guideline 4 requires assessing in actual environments. If this is going to happen, who is the best person to get to help collect data? If it is at a worksite, you might want to use a coworker, the supervisor, or the job coach. If it involves postsecondary education, it might involve high school guidance counselors or college-level disability services personnel. If it involves community housing, you might want to involve the family and a realtor.

Guideline 7 requires that data be verified by more than one person. For example, family members might be able to verify whether or not a student likes a specific job or housing option, while a friend might be able to verify a student's interest in visiting local art galleries and museums during monthly "gallery crawls."

In conclusion, remember that the APIE model is designed to be ongoing, which allows other individuals to be invited into the assessment process at any time once the student and team identify a need for a particular person. For example, a student who has been planning to live at home for a few years after graduating now decides that he would like to explore community housing alternatives. As a result, information must be gathered from a representative from the local public housing authority.

Step 2: Plan

Once enough information has been gathered to determine a student's needs, preferences, and interests related to postschool outcomes and current and future resources have been established, it is time to move on to the second step in the APIE model. If Guidelines 8 (i.e., synthesizing and interpreting assessment data to students, families, and teams) and 9 (i.e., documenting assessment data in a format that can be used to facilitate transition planning), have been followed, the information has been synthesized and interpreted so that all members of the planning team understand them and the results are in a format that will facilitate planning. The planning that now occurs will be written into the transition component of the student's IEP, along with the course of study. For more information on how this planning process works and who should be involved, see Chapter 4.

Step 3: Instruct

Once the second step of the APIE model is completed and the transition component of the IEP, the IEP goals and objectives, and the course of study have been determined, the next step is to provide instruction to the student. This instruction will be designed to help the student attain the skills needed to achieve the postschool outcomes stated in the IEP. Possible areas for instruction could include self-determination, social skills, health and fitness, community housing, community participation, and employment. For more information on how to teach and assess student performance in these areas, as well as who should be involved, see Chapters 6 through 10.

Step 4: Evaluate

While Step 4 is the last step in the APIE model, it is not the last step in the transition assessment process. Remember that a key characteristic of transition assessment is that it is an on-going process. As shown in Figure 3.1, the information gathered in Step 4 feeds back to all the earlier steps making the process cyclical and thus ongoing. Step 4 allows the educator, student, and family to take stock of where they are with respect to the student's achieving the desired postschool outcomes. As a result, evaluation will take place at regular intervals. To determine whether adequate progress is being made on transition activities and IEP goals and objectives, evaluation might occur semiannually, but it must occur annually.

To determine a student's performance in instructional environments, brief weekly or monthly progress reports could be developed and shared with the student and his or her family. As students are taught to self-evaluate, they could be given the task of sending home their own monthly reports. These reports could simply be a self-report checklist of tasks completed and current performance. A student who is currently involved in a community-based work experience might complete a self-graphing task analysis for his or her job (or a job task) each Friday, and at the end of the month (or week), these analyses would be sent home for the family to see.

How Can Data Be Collected to Evaluate? All of the strategies described for Step 1 can also be used in Step 4. However, instead of gathering information to begin planning and instruction, the educator collects data to guide ongoing planning and instruction. Therefore it is important that students and families be given multiple opportunities to revisit desired postschool outcomes and revise them as needed. It should be expected that, as a student has opportunities to try out and learn more about different jobs, community housing options, and postsecondary educational opportunities, his or her plans may change entirely (e.g., from getting a job to attending college) or become more precise (e.g., from wanting a job to wanting a job working with computers).

An additional set of data that needs to be collected once students get involved in their transition programs is consumer satisfaction data. It is important to collect these data from students and families to ensure that everyone is satisfied with the instruction, services, and supports being provided. In addition, this information can be used to make changes to the transition program to ensure that transition services are being provided at the highest possible level of quality. For more detail on what consumer satisfaction data to collect and how to collect it, see Chapter 11.

STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING COMMON CHALLENGES

What to Do If a Student Has Been Referred to Vocational Rehabilitation for an Evaluation

At some point in high school, students with disabilities will probably be involved in what is often called a traditional vocational evaluation. While the traditional vocational evaluation process typically includes four steps—clinical assessment, work evaluation, work adjustment, and job site evaluation—students may not be involved in all four steps. The first thing to do is to find out exactly which steps will be involved in each student's vocational evaluation. Once this is known, educators can help prepare the students by describing the process in advance.

The first step in traditional vocational evaluation process is called *clinical assessment*. Clinical assessment usually involves collecting medical, social, educational, and psychological information. Social, educational, and psychological information is typically gathered using standardized adaptive behavior, academic, and intelligence tests. All clinical assessment data should focus on a student's strengths and how these abilities relate to different vocational opportunities. The 1992 Rehabilitation Act Amendments (P.L. 102–569), mentioned in Chapter 1, states that vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselors are allowed to use existing assessment data if the report was completed in the past year. This means that the educator should find out what clinical assessment information the VR counselor will need and, if it is available from the past year, help the counselor get access to the data. (You will learn more about VR counselors and their role in the transition process in Chapter 5.) This also means that students will not have to retake a set of tests that they have recently taken for school.

The second step in the traditional vocational evaluation process is *work evaluation*. Because clinical assessment data often are not a good predictor of vocational success, work (real or simulated) has been used more often. There are three basic types of work evaluations: standardized interest and aptitude tests, work/job samples, and situational assessments.

Standardized interest and aptitude tests come in written formats, pictorial formats, and CD formats. CDs typically include video clips of people performing actual jobs. Standardized tests have limited usefulness because students often need work experience to make choices, must have the ability to make choices, and, at times, need good reading skills. The use of video clips and pictures is an attempt to avoid these problems. However, there is no real substitution for actual on-the-job experience to help students decide on their interests. Examples of standardized interest and aptitude tests include the Strong Interest Inventory (Strong et al., 1994), Digital Pictorial Inventory of Careers (Talent Assessment, Inc., 2000), and The Wide Range Interest and Occupation Test (Glutting & Wilkinson, 2003).

The other two types of work evaluation involve having students perform either simulated or real work tasks. Work samples involve having a student perform a real or simulated task (e.g., sorting mail, collating, fixing a drain), while situational assessments involve observing individuals doing entire jobs. Both work samples and situational assessments typically include collecting task-analytic data on specific job tasks as well as data on general work skills (e.g., following directions, getting along with coworkers, attitude). Educators can share any data they have from any on-campus or off-campus work experiences a student has participated in. The more data that are available to help make recommendations, the more realistic they will be.

The third step in a traditional vocational evaluation is called *work adjustment*. This process is similar to the APIE model in that it consists of a period of work experience followed by a planned sequence of instruction to remediate specific vocational weaknesses, which is then followed by another work experience and more skill instruction. Historically this process has taken place in sheltered workshops or other rehabilitation facilities. Today, however, best practice involves conducting work adjustment at community-based sites. As a result educators should be ready to offer, or recommend, the use of the school's community-based training sites (see Chapter 8) and the data collected, as the work adjustment step.

The final step in a traditional vocational evaluation is *job site evaluation*. In a true job site evaluation, students have an opportunity to try out a paid, competitive job as the final step in their vocational evaluation. This is probably the best way to tell whether or not an individual is both interested in and capable of performing a specific job. Educators may be able to volunteer the use of their community-based training sites for this step. One limitation of this is that jobs performed in many community-based training sites are unpaid.

To summarize, armed with an understanding of what is going to occur during a student's vocational evaluation, educators can assist by (a) supplying existing testing data (provided it was gathered within the past year), (b) sharing any existing data on the student's performance on work tasks and at on-campus or community-based training sites, and (c) offering on-campus or community-based training sites for use in the evaluation process.

What to Do When Students and Families Disagree

Educators should try to be aware of, and prepared for, any potential areas of disagreement between students and families. Comparing student and family responses to Student Dream Sheets and Parent Mapping Forms (see Figure 3.4 for examples) is an excellent way to be alerted early to possible disagreements. What follows are ideas for dealing with some common areas of disagreement. In addition, see Chapter 5 for strategies to help resolve conflicts.

Disagreements About Postschool Goals. This situation might occur if a student wants to move out and the family wants him or her to stay at home. One suggestion is to develop a long-range plan for how the student can be "free" while the parents still feel that he or she is safe.

Disagreement also occurs around the type of job the student wants and/or the job hours. Both students and families can have preconceived notions about what jobs are acceptable (e.g., sometimes a white-collar family will have issues with a blue-collar job). Another reason why a family may not want their son or daughter to get a job is loss of income and healthcare benefits if the student can no longer receive supplemental security income (SSI). In this case the family and student will need to be educated about new Ticket-to-Work requirements and social security work incentives such as the Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) and impairment-related work expenses (IRWE). A good starting point is to have a local social security expert work with the family. For more detail, see Chapters 5 and 8. The suggestion here is to create a long-term plan for employment that includes as many opportunities as possible for a student to try out a variety of jobs.

Fear of Risk Taking. Typically this involves families who feel that their child is not ready for a specific job or community participation experience. Overcoming this fear requires providing students with as many experiences as possible while they are still in school to prove to families that their sons and daughters will be successful in different situations. If possible, the family should be involved in planning for each experience and should be educated about the safeguards in place for each community-based training experience.

Differences in Expectations. This is another issue that will require long-range planning, but it also has to be overcome early or it will get in the way of the student's having any community-based experiences. Many things can be done to prove to parents that their sons and daughters are capable of doing more than the parents believe they can. The more students are involved in leadership roles