

Can I Return to Work?

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RTW Question: Varied Perspectives

- **John (client):** Do you think I am ready to return to work?
- **Insurer:** When will John be able to go back to work?
- **Health/vocational professionals:** How can we best evaluate John's work abilities and potential?

Significance of RTW Question

One must work and dare if one really wants to live.

Vincent van Gogh

In order that people may be happy in their work, these three things are needed: they must be fit for it; they must not do too much of it; and they must have a sense of success in it.

John Ruskin

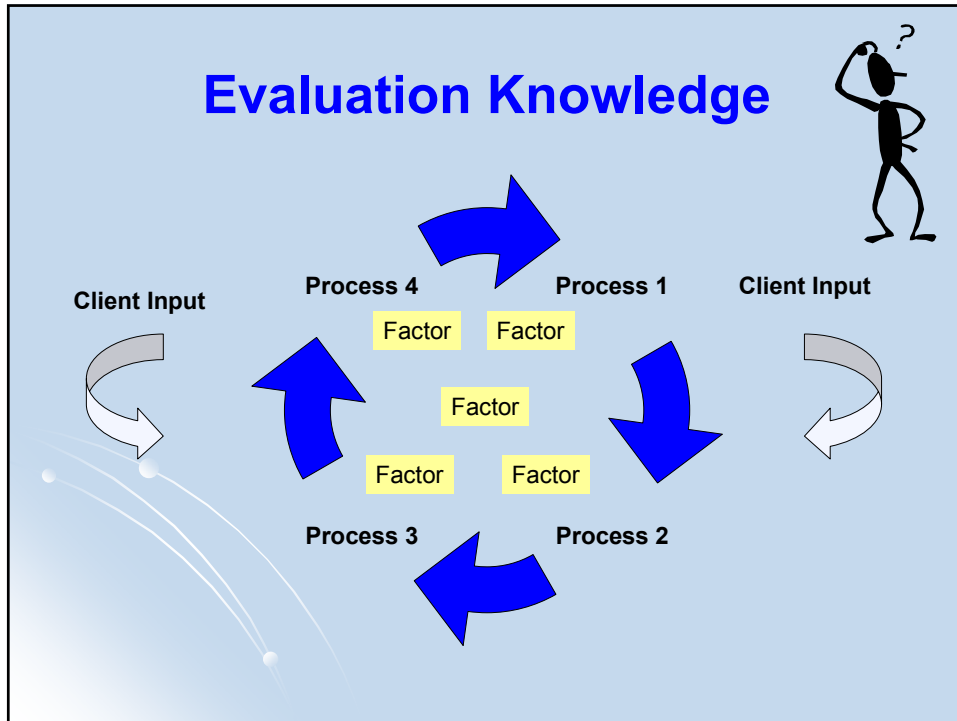
Workshop Objectives

What:

Examine how we evaluate work abilities and determine if clients are able to work/return to work

How:

- By exploring what we individually do (in practice)
- By exploring what we collectively know (we + literature)



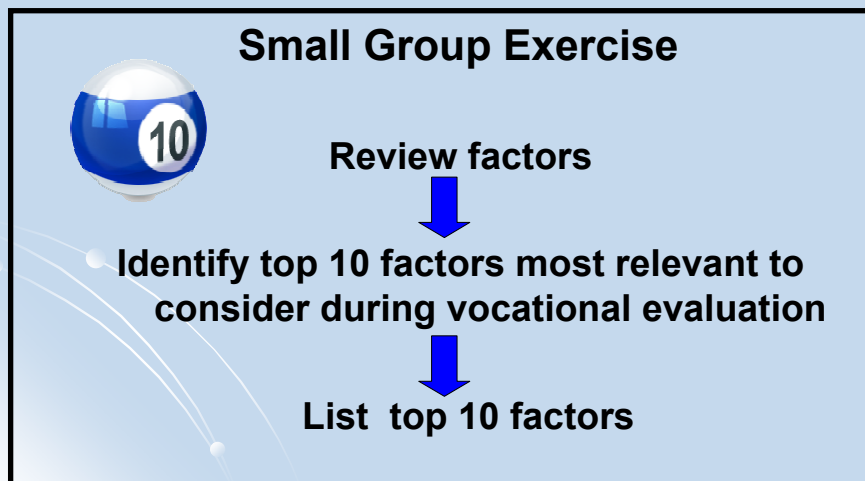
In my current practice, the key processes I follow are...



- I define the purpose of my evaluation as...
- I collect the following information (e.g.) from the following persons (e.g.)...
- I assess the following areas (e.g.) because/to determine...
- I analyze my results by...
- I make recommendations related to...

Factors Associated with Employment Outcomes Post-TBI	
Category	Factor
Personal	
Pre-Injury	Age; Gender; Marital Status; Race; Education; Psychological Status
Injury-Related	Injury Severity; Mechanism/Type of Injury; Acute Injury Recovery; Concurrent Symptoms/Disabilities; Length of Stay
Post-Injury	Physical Status; Neuropsych/Cognitive Status; Psychosocial Status; Functional Status & Independence; Self-reported Status
Occupational	
Pre-Injury	Occupational History/Occupational Category
Post-Injury	Occupational Category/Complexity/Job Goal
Environmental	
Economic	Availability of Insurance Benefits; Funding; Litigation
Workplace Supports	Workplace Culture; Accommodations
Social/Instrumental Supports	Family & Community Supports; Driving Independence/Transportation; Voc Rehab Services

Factors Most Relevant To Vocational Evaluation



Review Purpose

- To provide the evidence base for a clinical practice guideline for vocational evaluation following TBI
- To make explicit the key process and factors relevant to vocational evaluation

Review Questions



What **processes** should evaluators follow when completing a vocational evaluation of clients' work abilities post-tbi?

What **factors** should evaluators consider when completing a vocational evaluation...



What do **clients** who have experienced a TBI and attempted to return to work **perceive** to be **relevant** to the process of rtw and vocational evaluation?

The Systematic Review



Medline

PsychInfo

Embase

Cochrane
Reviews

9 Guideline
Websites

Inclusion

- Assessment process
- PEO factors
- 18-65 years old



Exclusion

- Strokes & ABI (>50%)
- Treatment/intervention
- Theoretical papers

79 ARTICLES/STUDIES + 4 GUIDELINES

- 12 descriptive articles + 3 qualitative studies (process)
- 10 review articles + 43 quantitative studies (factors)
- 11 qualitative studies (clients' perspectives on rtw)

The Systematic Review (cont)



79 ARTICLES/STUDIES + 4 GUIDELINES

Quality Appraisal

- Descriptive X 1
- Reviews X 2
- Qualitative X 2
- Quantitative X 2
- Guidelines X 2



Appraisal Instruments

- Clinical Relevance
- CASP Tool (Reviews)
- CASP Tool (Qualitative)
- Ownsworth & McKenna (quant)
- AGREE Tool (Guidelines)

EVIDENCE REMAINING FOLLOWING APPRAISAL

- 12 descriptive articles + 3 qualitative studies (process)
- 8 review articles + 30 quantitative studies (factors)
- 6 qualitative studies (clients' perspectives on rtw)
- 3 guidelines (process + factors)

Second Reviewers



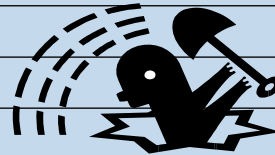
- Tanya Glenrose-Eimantas, MSc
- Lynn Rutledge MSc, Ph D. (student)

- Sara McEwan, Ph D

- Debbie Hebert, MSc, Ph D (candidate)
- Mandy Lowe, MSc

Data Extraction: Evidence Tables

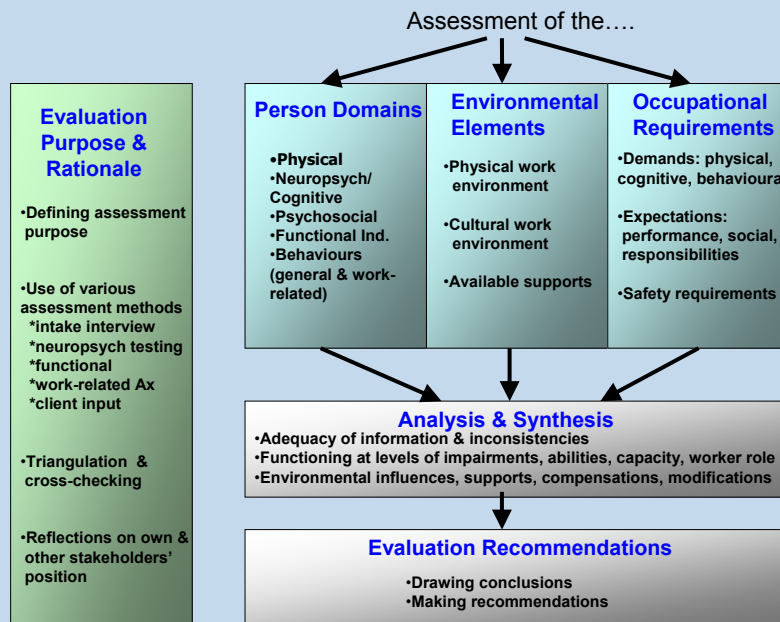
Study Purpose/Research Question
Study Location/Context
Participants/Population
Study Design
Methods
Treatment Provided
Outcomes Measured
Themes Identified
Findings/Results
Key Factors Relevant to Work Evaluation
Key Processes Relevant to Work Evaluation



Data Analysis & Synthesis

- ➔ **Directed content analysis** to identify key process across descriptive evidence (process)
- ➔ **Constant comparative method** to compare study findings re: each factor and relationship to employment (factors)
- ➔ **Thematic analysis** to synthesize meanings clients ascribe to return to work following TBI (clients' perspectives)

Process Synthesis 1: Elements of a Vocational Evaluation



Factor Synthesis 2: Factors with the Greatest Support for a Relationship with Employment Outcomes	
Factor	Level of Support
Personal	
Pre-Injury	Age; Educational Level (strong)
Injury-Related	Acute Injury/Recovery; Concurrent Symptoms; Length of Stay (some)
Post-Injury	Neuropsych/Cognitive Status; Functional Status; Psychosocial Status (strong)
Occupational	
Pre-Injury	Occupational History/Occupational Category (moderate)
Post-Injury	Occupational Category/Complexity (moderate)
Environmental	
Economic	Availability of Benefits (mixed)
Workplace Supports	Culture; Accommodations (limited)
Social & Instrumental Supports	Family; Transportation; Voc Services

Clients' Perspectives & Roles In the Process

How do we incorporate clients into the vocational evaluation process?

How can their perspectives inform how vocational evaluations are completed?

Synthesis 3: Clients' Experiences of RTW

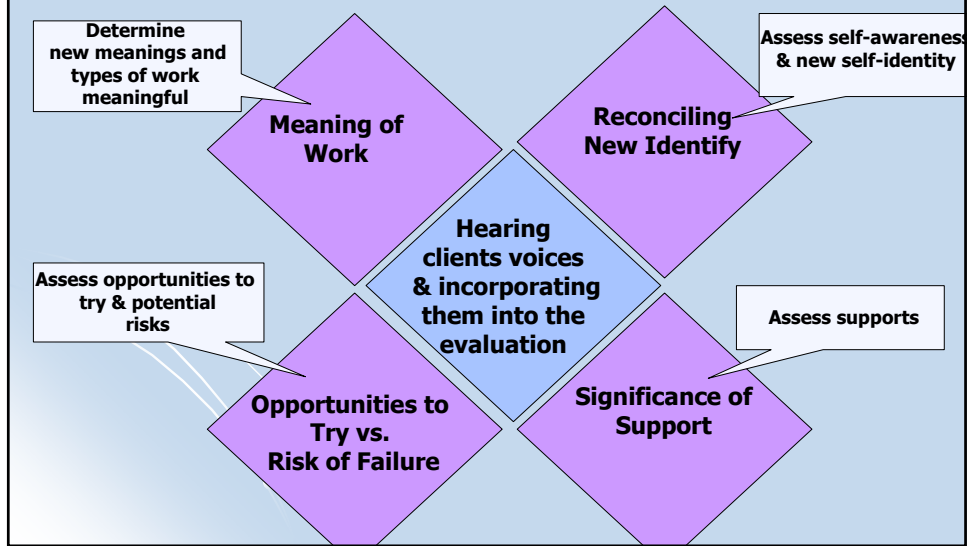
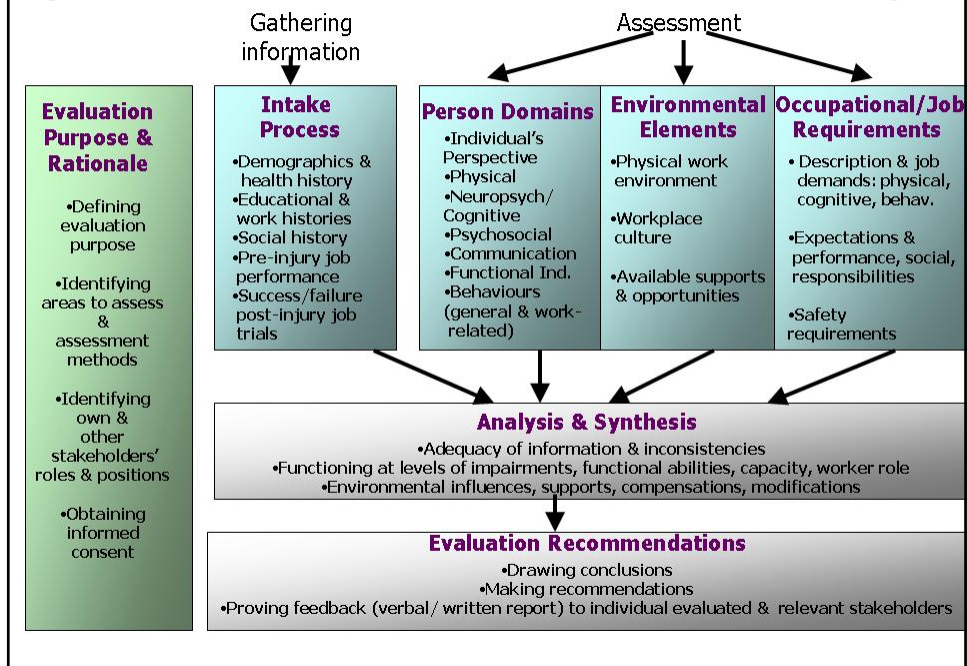


Figure 1: Evidence-Based Framework For Vocational Evaluation Following TBI



Resulting Developments

Review + framework + inter-disciplinary panel



Clinical Practice Guideline For Vocational
Evaluation Following Traumatic Brain Injury



Pilot Testing Guideline (OT's)

- Implementation + Outcomes

Lessons Learned

- Clarifying purpose and linking this to assessment tools/process, synthesis & final evaluation recommendations
- Significance of changes in meaning of work post-TBI
- Significance of supports and opportunities to try for clients
- Significance of clear understanding of expectations at the workplace

Ph D Thesis Committee



- **Dr. Susan Rappolt**
 - Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, University of Toronto
- **Dr. Deirdre Dawson**
 - Associate Professor, Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy, University of Toronto & Scientist, Kunin-Lunenfeld Applied Research Unit, Baycrest
- **Dr. Dorcas Beaton**
 - Associate Professor, Health Policy, Management and Evaluation, University of Toronto & Scientist and Director of Clinical Research, Mobility Program Clinical Research Unit, Keenan Research Centre, Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute, St. Michaels Hospital

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- Kunin-Lunenfeld Applied Research Unit, Finkler Graduate Student Fellowship
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- University of Toronto, Faculty of Medicine, Continuing Education and Professional Development Award (PI, Dr. Rappolt)

References

- **Stergiou-Kita, M., Dawson, D., Rappolt, S. (2010). Systematic Review of Evidence for Vocational Evaluation Following Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Under review: Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation.**
- **Stergiou-Kita, M., Rappolt, S., & Dawson, D. (2010). Towards developing a guideline for vocational evaluation following traumatic brain injury: The qualitative synthesis of clients' perspectives. Under Review: Disability & Rehabilitation.**