

Interpreting the SDS in light of Profile Elevation, Communication Apprehension, Personality, and Career Thoughts

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Key Concepts

Career thought. Outcomes of one's thinking about behaviors, beliefs, feelings, plans, and/or strategies related to career problem solving and decision making.

Career Thoughts Inventory (CTI). A 48 item inventory of career thoughts that is a single global indicator of negative thinking in career problem solving and decision making. As scores on the CTI increase, the extent of negative career thinking increases as well. The CTI total score is negatively correlated with the Identity scale of the My Vocational Situation (MVS).

Code. One to three RIASEC letters that indicate which Holland types a person, occupation, field of study, or leisure area most resembles.

Coherence of Aspirations. Degree to which codes of a person's set of vocational aspirations or occupational daydreams belong in the same Holland category. Scores of high, average, or low are determined from analysis of the first three occupational aspirations listed in the Daydreams Section of the SDS: **High**, first letter of first occupation same as first letter of second and third occupations; **Average**, first letter of first occupation same as first letter of second or third occupation; **Low**, first letter of first occupation does not appear as first letter of either second or third occupation. Coherence is related to consistency; high coherence may indicate future persistence in occupations with the same first letter code as that of the first aspiration.

Commonness. The frequency with which a given code is observed; there is an extremely uneven frequency of various persons across the RIASEC types. Some code combinations, e.g., AC, CA, are rare. SDS Summary Codes which occur with a frequency of greater than 4.5% are **High**; those which occur with frequencies of .11 to 4.49% are **Average**; and those which occur with a frequency of less than .10% are **Low**. Common codes are associated with stability of choice.

Commitment Anxiety. A CTI scale that reflects an inability to make a commitment to a specific career choice, accompanied by generalized anxiety about the outcome of the decision making process, with anxiety perpetuating the indecision.

Communication Apprehension (CA). An individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons. CA is measured using the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24), which provides a total communication apprehension score and four sub scores. The sub scores pertain to four different areas in CA: group discussion, interpersonal communication, public speaking, and communication during meetings. Total CA scores range from 24 to 120. Scores below 51 represent individuals with low CA levels. Scores between 51 and 80 represent individuals with average CA. Scores above 80 represent individuals with high levels of CA.

Congruence. The degree of match between two codes, e.g., a person and an occupation. A Realistic person in a Realistic occupation is very congruent, whereas a Realistic person in a Social occupation is incongruent. Degrees of congruence are defined according to the hexagonal model in which Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and

Conventional types (in that order) are at the six points of the hexagon. High levels of congruence are indicative of a person who will maintain the code of the first aspiration in the future.

Consistency. The degree of consistency in an SDS code is determined by the distance between the first two code letters on the hexagon: **High**, first two letters are adjacent on the hexagon (e.g., RI); **Average**, first two letters are alternate on the hexagon (e.g., RA); **Low**, first two letters are opposite on the hexagon (e.g., RS). High consistency is positively correlated with more stability in work history and the direction of career preferences or work histories.

Decision Making Confusion. A CTI scale that reflects an inability to initiate or sustain the career decision making process as a result of disabling emotions and/or a lack of understanding about the decision making process itself.

Differentiation. The level of definition or distinctness of a personality profile. A person who resembles one type and no other type is highly differentiated, whereas a person who resembles all six types to an equal degree is undifferentiated. Differentiation is usually computed by subtracting the lowest score in the profile from the highest; sometimes a more technical Iachan index is used. High differentiation is positively related to the person's exhibition of characteristics attributed to the types, especially the highest and lowest profile scores. In this way, persons with differentiated profiles are more predictable with respect to their interests.

External Conflict. A CTI scale that reflects an inability to balance the importance of one's own self-perceptions with the importance of input from significant others, resulting in a reluctance to assume responsibility for decision making.

Profile Elevation. The sum of the 6 section scores on SDS:R (the total number of positive responses and the two self-estimates scores). Persons with high profile elevation more likely value new experiences, and have a more outgoing, sociable, and cheerful disposition. Conversely, persons with low scores may be less willing to consider new career options and may exhibit traits of sadness and frustration. Scores range from 14 to 300, and mean scores for adults are about 110 with standard deviations of about 35. Low scores are <87 and high scores are 133>.

Rule of 8. RIASEC summary scale differences less than 8 on the SDS Form R should be regarded as trivial because they are within the limits of the standard error of measure of the inventory.

Type. Holland's theory makes use of six personality types and six environmental models in explaining behavior in environments. No person is a true type; but indicating the types a person resembles helps to describe the person.

Vocational aspiration. A person's desired occupational or career aim. Similar terms include vocational expectation, (expected career role at a point in future time), occupational aspiration, occupational daydream, and occupational expectation. Classified aspirations or expectations can be used to estimate a person's Holland code. Aspirations are assessed by expressed interest measurement techniques.

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