

Conducting Psychological Tele- Assessment

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NYU | STEINHARDT



APA's Guidance Principles

*Wright, Mihura, Pade, McCord
(2020)*

[https://www.apaservices.org/practice/
reimbursement/health-
codes/testing/tele-assessment-covid-](https://www.apaservices.org/practice/reimbursement/health-codes/testing/tele-assessment-covid-19)

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Conducting Psychological Tele-Assessment

Essentials of Psychological Tele-Assessment

Wright & Raiford (Wiley, 2020)

<https://www.wiley.com/learn/psychology-essentials/>

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6. Maintain the same ethical standards of care as in traditional psych assessment.

You must be adequately trained and competent to do the work!

Competent at assessment

Competent at the technology

Competent at doing assessment using the technology

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*6. Maintain the same ethical standards
of care as in traditional psych
assessment.*

Determine client appropriateness

“High risk”

Age interaction with technology

Technology literacy and comfort

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*6. Maintain the same ethical standards
of care as in traditional psych
assessment.*

Determine client appropriateness

*Access to necessary technology and
environment*

Accepting of the modality

Clinical and cognitive factors

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6. *Maintain the same ethical standards of care as in traditional psych assessment.*

Do no harm

The assessment must be valid

Online privacy and security

Knowingly inadequate services

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6. *Maintain the same ethical standards of care as in traditional psych assessment.*

Ensure consent is fully informed

Limitations of the process

Alternatives

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6. Maintain the same ethical standards of care as in traditional psych assessment.

Test security and integrity

Verify client identity

Take steps to ensure clients do not have access to materials ahead of time

Ensure no cheating

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1. Do not jeopardize test security.

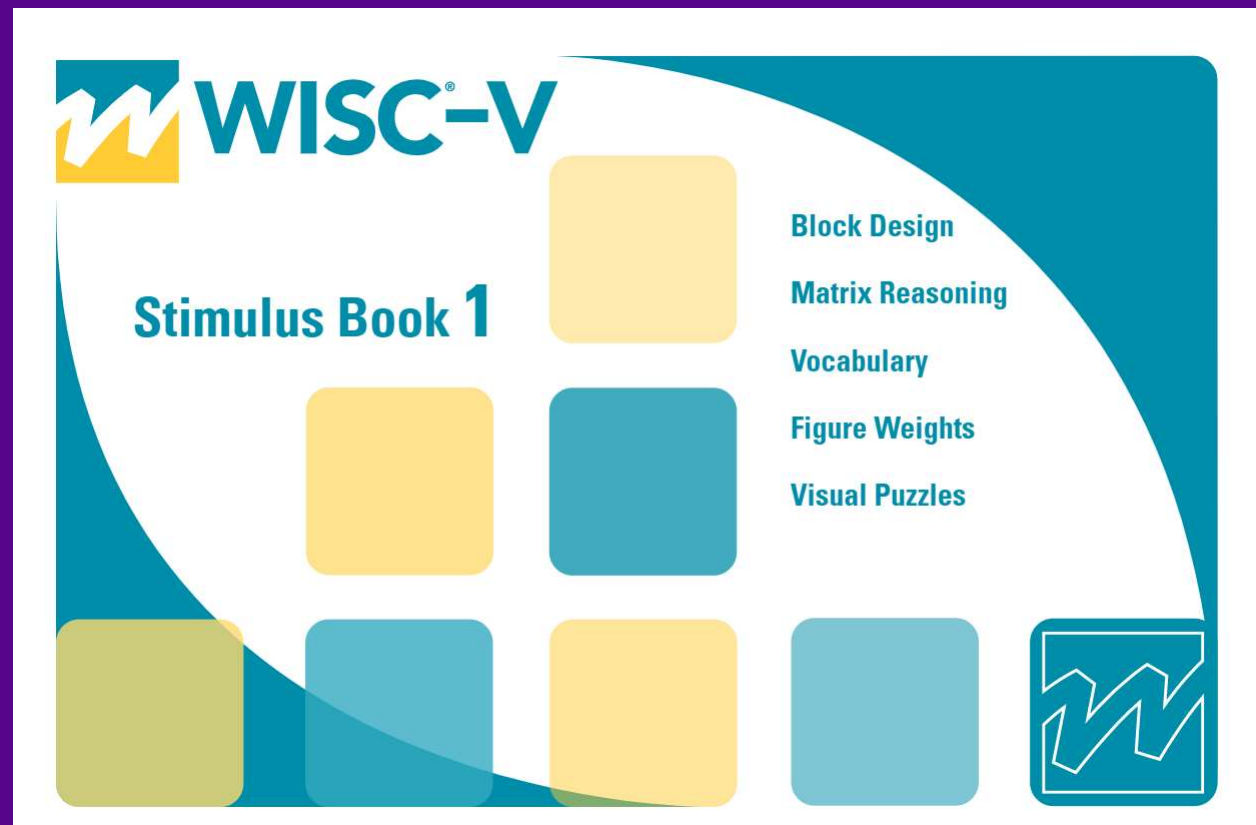
Ethical Standard 9.11: security

“Psychologists make reasonable efforts to maintain the integrity and security of test materials and other assessment techniques consistent with law and contractual obligations, and in a manner that permits adherence to this Ethics Code.”

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1. *Do not jeopardize test security.*

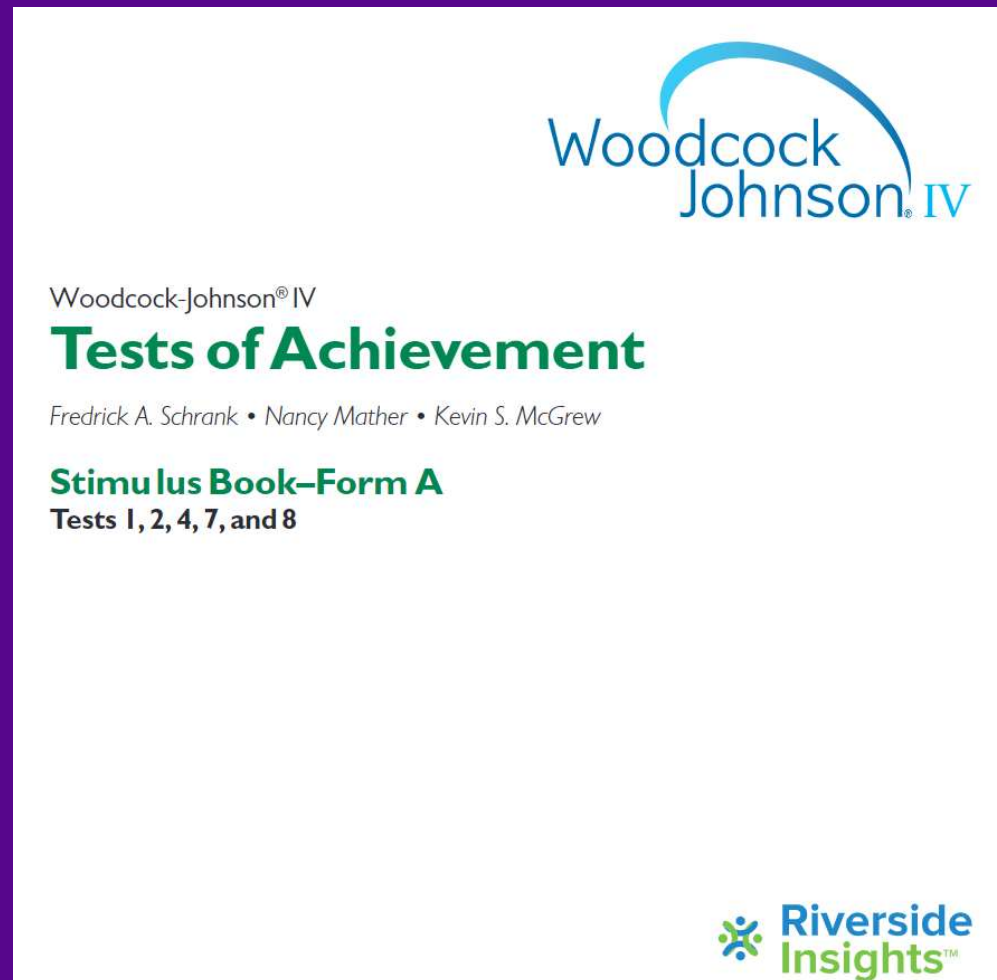
Publishers providing online materials



Conducting Psychological Tele-Assessment

1. Do not jeopardize test security.

Publishers providing online materials



Conducting Psychological Tele-Assessment

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Publishers providing online materials

PAR, Inc.'s PARiConnect

Conducting Psychological Tele-Assessment

1. Do not jeopardize test security.

Publishers providing online materials

MHS, WPS, etc.

Conducting Psychological Tele-Assessment

1. Do not jeopardize test security.

Some tests are not available in this way yet, though.



Conducting Psychological Tele-Assessment

1. Do not jeopardize test security.

Find the safest ways possible to present materials.



1. Tell client/parent you are sending materials and NOT TO OPEN THEM.
2. Include a SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE.
3. Write DO NOT OPEN on the envelope itself.
4. Instruct the client/parent/child to open the envelope JUST IN TIME.
5. Instruct them to put completed materials in the envelope and WATCH THEM SEAL IT.

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*6. Maintain the same ethical standards
of care as in traditional psych
assessment.*

Documentation and reporting

Social justice

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

PRACTICE!!!

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

PREPARE!!!

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Psychologist's Side

- ☐ Practice with the technology and tests yourself
- ☐ Know and understand the literature base
- ☐ Consider test and subtest substitutions

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4. Think critically about test and subtest substitutions.

Some tasks cannot be accomplished, at all, in any way.



Conducting Psychological Tele-Assessment

4. Think critically about test and subtest substitutions.

Some tasks cannot be accomplished, at all, in any way.

NO TEST IS PERFECT.

NO TEST DIAGNOSES.

YOU ARE THE PSYCHOLOGIST.

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4. *Think critically about test and subtest substitutions.*

Some tasks cannot be accomplished, at all, in any way.

Some tasks can be accomplished, but with seriously compromised results.

Rely on broader indices whenever possible.

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Psychologist's Side

- ☐ Practice with the technology and tests yourself
- ☐ Know and understand the literature base
 - ☐ Consider test and subtest substitutions
 - ☐ Approximate standardized administration

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Psychologist's Side

- ☐ Ensure your connectivity is consistent/reliable
- ☐ Prepare and test your eye gaze angle
- ☐ Prepare a contingency plan for tech glitches

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Psychologist's Side

- ☐ Develop a safety plan
- ☐ Client's address/parents' whereabouts during session
- ☐ Client's/parents' phone number during session
- ☐ Emergency resources near the client

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Psychologist's Side

- ☐ Prepare your own computer
 - ☐ Clear browser history
 - ☐ Close all possible programs (even background)
 - ☐ Turn off notifications
 - ☐ If using remote control, set up a new profile

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Psychologist's Side

- ☐ Set up your physical space
 - ☐ Quiet and relatively free from distractions
 - ☐ Remove distracting personal items/artwork
 - ☐ Consider a virtual background, but be careful
 - ☐ Ensure you are well lit from the front

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Psychologist's Side

- ☐ Set up all testing materials
 - ☐ Physical stimulus materials within reach
 - ☐ Virtual stimulus materials open and minimized
 - ☐ Prepare backup/alternate tests to administer

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Client's Side

- ☐ Discuss with client/parent exactly what to expect
- ☐ Send materials to client
 - ☐ Response booklets and similar materials
 - ☐ Addressed, stamped return envelope
 - ☐ Discuss the rules/parameters of the materials

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Client's Side

- ☐ Instruct the client/parent on their physical space
 - ☐ Relatively free from distraction
 - ☐ Comfortable and private
 - ☐ Times with fewer likely distractions
 - ☐ Use headphones

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Client's Side

- ☐ Instruct the client/parent that there should be no recording of sessions
- ☐ Communicate clearly to client/parent what will happen if technology fails

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Client's Side

- ☐ Have clients prepare their technology for optimal use
 - ☐ Ensure adequately sized monitor
 - ☐ Close all other programs, even background
 - ☐ Turn off all notifications

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Client's Side

- ☐ Have clients prepare necessary materials
 - ☐ Testing materials (response booklets, pencils without erasers, etc.)
 - ☐ Water nearby
 - ☐ Snack nearby, if appropriate

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

Preparation Check-List: Client's Side

- ☐ If parent/guardian/proctor is being used in session:
 - ☐ Coach on what they should/should not do
 - ☐ Instruct where they should be seated
 - ☐ What kinds of interactions are ok/not ok
 - ☐ Warn them it may be tempting to intervene
 - ☐ Let them know their exact tasks

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

During sessions

Verify the identity of the client

Continuously monitor the client's environment

Be explicit and specific about how the client should use test materials

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

During sessions

Shorten sessions

Monitor fatigue

Be ready to abort sessions, if needed

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2. Do the best you can with what's available to you (mindfully and ethically).

During sessions

Be ready to contact tech support during sessions

Test the limits and follow up on responses liberally

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3. *Be rigorously mindful of data quality.*

YOU ARE THE PSYCHOLOGIST.

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Technological effects.



Conducting Psychological Tele-Assessment

3. *Be rigorously mindful of data quality.*

Technological effects.

Environmental hitches.



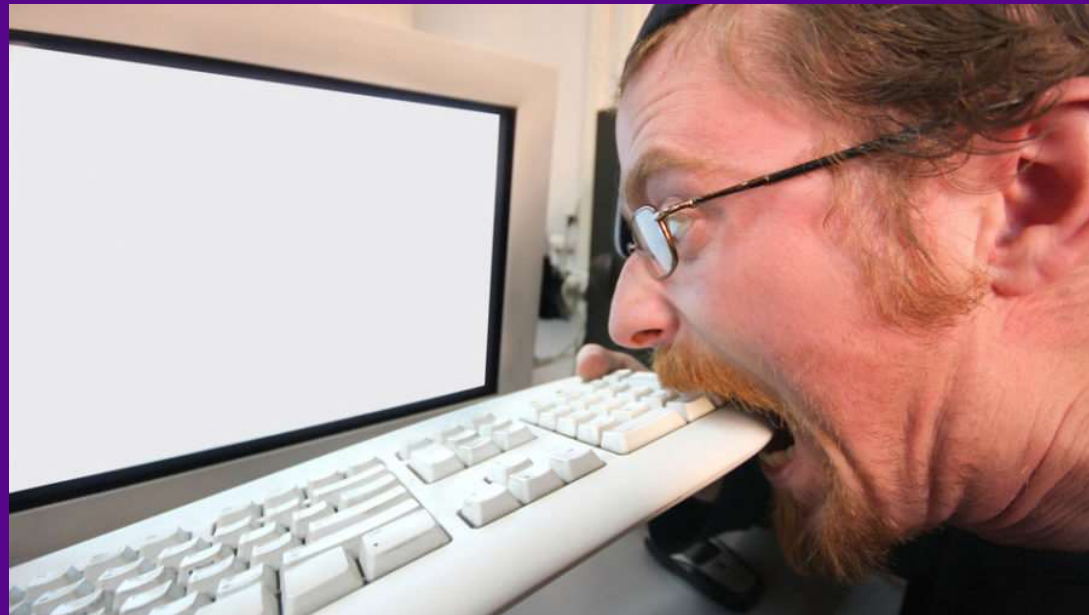
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Technological effects.

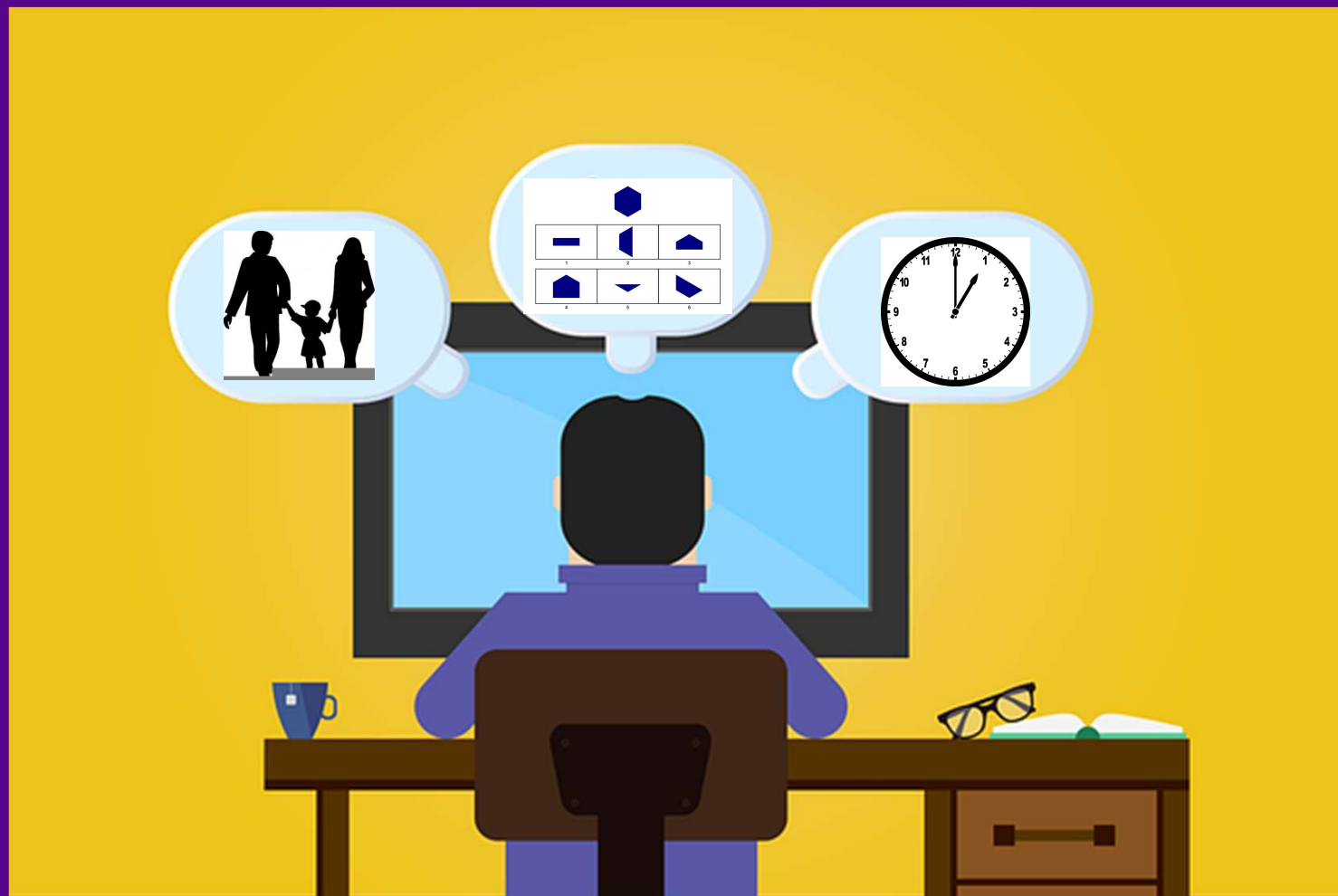
Environmental hitches.

Tech frustration.



Conducting Psychological Tele-Assessment

3. *Be rigorously mindful of data quality.*



Conducting Psychological Tele-Assessment

3. *Be rigorously mindful of data quality.*

Use your best psychological and clinical judgment.

Re-watch sessions!

Don't use bad data!

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5. Widen “confidence intervals” when making conclusions and clinical decisions.

Remember what test scores are!

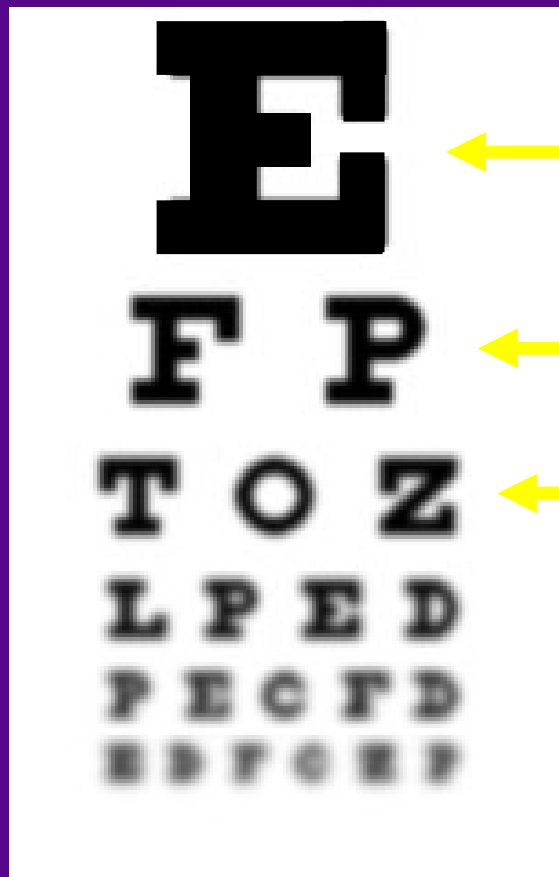
Proxies for abilities, traits, or functioning

Optimal vs. typical functioning

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5. Widen “confidence intervals” when making conclusions and clinical decisions.

Remember what test scores are!



← They were never this.

← They are usually this.

← Tele-assessment.

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5. Widen “confidence intervals” when making conclusions and clinical decisions.

Remember what test scores are!



Broaden the assumed margin for error of any one score.

Be slightly less confident in how precise any one score is.

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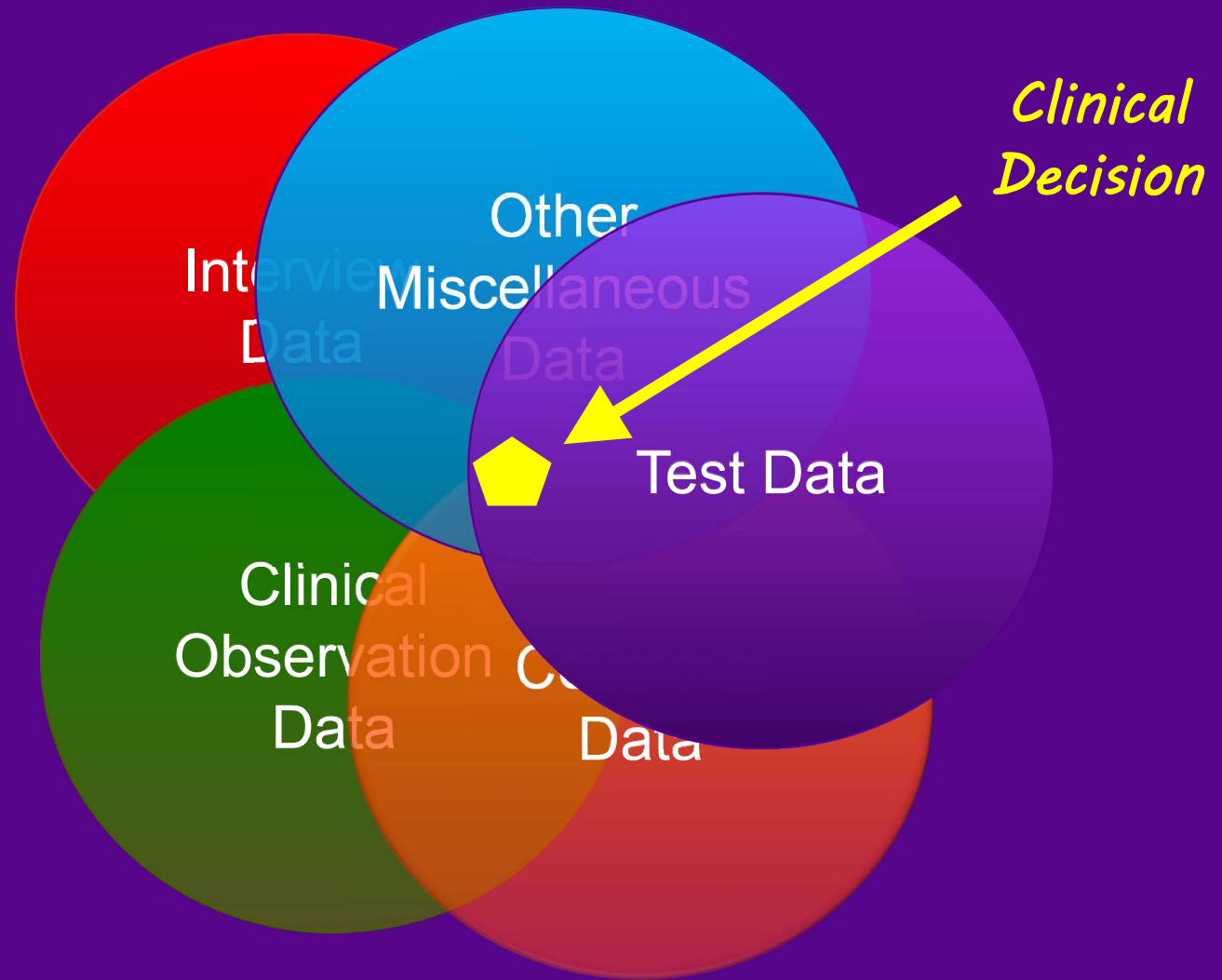
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Remember what test scores are!

Remember what assessment is!

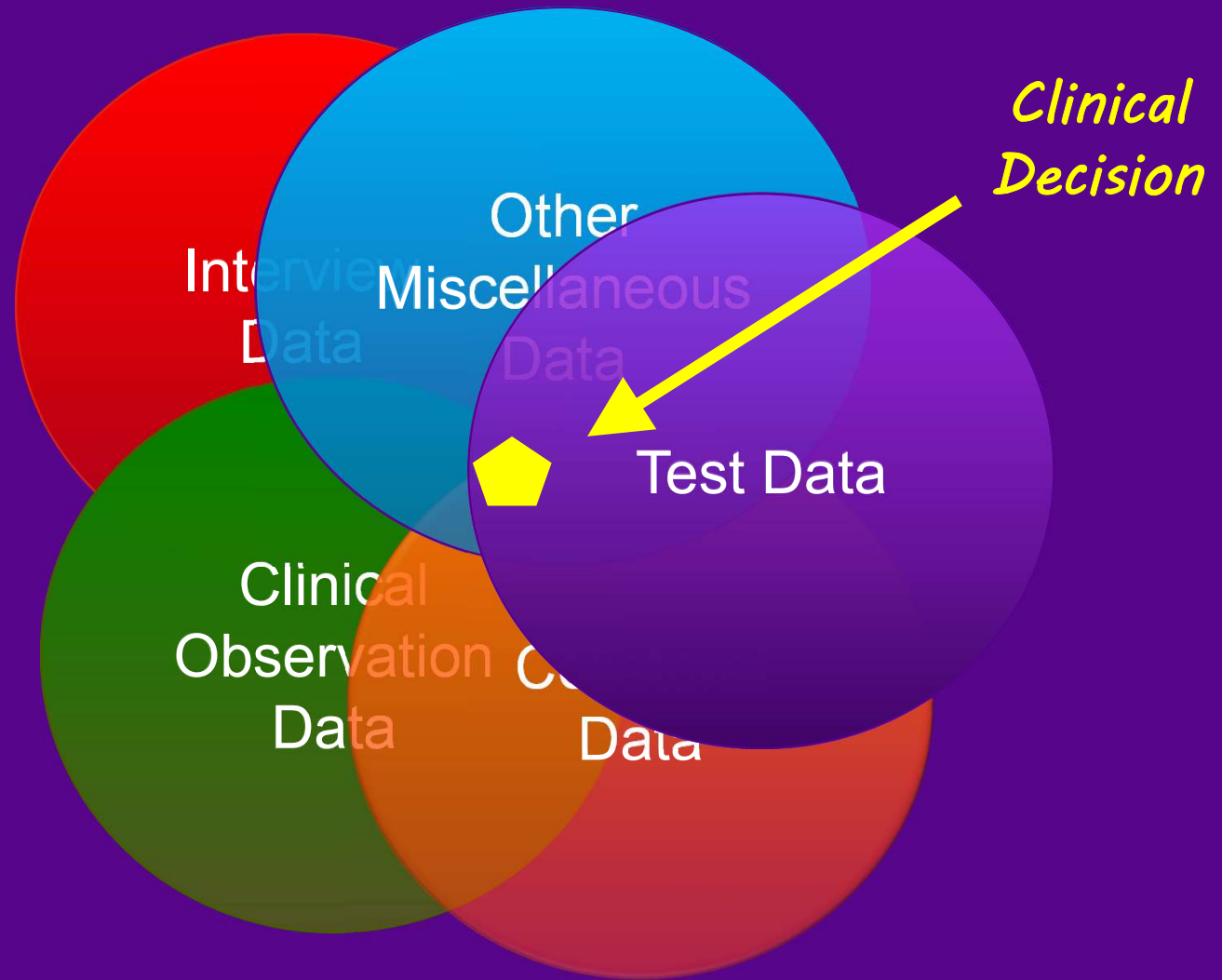
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Conducting Psychological Tele-Assessment

5. Widen “confidence intervals” when making conclusions and clinical decisions.

Remember what test scores are!

Remember what assessment is!

Bad data is worse than no data...

but good data is better than no data.

And stopping entirely may not be a good option.

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