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# CAREER EXPLORATION INVENTORY

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# EZ



## ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE

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### WHAT IS THE CEI EZ?

The *Career Exploration Inventory EZ (CEI-EZ)* is a shorter, easier-to-read, but no less powerful version of the *Career Exploration Inventory, Third Edition (CEI)*. Like the assessment it is based on, the *CEI-EZ* is a self-scoring and self-interpreting instrument designed to help people explore their career and job alternatives based on their interests. The *CEI-EZ* offers the advantage of including three major interest areas—work, leisure, and learning—in one device. It provides a developmental approach that measures not only interests from the past and present but also those anticipated for the future.

The *CEI-EZ* helps individuals identify work, leisure, and learning interests and explore the relationship between those interests. It also helps individuals assess their lifelong interests. Thus, a person who takes the *CEI-EZ* is able to evaluate work, leisure, and learning experiences from the past and the present before making career-related decisions about the future. The *CEI-EZ* allows people to identify their major interest clusters; explore a variety of work, leisure, and educational options; and develop a career action plan.

The *CEI-EZ* is based on the third edition of the *CEI*, and as such reflects the updates made to that assessment to

illustrate changes in the world of work and in our culture. Like the *CEI*, Interest Area categories in the *CEI-EZ* are based on the 16 U.S. Department of Education career clusters, which are also used in JIST's *New Guide for Occupational Exploration*. The occupations and leisure activities listed in the "Work, Leisure, and Learning Activities Guide" are also based on this book. The job groups and job titles in the guide are from the *O\*NET Dictionary of Occupational Titles*, published by JIST and based on information from the Department of Labor's O\*NET (Occupational Information Network) database.

Many of the professionals administering the *CEI* suggested the need for an easy version that still had the original *CEI*'s utility and effectiveness. Based on feedback from professionals working in a variety of settings, the publishers at JIST developed this new, easier-to-complete version of the *CEI* to make it more accessible to a wider range of populations.

The goals in the development of the *CEI-EZ* included (a) to reduce the total number of items included on the *CEI* and thus reduce the time needed to complete the assessment; (b) to make the *CEI* more applicable to a wider range of populations that may not have been able to complete the *CEI* due to limited reading, comprehension, or learning skills; (c) to revise the instructions and limit the number

of steps on the *CEI* to make it easier to administer, score, and interpret; and (d) to increase the respondents' understanding of the career exploration process in the least amount of time available.

More information about the theoretical basis and development of the *CEI* is available on the *Career Exploration Inventory Professional Resources CD-ROM*, Third Edition, available separately from the publisher.

## WHO CAN USE THE *CEI-EZ*?

The assessment items on the *CEI-EZ* were normed on employed and unemployed adults aged 18 to 73. Like the *CEI*, the *CEI-EZ* can be used with working and unemployed adults, students, and youth. It can also be used with special populations such as the economically disadvantaged, people in correctional facilities, and those with substance abuse problems. Its brevity and ease-of-use make it particularly well suited to programs where time is limited. Care has been taken to make the device easy to read and simple to interpret with minimal counselor or instructor intervention. In addition, research and testing has been done to eliminate any gender, cultural, or age bias.

Career counselors now see leisure and learning as integral components of an individual's career. In the past, professionals have had to rely on separate inventories to measure occupational, leisure, and educational interests. The *CEI-EZ* helps professionals measure and assess an individual's interests in all three areas at the same time. In addition, the *CEI-EZ* is cross-referenced to standard occupational information sources, so it can be used as the basis for a comprehensive exploration of career alternatives. The combination of leisure and learning elements with more-traditional career considerations makes the *CEI-EZ* particularly useful for many populations.

The *CEI-EZ* can help individuals explore opportunities they might have overlooked when using more traditional assessment instruments. For example, after taking the *CEI-EZ*, a frustrated administrative assistant who enjoys needlework as a leisure activity might decide to explore other career opportunities such as doing alterations or opening a small crafts business. A heavy-equipment operator may discover a strong interest in literature and fine arts and choose to pursue those activities during leisure time. A young person who fixes electronics equipment as a hobby might consider formal training and education in electronics. Another person may discover leisure interests to develop prior to retiring.

In addition to the audiences above, this *EZ* version of the *CEI* has been developed for any practitioner who is working with students or clients with limited education or reading skills. The *CEI-EZ* is a shortened version of the

original *CEI* with the same reliability and validity. The directions have been simplified, the number of steps reduced from 8 to 5, and the number of items reduced from 120 to 96. The reading level of the *CEI-EZ* has been decreased as well. The *CEI-EZ* assessment booklet still follows the same basic structure as the *CEI*. The aim of the *CEI-EZ* is to introduce respondents to the idea of comprehensive career planning; provide a structure for career exploration; and provide a broad range of work, leisure, and learning interest activities while reducing the time needed to complete the assessment.

## TIPS FOR ADMINISTERING THE *CEI-EZ*

The *CEI-EZ* can be used in many environments by many professionals, including counselors, instructors, trainers, job search specialists, and career development researchers. The *CEI-EZ* was designed for self-administration and interpretation. The instructions are clear and easy to understand, and individuals should require little assistance in completing the assessment. Depending on the user, it may still help if you provide a brief review of the device. Here are some suggestions.

### Introduction to Assessments in General

Provide a brief review of the advantages of using a device such as the *CEI-EZ* to analyze interests and put them into a useful arrangement. Explain that any device simply takes an individual's responses and compares them to other people's responses. It is up to the individual to make decisions based on the results obtained.

### Administering the *CEI-EZ*

Briefly explain that the *CEI-EZ* can help individuals plan their future by examining their past and present interests. People who complete the *CEI-EZ* will be considering their leisure and learning interests as well as their career interests. Ask participants to read the section titled "Introduction to the *CEI-EZ*" on the first page of the device. Answer any questions.

Respondents complete the *CEI-EZ* by working through a series of five steps. In Step 1, respondents complete the 96 items by circling a **P** (Past), **C** (Current), or **F** (Future) based on their former, present, and potential interest in the activity presented. In Step 2, respondents add their totals from the items they circled in Step 1. In Step 3, respondents can interpret their scores on the 16 scales included on the *CEI-EZ*. In this step, respondents are told that the totals they completed in Step 2 indicate their level of interest in 16 different areas of related activities. The higher their total, the higher their interest in that area.

- **Scores between 0 and 5 are in the low range** and indicate that they do not have much interest in the types of activities represented by that interest area.
- **Scores between 6 and 12 are in the average range** and indicate that they have average interest in the types of activities represented by that interest area.
- **Scores between 13 and 18 are in the high range** and indicate that they have a great deal of interest in the types of activities represented by that interest area.

In Step 4, respondents are introduced to the “Work, Leisure, and Learning Activities Guide.” This guide provides work, leisure, and educational interests in the following 16 interest categories:

### Interest Area Definitions

1. **Agriculture and Natural Resources:** An interest in working with plants, animals, forests, or mineral resources for agriculture, horticulture, conservation, and other purposes.
2. **Architecture and Construction:** An interest in designing, assembling, and maintaining buildings and other structures.
3. **Arts and Communication:** An interest in creatively expressing feelings or ideas, in communicating news or information, or in performing.
4. **Business and Administration:** An interest in making an organization run smoothly.
5. **Education and Training:** An interest in helping people learn.
6. **Finance and Insurance:** An interest in helping businesses and people secure their financial future.
7. **Government and Public Administration:** An interest in helping a government agency serve the needs of the public.
8. **Health Science:** An interest in helping people and animals be healthy.
9. **Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation:** An interest in providing others with a clean environment, good food and drink, comfortable accommodations, and recreation.
10. **Human Service:** An interest in improving people's social, mental, emotional, or spiritual well-being.
11. **Information Technology:** An interest in designing, developing, managing, and supporting information systems.
12. **Law and Public Safety:** An interest in upholding people's rights or in protecting people and property.
13. **Manufacturing:** An interest in processing materials into products or maintaining and repairing products by using machines or hand tools.
14. **Retail and Wholesale Sales and Service:** An interest in bringing others to a particular point of view through personal persuasion and sales techniques.
15. **Scientific Research, Engineering, and Mathematics:** An interest in discovering, collecting, and analyzing information about the natural world, life sciences, and human behavior.
16. **Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics:** An interest in operations that move people or materials.

Encourage respondents to circle any of the occupations, leisure activities, and education and training options they would like to know more about, but to focus on those interest areas where they scored above the average range.

In Step 5, respondents are asked to create an action plan. This step is designed to assist respondents in setting short-range and long-range goals for work, leisure, and learning in specific interest areas. In addition, research resources are provided for respondents to gather additional information about occupations, leisure activities, and educational programs of interest.

After individuals complete the first three steps, you may want to assist them in interpreting the device and completing Steps 4 and 5. While this work can easily be done in one session, Step 5 may require access to additional resources. If possible, copies of the major reference books mentioned in Step 5 should be available for participants to use. These books are available through a variety of sources, including most libraries.

As individuals complete the *CEI-EZ*, take a few moments to encourage them to follow up on what they have learned. They may need to go back to the library or talk to other people. Help them feel positive about themselves. If you cannot be available for additional counseling, suggest other resources they can use to obtain individual assistance in their career and life planning.

The *CEI-EZ* can be given to an individual for self-administration and interpretation without counselor intervention; however, this approach is not recommended unless there is no reasonable alternative. The reason is that most people will benefit from discussing their results and feelings with a knowledgeable professional.

### Restrictions on the Use of This Device

Because the *CEI-EZ* has been designed for self-administration, scoring, and interpretation, there are few restrictions on its use. However, you should have a basic

understanding of the nature and limitations of assessment instruments if you intend to help others interpret the *CEI-EZ* properly. As the instructions on the *CEI-EZ* itself emphasize, no device can tell an individual the right thing to do. Nevertheless, you will find that many participants believe that simply using an assessment tool such as this will give them the direction they have been unable to find elsewhere.

The *CEI-EZ* is a tool of self-discovery. When properly used, it helps people organize information about themselves and discover additional information they can use in making decisions. You may need to assist participants in understanding the limitations of this or any such device. You may also need to present information about additional resources and provide personal counseling.

## INTERPRETING THE *CEI-EZ*

Care should be taken in the interpretation of the *CEI-EZ*. When respondents are interpreting their scores on the assessment, they need to be aware of the various ways that work, leisure, and learning interact with each other to form a career. You can help respondents by indicating that certain work, leisure, and learning patterns are often displayed and incorporated into a person's lifestyle. These patterns are referred to as Complementary or Spillover, Compensatory, Multipotential, or Neutral.

A **Complementary** or **Spillover** pattern is one in which all three career areas (work, leisure, and learning) interact to complement one another. In this pattern a person is able to fuse work, leisure, and education in one interest area.

In a **Compensatory** pattern, one or two of the three career areas (work, leisure, and learning) are used to compensate for a lack of satisfaction in another career area. For example, a person may not always like their work as an office manager, but compensates for this by finding satisfaction from an interest in ceramics in their leisure time.

In a **Multipotential** pattern, a person has too many interests and cannot choose just one for work, leisure, or learning.

In the **Neutral** pattern, a person has many different interests, though none are particularly strong. That person probably engages in a wide variety of diverse activities in work, leisure, and learning.

To help you interpret respondents' inventory results, here are some relationships that may occur:

- **Complementary or Spillover Profile:** If one score is considerably higher than the others, it may mean the respondent will be satisfied in that interest area in both work and leisure activities. For example, a person who scored High in "Arts and Communication" and significantly lower in other areas would likely be satisfied in

a job such as graphic designer or reporter and enjoy leisure activities such as writing articles or dancing.

- **Compensatory Profile:** Several high scores may indicate that the respondent would enjoy a variety of work and leisure combinations. For example, a person with high scores in "Education and Training" and "Agriculture and Natural Resources" might find satisfaction in working as a teacher and in gardening as a hobby.
- **Multipotential Profile:** Three or more high scores probably indicates that the respondent enjoys many different types of activities. Because he or she is interested in so many different things, the respondent may have trouble making effective career decisions. A rational decision-making process must be used to help respondents limit their interests.
- **Neutral Profile:** If none of a respondent's scores are very high, he or she should still explore those areas with the highest scores. If all of the scores are low, the respondent may not be motivated to pursue any of the interest areas. The respondent may still be recovering from the shock of being disabled or dislocated, or they may not be ready to start thinking about career choices. Administrators should be alert to the possibility of depression, low self-esteem, or other emotional issues. Administrators should use interviewing skills to help respondents take a closer look at interests in the past, present, and those anticipated in the future.

Because available resources differ from one setting to another, few specifics are offered here on counseling those who take the *CEI-EZ*. You should advise participants of the resources available to them and explain how these resources can be accessed. Refer participants to books and other information and to community resources. Encourage them to explore all of the options they might have uncovered by taking the assessment, and not to focus only on the career choices.

### Case Studies

Susan is an 18-year-old Freshman who took the *CEI-EZ* in college to help her determine a major. She scored a 16 in "Education and Training" and below a 9 in the other 15 categories. Since she had only one high score, the counselor suggested that she possessed the Spillover career pattern and that she will probably retain this one interest in work, leisure, and learning. After much discussion, Susan revealed that she really enjoyed coaching her local girl's soccer team, and that during high school she worked after school and in the summers with the Boys and Girls Club organizing and instructing after-school study programs for disadvantaged youth. She thought that she would make a great elementary

school teacher and maybe even a school principal or guidance counselor one day. She decided to major in elementary education in college. Her counselor also suggested that she continue engaging in leisure activities that involved children during summer vacations. It was also recommended that she join the Education Club and other organizations related to education to get as much experience and exposure to the teaching profession as possible. The counselor finally recommended that she gather occupational information related to the teaching profession.

Roger went to a local Employment Services office after being laid off from his job. He had worked for the past ten years at a plant that manufactures televisions and other electronic equipment. He wanted to begin looking for another job but was unsure about the best career path. He took the *CEI-EZ* to determine his true interests. Roger scored high in two different career areas. He scored 14 on the "Agriculture and Natural Resources" scale and 13 on the "Business and Administration" scale, while scoring less than 7 on all of the other scales. Because he had only two high scores, the counselor suggested that he possessed the Compensatory career pattern and that he will probably share these two interests in various combinations of work, leisure, and learning. Roger said that he has an interest in the business world and that he might enjoy being a manager or supervisor. He was allowed to do some supervision at the manufacturing plant. The counselor suggested that he could enroll at the local community college to begin taking courses in business administration. In the interview, Roger also said that he enjoyed landscaping around his house. He said he would like to begin looking for a job where he could work with his hands. After some research, he decided that he wanted to look for employment as a landscaper or groundskeeper (using his interest in "Agriculture and Natural Resources"). The counselor encouraged this decision and suggested that Roger might even be able to combine his experience in landscaping with his coursework in business to start his own landscaping company in the future. Regardless of the occupational path that Roger takes, the counselor suggested that he continue to engage in leisure activities in his two high interest areas and also continue to take courses in those areas.

## TECHNICAL AND RESEARCH INFORMATION

As mentioned previously, the items on the *CEI-EZ* were normed on a variety of populations in the process of making career decisions, implementing a career change, or searching for employment. Its validity was found to be comparable to existing work and leisure interest inventories. In order to make the *CEI* easier to use, the total number of items in the inventory was reduced from 128 to 96. Based on a statistical analysis, two items were eliminated from each of the sixteen scales used on the *CEI*.

Research for the *CEI-EZ* suggests that it has similar validity and reliability as the original *CEI*. People taking the *CEI-EZ* score very much the same as people completing the *CEI*. Men taking the *CEI-EZ* scored highest on the "Scientific Research, Engineering, and Mathematics" scale ( $M = 8.90$ ), the "Architecture and Natural Resources" scale ( $M = 7.05$ ), and the "Manufacturing" scale ( $M = 7.00$ ). On the *CEI*, men scored highest on the "Mechanical" and "Physical Performing" scales (See Table 1).

Women taking the *CEI-EZ* scored highest on the "Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation" scale ( $M = 11.71$ ), the "Human Service" scale ( $M = 10.14$ ), and the "Arts and Communication" scale ( $M = 8.86$ ). On the *CEI* women scored highest on the "Social Service" and "Personal Service" scales (See Table 1). Overall, people completing the *CEI-EZ* scored highest on the "Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation" scale ( $M = 9.17$ ) and the "Human Service" scale ( $M = 8.49$ ). Overall, people completing the *CEI* scored highest on the "Social Service" and "Physical Performing" scales (See Table 2). Because the two assessments yield very similar test scores, the construct validity of the two assessments is very high.

This brief guide is intended to give you an overview of the *CEI-EZ*. Substantial additional technical information on the development of the *CEI*—the assessment upon which the *CEI-EZ* is based—can be obtained from the *Career Exploration Inventory Professional Resources CD-ROM*, Third Edition, available separately from the publisher. This separate resource provides information on the instrument's theoretical basis, normative data, workshop guidelines and ideas, and other details.

**TABLE 1: CEI-EZ SCORES FOR MEN AND WOMEN**

Scale	Men (N = 97)		Women (N = 86)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Agriculture and Natural Resources	5.20	3.69	6.90	5.31
Architecture and Construction	7.05	3.86	1.90	2.61
Arts and Communication	5.55	4.22	8.86	4.59
Business and Administration	5.50	4.26	7.33	4.51
Education and Training	1.25	1.48	4.86	3.89
Finance and Insurance	3.00	3.70	2.90	2.84
Government and Public Administration	2.10	1.97	1.05	1.43
Health Science	3.75	3.60	4.95	3.61
Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation	6.50	2.50	11.71	4.76
Human Service	6.75	3.39	10.14	4.42
Information Technology	3.25	4.23	2.43	2.66
Law and Public Safety	5.25	3.11	3.62	3.07
Manufacturing	7.00	3.45	0.95	2.58
Retail and Wholesale Sales and Service	4.40	3.84	4.80	4.29
Scientific Research, Engineering, and Mathematics	8.90	4.96	3.14	4.49
Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics	4.60	3.68	2.19	2.44

**TABLE 2: CEI-EZ TOTAL SCORES**

	Total (N = 183)			Total (N = 183)	
	Mean	SD		Mean	SD
Agriculture and Natural Resources	6.07	4.62	Human Service	8.49	4.26
Architecture and Construction	4.41	4.15	Information Technology	2.83	3.49
Arts and Communication	7.24	4.67	Law and Public Safety	4.42	3.16
Business and Administration	6.44	4.43	Manufacturing	3.90	4.28
Education and Training	3.10	3.46	Retail and Wholesale Sales and Service	4.60	4.03
Finance and Insurance	2.95	3.25	Scientific Research, Engineering, and Mathematics	5.95	5.50
Government and Public Administration	1.56	1.78	Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics	3.37	3.30
Health Science	4.37	3.61			
Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation	9.17	4.61			

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Liptak, Ed.D., is one of the leading developers of quantitative and qualitative assessments in the country. He is the Associate Director of the Experiential Learning and Career Development office at Radford University in Radford, Virginia. He provides career assessment and career counseling services for students and administrators and interprets a variety of career assessments. Dr. Liptak focuses on helping students develop their careers by becoming engaged in a variety of learning, leisure, and work experiences.

In addition to the *CEI* and the *CEI-EZ*, Dr. Liptak has created the following assessments for JIST Publishing: *Transition-to-Work Inventory (TWI)*, *Job Search Knowledge Scale (JSKS)*, *Job Survival and Success Scale (JSSS)*, *Barriers to Employment Success Inventory (BESI)*, *Job Search Attitude*

*Inventory (JSAI)*, and *College Survival and Success Scale (CSSS)*. Dr. Liptak consults on the development of assessments for schools and agencies around the country and has developed specialized assessment instruments for use with clients. He is a regular speaker at national and international conventions on the topic of assessment and assessment development and is also a JIST-certified trainer.

## ORDERING INFORMATION

The *CEI-EZ* is sold in packages of 25 copies. To order the *CEI-EZ*, contact your distributor or the publisher (see page 1 of this booklet for contact information). Preview copies of the *CEI-EZ* are available at no cost to qualified institutions and organizations.

