

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	11
1.1	Goals	11
1.2	Overview	12
1.3	Notes on using this book	14
2	FUNDAMENTALS OF OUR APPROACH	15
2.1	Decision-oriented psychological assessment	15
2.2	Our view of psychology	18
2.3	Goals of decision-oriented assessment	19
2.4	Conditions for psychological assessment.....	20
2.5	General criteria for evaluating psychological reports.....	22
3	THE CLIENT'S QUESTION	24
3.1	Deciding for or against a client's question	24
3.2	Required assumptions	26
3.3	Requirement profile	27
3.4	Required knowledge for assessment work	29
3.5	Prediction of individual behavior	30
3.6	Citing the client's question in the psychological report	31
4	SELECTION OF VARIABLES	32
4.1	Behavioral equation	32
4.2	Environment variables	34
4.3	Organism variables	35
4.4	Cognitive variables	37
4.5	Emotional variables.....	39
4.6	Motivational variables	41
4.7	Social variables	43
4.8	Three classes of information for the explanation and prediction of individual behavior	44
4.9	Criteria for the selection of variables	45
5	PSYCHOLOGICAL QUESTIONS (= HYPOTHESES)	47
5.1	The function of psychological questions	47
5.2	Constructing psychological questions	48
5.3	Formulating psychological questions	48
5.4	Number of psychological questions	50
6	WORKTHROUGH OF EXAMPLE CLIENTS' QUESTIONS	52
6.1	Client's question	52
6.2	Information available before the beginning of the assessment	53

6.3	Requirement profile	54
6.4	Psychological questions	55
6.4.1	Grouping the psychological questions according to the behavioral equation	55
6.4.2	Psychological questions relating to motivational conditions.....	56
6.4.3	Psychological questions relating to intellectual conditions.....	56
6.4.4	Psychological questions relating to the ability to withstand emotional and physical strain	56
6.4.5	Psychological questions relating to social conditions	57
6.4.6	Alternative ways of structuring psychological questions	58
6.4.7	Decision-oriented construction of hypotheses for judicial questions regarding parental custody.....	58
6.4.7.1	Goals of decision-oriented assessment in custody questions.....	58
6.4.7.2	The requirement profile	59
6.4.7.3	Selection of the relevant variables	61
6.4.7.4	The formulation of psychological questions	61
6.4.7.5	Shortened psychological questions	64
7	PLANNING THE ASSESSMENT	65
7.1	Role of the assessment plan	65
7.2	Broad plan of the assessment	66
7.3	Detailed plan of the assessment	67
7.4	Ratio of costs to benefits as a criterion for planning a psychological assessment	68
8	ANALYSIS OF THE A-PRIORI STRATEGY	70
8.1	Analysis of the a-priori strategy for single-case questions	70
8.2	Qualitative analysis of the a-priori strategy	71
8.3	Optimizing the assessment strategy	72
8.4	Quantitative analysis of the a-priori strategy for institutional questions	73
8.5	Analysis of the a-priori strategy for institutional questions regarding aptitude assessment	73
9	FEATURES OF ASSESSMENT INFORMATION SOURCES	75
9.1	Functions of the features of assessment information sources	75
9.2	Nature of the observer	76
9.3	Contents of the observation	78
9.4	Time and duration of the observation.....	79
9.5	Nature of the observation	80
10	STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES.....	82
10.1	Criteria for the selection of standardized assessment procedures	82
10.2	A theory definition for psychological work	83
10.3	Functions of theories for assessment procedures	84
10.4	Objectivity of standardized procedures	85
10.4.1	Objectivity in execution	85
10.4.2	Measures for increasing the objectivity in execution	86

10.4.3	Objectivity in scoring	87
10.4.4	Objectivity of interpretation	89
10.5	Reliability of standardized procedures	91
10.5.1	Deciding on a type of reliability.....	92
10.5.2	Evaluating the reliability	92
10.6	Validity of standardized procedures	93
10.7	Some comments on the size of validity coefficients	95
11	PART I OF THE ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR THE EXAMPLE CLIENT'S QUESTION RELATING TO APTITUDE ASSESSMENT.....	97
11.1	Standardized procedures	97
11.2	Decisions when selecting standardized procedures	98
11.3	Selection of standardized procedures	100
11.4	Description of the standardized procedures in the psychological report	101
12	DECISION-ORIENTED INTERVIEWING	103
12.1	Definition	103
12.2	Aims of various types of interview	104
12.3	Interview guide for the decision-oriented interview	105
12.4	Function of interview guides	106
12.5	Characteristics of interview guides	108
12.6	Broad structure of an interview guide.....	109
12.7	Detailed structure of an interview guide	111
12.8	Features of efficient questions	112
12.9	Poor questions	114
12.10	Degree of openness of a question	115
12.11	Degree of directness of a question	116
12.12	Preconditions for carrying out decision-oriented interviews	117
12.13	Conditions for a successful assessment interview	118
13	PART II OF THE ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR THE EXAMPLE OF A CLIENT'S QUESTION CONCERNING APTITUDE ASSESSMENT	120
13.1	Interview guide for the decision-oriented interview	120
13.2	Selection of the partly-standardized and non-standardized procedures	125
13.3	Description of the partly-standardized and non-standardized procedures in the psychological report	126
14	PERSON PERCEPTION AND ASSESSMENT JUDGMENTS	128
14.1	Person perception in daily life and assessment judgments	128
14.2	The importance of social psychological research into person perception	129
14.3	Individual differences in assessment judgments	131
15	ERRORS AND BIASES IN THE PROCESS OF FORMING ASSESSMENT JUDGMENTS	132
15.1	Description of errors and biases in the process of forming assessment judgments	132
15.2	Errors and biases in psychological questions	133
15.3	Errors and biases of judgment when planning assessments.....	136

15.4	Errors and biases of judgment when presenting the results of the assessment	137
15.5	Errors and biases of judgment in the conclusions	138
15.5.1	Generally observable errors and biases of judgment in the conclusions	138
15.5.2	Errors and biases of judgment in the conclusions which are determined by the personality of the assessing psychologist	140
16	POSSIBILITIES OF MINIMIZING ERRORS AND BIASES IN ASSESSMENT	
	DECISION-MAKING	142
16.1	Extending knowledge	142
16.2	Initial conditions	143
16.3	Combining statements	145
16.4	Decision criteria	146
16.5	Attributing traits to people	146
16.5.1	Four types of behavioral description	146
16.5.2	Features of personality traits	147
16.6	Development of documented assessment plans	148
17	EVALUATING BEHAVIORAL OBSERVATIONS	149
17.1	Types of behavioral observation	149
17.2	Scoring tests	150
17.3	Presenting the test results	152
17.4	Decision-oriented interviews: analysis	154
17.5	Interview results: presentation	154
17.6	Presentation of interview results in indirect speech	156
18	THE DATA SECTION OF THE EXAMPLE PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORT	157
19	THE RESULTS SECTION	164
19.1	Aims of the assessor in the results section	164
19.2	Procedure of the assessor in the results section	165
19.3	Recommendations and suggestions in the psychological report	167
19.4	Formulations in the results section	168
20	RESULTS SECTION OF THE EXAMPLE PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORT	170
21	FOUNDATIONS OF A THEORY OF DECISION-ORIENTED PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT	181
21.1	Assumptions of the theory	181
21.2	Beliefs as cognitions directing actions	182
21.3	Expectations as cognitions directing actions	184
21.4	On the testability of the theory	186
21.5	First results of empirical tests of the theory of decision-oriented psychological assessment	187
21.5.1	Assessment in family law: how it is and how it can be	187
21.5.2	On the development of assessment strategies	188
21.5.3	Decision-oriented interviewing in psychological assessment	188

21.5.4	Training in psychological assessment	189
21.5.5	Guidelines for the Assessment Process (GAP)	190
21.6	Decision-oriented assessment – a useful technology	190
21.6.1	A technology – a necessity in psychological assessment.....	190
21.6.2	Utility as the highest criterion of a technology.....	191
21.6.3	Optimization of assessment strategies	191
22	AIDS FOR THE EVALUATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORTS BY NON-PSYCHOLOGISTS	193
22.1	Structure of a psychological report.....	194
22.2	Transparency of the psychological report.....	195
22.3	Formulations in the psychological report.....	195
22.4	Client's question	196
22.5	Formulation of psychological questions.....	196
22.6	Description of the assessment plan in the psychological report.....	197
22.7	Scoring and analyzing tests and questionnaires in the data section of the psychological report	198
22.8	Description and analysis of interviews and non-standardized written information in the data section of the psychological report	199
22.9	Results section of a psychological report.....	200
22.10	Recommendations and suggestions in the psychological report.....	202
23	CHECKLISTS TO SUPPORT THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSOR DURING THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND THE WRITING OF A PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORT	204
23.1	Checklist: The client's question	204
23.2	Checklist: Profile of requirements	204
23.3	Checklist: Knowledge	205
23.4	Checklist: Selection of groups of variables	205
23.5	Checklist: Selection of environment variables.....	205
23.6	Checklist: Selection of organism variables	206
23.7	Checklist: Selection of cognitive variables	206
23.8	Checklist: Selection of emotional variables	207
23.9	Checklist: Selection of motivational variables.....	207
23.10	Checklist: Selection of social variables	208
23.11	Checklist: Criteria for the selection of variables	208
23.12	Checklist: Formulating psychological questions (= hypotheses).....	208
23.13	Checklist: Selection of sources of information	209
23.14	Checklist: Detailed planning of the assessment	209
23.15	Checklist: Costs and benefits of every source of information.....	209
23.16	Checklist: Evaluation of an observer	210
23.17	Checklist: Contents of observations	210
23.18	Checklist: Characteristics of scientific behavioral observations	210
23.19	Checklist: Criteria for the selection of standardized procedures	211
23.20	Checklist: Objectivity of execution of psychological assessment procedures	211
23.21	Checklist: Criteria for scoring and analyzing psychological assessment procedures	211

23.22	Checklist: Conditions for the highest possible degree of objectivity in the interpretation of standardized psychological assessment procedures	212
23.23	Checklist: Reliability of standardized psychological assessment procedures	212
23.24	Checklist: Validity of standardized psychological assessment procedures.....	212
23.25	Checklist: Planning a decision-oriented interview (DOI)	213
23.26	Checklist: Broad structure of an interview guide	213
23.27	Checklist: Detailed structure of an interview guide	214
23.28	Checklist: Formulating “good” questions	214
23.29	Checklist: Suggestive questions	215
23.30	Checklist: Conditions for decision-oriented interviews	215
23.31	Checklist: Presenting the plan of the assessment in the psychological report	216
23.32	Checklist: Scoring of tests and questionnaires and presenting the data in the psychological report.....	216
23.33	Checklist: Analysis and presentation of information from interviews and non-standardized written information sources in the data section of the psychological report	217
23.34	Checklist: The results section of a psychological report	217
23.35	Checklist: Recommendations and suggestions in a psychological report	218
23.36	Checklist: Formulations in the results section of a psychological report	219
23.37	Checklist: Structure of a psychological report.....	219
24	CHECKLISTS FOR THE EVALUATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORTS BY NON-PSYCHOLOGISTS	220
24.1	Structure of a psychological report.....	220
24.2	Transparency of the psychological report.....	220
24.3	Formulations in the psychological report	220
24.4	Client’s question	221
24.5	Formulation of psychological questions.....	221
24.6	Description of the assessment plan in the psychological report.....	221
24.7	Scoring and analysis of tests and questionnaires in the data section of the psychological report	221
24.8	Analysis and presentation of information from interviews and non-standardized written information sources in the data section of the psychological report	222
24.9	Results section of a psychological report.....	222
24.10	Recommendations and suggestions in the psychological report.....	223
	REFERENCES	224