A Viewpoint on Psychological Testing

Tests should be used, but not misused.

Tests assume a significant role in making decisions about people. They can provide facts that help to better understand people. The meaning and importance of test scores is greatest when combined with a full study of the person by means of interview, background information, application forms as completed, and other methods. Tests are mechanical tools that can almost never render decisions automatically.

Tests given for the purpose of education, performance assignment, training, counseling, etc., are to the advantage of the person tested, and will promote understanding and goodwill if the examinee knows this. For example, the very facts regarding turnover that lead to screening applicants are facts which would reassure the applicant if (s)he knew them. If the examinee performs satisfactorily on the test, (s)he can have confidence that (s)he possesses the potential to master the task ahead. Information garnered from the test scores can help the examinee identify areas of weakness and strength aiding in determining potential to handle the work ahead satisfactorily.

Any observation of behavior during an interview, casual conversation, or other personal contact may yield information about the individual that (s)he would prefer to conceal. The revelation may be unintentional and the individual may be unaware of providing this significant insight.

Psychological tests have often been singled out in discussions of the invasion of privacy. This phenomenon probably reflects prevalent misconceptions about tests. If tests were recognized as measures of behavior or performance samples, with no mysterious powers, fears and suspicions would be minimized. Psychological tests have no mystical power and they measure nothing more than what they purport to measure, e.g., an “arithmetic test” simply measures arithmetical skill or ability. The objectivity of tests is usually superior to the subjectivity of many other measurement factors.

A suitable testing program furnishes objective information on the examinee’s abilities, skills and personality characteristics as related to educational/employment performance. It increases the probability that those selected will be successful. Many employers, for this reason, see advantages in career education placements or alignments based upon a testing program. In addition, test results or findings often enhance the examinee’s understanding of his or her own abilities and potential, and aid in bringing to his or her attention both areas of strength and areas of possible improvement.


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PSB Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination

PSB's Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination can predict an individual's readiness and capability for successful completion of the educational program designed to prepare the qualified practical or vocational nurse.

The examination addresses the required pre-requisite and acquired educational achievements commensurate with the objectives of the career preparation program for practical or vocational nursing. It comprises five separate tests that measure abilities, skills, knowledge and attitudes important for success in the program and career choice.

The examination is the result of requirements and needs expressed by education professionals responsible for preparing qualified, competent practical and vocational nurses.

More detailed information about the PSB Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination can be found here.


9/16/03
More About
PSB Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination

Part I - Academic Aptitude

Academic aptitude as measured by the total (combined subtests), might be thought of as a type of ability to learn. The test content is specifically adapted for appraising the combination of innate and acquired abilities that are needed for work of an academic nature. The academic aptitude total emphasizes familiar experiences and concepts while requiring careful reasoning and the capacity to comprehend and draw conclusions.

Verbal: The verbal aspect consists of 30 vocabulary-related test questions. Empirical evidence has shown this type of test item to be highly related to academic success.

Arithmetic: The numerical aspect consists of 30 items drawn largely from arithmetic. To some degree, it involves skill with arithmetical concepts along with computational speed. The content of the numerical items is that to which practically all eighth grade students have been exposed.

Nonverbal: The nonverbal aspect consists of 30 test items calling for a comprehension of form relationships. Measurement is in terms of the ability to manipulate "things" mentally, to reason out differences in pictured objects, and to deal with concrete materials through visualization. Recognition of relationships and of differences has been shown by research to be basic to learning aptitude.

Part II - Spelling

The spelling test measures skill with a tool essential to written expression or communication. It also reflects educational achievement in basic tools of learning.

Part III - Information In The Natural Sciences

Measurement with this test concerns accumulation of information in the natural sciences, i.e., biology, chemistry, health, safety, etc., at a fundamental level.

http://www.psbtests.com/public/products/apneref.htm 9/16/03
The relationship of knowledge in the area of the natural sciences to the course of study of the nursing or allied health educational program is an obvious one.

Part IV - Judgment And Comprehension In Practical Nursing Situations

This test is concerned with the measurement of the exercise of judgment in the working relationships experienced by the nurse as a student and as a practitioner.

Part V - Vocational Adjustment Index

The person’s characteristic life style is reflected in his or her distinctive educational and occupational adjustment. Feelings, attitudes, opinions, and other personality characteristics and behavioral traits, which may be quite acceptable in many situations, may not be those desirable for the prospective nurse either as a student or as a practitioner.

Understanding Your Test Record and Profile Chart for the

PSB-Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination

This data sheet has been prepared to help you understand the meaning of the scores you
earned on the PSB-Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination as reported on your Test Record
and Profile Chart. Immediately beneath the lines containing your name, the name of the school,
and the test date, you will find the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentile Scores</th>
<th>Academic Aptitude V, A, NV, Total</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Natural Sciences</th>
<th>Judgment &amp; Comprehension</th>
<th>Vocational Adjustment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The PSB-Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination is comprised of five tests and three
subtests. These tests and subtests are as follows:

Academic Aptitude-Part I
  - Verbal - V
  - Arithmetic - A
  - Nonverbal - NV

Spelling-Part II

Information in the Natural Sciences-Part III

Judgment & Comprehension in Practical Nursing Situations-Part IV

Vocational Adjustment Index-Part V

An explanation of what is measured by each of these tests and subtests is included.

The Academic Aptitude Total consists of the scores earned on each of the subtests
combined into a separate distribution of the three combined scores. Your percentile rank on the
Academic Aptitude test is established from this separate distribution of raw scores. It is statistically
unsound to average percentile ranks.

Your testing results are reported in two ways, as raw scores and as percentile ranks. Each raw
score represents the number of questions answered correctly in one particular part of the
examination. For example, the test Spelling-Part II consists of 50 test questions. If you respond
correctly 40 of these test questions, your raw score is 40.

To be meaningful, the raw score is translated into a percentile rank. Percentile rank comes
from the concept of percent. The percentile rank is used to describe the relative standing of an
individual with respect to other individuals. If you, for example, earned a raw score on the PSB-
Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination's Academic Aptitude Total test that translated into
a percentile rank of 60, it would indicate that your score is better than the scores of 60 percent of
persons in specific comparison group, but not as good as that of 40 percent of persons in that
specific comparison group. In the case of the PSB-Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination,
the specific comparison group is that of individuals applying for admission to schools of practical or
vocational nursing throughout the United States and Canada.

The lines on your Test Record and Profile Chart provide a graphic record of the scores
(percentile ranks) you earned on each of the five tests and three subtests. You will also find verbal
eratings, ranging from "very low" to "superior" in the left margin of the Test Record and Profile
Chart. You can find your verbal rating category for each of the five tests plus the three subtests by
looking to the left from the apex of each of the eight connecting lines on your profile chart.

In assessing your performance on the PSB-Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination, you
will need to consider your results from each and all of the five tests and three subtests. These
results will reflect your strengths and weaknesses as measured by the examination and as
compared with other students for admission.

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Acceptance to or rejection from a practical or vocational nurse preparation program is based upon many factors. Test results are only one of these factors. If, however, you meet all other criteria and have good test results, you can have confidence that you possess the potential for satisfactorily completing the preparation program . . . provided you have the interest, motivation, and willingness to work hard. If your scores were low or marginal on the PSB-Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination, you are not as likely to be able to handle the academic work and study required to successfully complete an aviation practical or vocational nurse preparation program. While the immediate failure to realize your goal is disappointing, it is not the end of satisfying and rewarding opportunities for you. There are, most assuredly, many other kinds of training for which you are better suited. The failing is in your best interest as it will enhance your understanding of your abilities and aid in bringing to your attention areas of strength and areas of needed improvement.

PSB-Aptitude for Practical Nursing Examination

Academic Aptitude-Part I

Verbal Subtest:
The verbal aspect consists of 30 vocabulary-related test questions. Empirical evidence has shown this type of test item to be highly related to academic success.

Arithmetic Subtest:
The numerical aspect consists of 30 items drawing largely from arithmetic. To some degree, it involves skill with arithmetic concepts along with computational speed. The content of the numerical items is that to which practically all eighth grade students have been exposed.

Nonverbal Subtest:
The nonverbal aspect consists of 30 test items calling for comprehension of form relationships. The measurement is in terms of the ability to manipulate shapes mentally, to reason out differences in pictured objects, and to deal with concrete materials through visualization. Recognition of relationships and of differences between shapes has been shown by research to be basic to learning aptitude.

Academic Aptitude Total:
The Academic Aptitude test, as measured by the Total, might be thought of as the ability to learn. The test content is specifically adapted for appraising the combination of native and acquired abilities that are needed for work of an academic nature. The Academic Aptitude test emphasizes familiar experiences and concepts while requiring careful reasoning and ability to comprehend and draw conclusions.

Spelling-Part II
The Spelling test measures skill with a tool essential to written expression or communication. To some extent the test also reflects the background of educational achievement in at least one of the basic tools of learning.

Information in the Natural Sciences-Part III
Measurement with this test concerns accumulation of information in the natural sciences, e.g., biology, chemistry, health and safety, etc., at an elementary level. The relationship of knowledge in the area of the natural sciences to the course of study of the practical and vocational nurse is an obvious one.

Judgment & Comprehension in Practical Nursing Situations-Part IV
This test is concerned with the measurement of the exercise of Judgment and Comprehension in the working relationships experienced by the practical and vocational nurse as a student and as a practitioner.

Vocational Adjustment Index-Part V
An individual’s characteristic life style is reflected in his or her educational and occupational adjustment. Feelings, attitudes, personality characteristics, and behavioral traits, which may be quite acceptable in many situations, may not be those desirable for the prospective practical or vocational nurse as a student and as a practitioner.

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