

VAI

Violation Analysis Inventory

Training Manual

Preface

The **Violation Analysis Inventory (VAI)** is a brief, easily administered and automated (computer scored and interpreted) test specifically designed for use with defendants convicted of moving violations.

The **VAI** contains 114 items, requires a fifth to sixth grade reading level and can be administered in 15 to 20 minutes. The VAI is a self-report assessment that is administered and scored on-site. Reports can be available within two or three minutes of test completion.

The VAI is to be used with defendants that have been convicted of a moving violation, are participating in defensive driving courses or are completing traffic violator or driver safety programs.

The VAI is designed for quick assessment of attitudes and behavior that influence one's driving. The VAI helps defendants explore their attitudes and assess their driving related behavior in a positive (as opposed to critical) manner.

The Truthfulness Scale shows how open and cooperative the defendant is while completing the VAI. The Driver Risk Scale measures the defendant's driver risk potential. The Self-Esteem Scale reflects how the defendant feels about himself or herself. The Attitude Scale helps the defendant understand their own attitude or outlook. The Stress Coping Abilities Scale measures how well the defendant handles stress.

The VAI does not contain Alcohol or Drug Scales. The test was designed to be of assistance to traffic violators that were given non-substance abuse related moving violations. These offenders are sometimes insulted if it is implied they have an alcohol or drug problem.

Another test, the Remedial Driver Inventory (RDI) is available for driving schools handling substance (alcohol or other drug) abuse offenders. The RDI has four scales: Truthfulness, Alcohol, Drug and Driver risk. It contains 76 items and can be completed in 10 to 15 minutes.

VAI users are cautioned not to attempt to copy VAI diskettes, nor attempt loading these programs on a hard drive, as these diskettes are copy protected and such acts would damage the program on the diskette, rendering it unusable. Attempts to copy these programs is also a violation of federal copyright law. **All diskettes, including used, damaged or recalled diskettes must be returned to Online-Testing.com**

The VAI is a proprietary self-report assessment instrument that is completed by the defendant individually or in group testing settings. There are no forms or questionnaires to be completed by the staff. The VAI is scored and interpreted by the computer, which generates VAI reports on-site.

The purpose of this manual is to describe the VAI and explain how it works. Throughout this manual, emphasis is placed on understanding the VAI and the assessment system it represent.

Violations Analysis Inventory

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Product Description

The **Violation Analysis Inventory (VAI)** is a brief, easily administered and automated (computer scored and interpreted) test specifically designed for use with defendants convicted of moving violations.

The **VAI** contains 114 items, requires a fifth to sixth grade reading level and can be administered in 15 minutes. The **VAI** is a self-report assessment that is administered and scored on-site. Reports can be available within two or three minutes of test completion.

FIVE VAI MEASURES

1. TRUTHFULNESS SCALE: The Truthfulness Scale measures how truthful the client was while completing the test. This scale identifies self-protective, guarded and defensive people who minimize or even conceal information. The **VAI** identifies faking. The Truthfulness Scale also identifies the reading impaired.

2. DRIVER RISK SCALE: Measures the defendants driver risk independent of substance abuse. Some people are simply irresponsible or aggressive drivers. This scale identifies driver risk.

3. SELF-ESTEEM SCALE: This scale reflects a person's explicit valuing and appraisal of self. It incorporates an attitude of acceptance-approval versus rejection-disapproval. The Self-Esteem Scale reflects how a person perceives themselves.

4. ATTITUDE SCALE: Identifies negative outlooks characterized by resistance, entitlement, oppositional disposition and un-cooperativeness. Positive attitude change is a prerequisite to behavior change. This scale identifies positive or negative features of one's attitude.

5. STRESS COPING ABILITIES SCALE: This scale measures how well the applicant copes with stress, tension and job pressure. Stress exacerbates defendant problems and contributes to mental health and adjustment problems.

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The **VAI** does not contain an alcohol or drug scale. The **Driver Risk Inventory (DRI)** is designed for DWI/DUI offender assessment and has an alcohol and drug scale. The **Reinstatement Review Inventory (RRI)** is for evaluation prior to reinstatement of suspended or revoked driver's licenses. It also has an alcohol and drug scale. The **Violation Analysis Inventory (VAI)** is for assessing defendants convicted of moving violations.

VAI diskettes contain 25 or 50 test applications. Diskettes are to be used on IBM-PC compatibles with a minimum of 640K memory and MS-DOS. Windows applications will be available in 1998. Diskettes contain all of the software necessary to perform all test scoring functions, build an expanding database and print reports. **Staff report writing, substantiation of decision making and record keeping needs are met with these reports.**

VIOLATIONS ANALYSIS INVENTORY

The **Violations Analysis Inventory** or **VAI** is designed for use with defendants convicted of a moving Violations. The VAI helps defendants explore their attitudes and assess their driving related behavior. To achieve this goal the VAI incorporates five scales or measures.

FIVE VAI MEASURES (SCALES)

1. Truthfulness Scale: Measures how truthful the defendant was while completing the VAI. It identifies defensiveness and faking.

2. Driver Risk Scale: Measures defendants driver risk independent of substance abuse. Some people are simply irresponsible or aggressive drivers.

3. Self-Esteem Scale: Reflects a person's explicit valuing and appraisal of self. It incorporates an attitude of acceptance-approval versus rejection-disapproval.

4. Attitude Scale: Identifies negative outlooks characterized by resistance, oppositional dispositions and un-cooperativeness. Positive attitude change is a prerequisite to behavior change.

5. Stress Coping Ability Scale: Measures experienced stress in comparison to the defendants coping abilities. This scale measures how well the individual copes with stress, anxiety, tension or pressure.

UNIQUE VAI FEATURES

FAST: VAI's 114 items can be completed in 15 minutes, with no compromise in the quality of the report. The VAI is designed for use with defendant;s convicted of moving Violationss, defensive driving courses and driver safety programs. Reports are available on-site within 2 to 3 minutes of completion.

ACCURATE: Demonstrated reliability, validity and accuracy provide a sound basis for decisions, self-appraisal and change. The Truthfulness Scale detects defensiveness and / or faking. Truth - corrected scores are more accurate than raw scores. Raw scores reflect what the defendant wants you to know. Truth - corrected scores reveal what the defendant is trying to hide.

USER FRIENDLY: The VAI is written in an easy to read and non-offensive style. Reports are positively phrased and constructive. VAI reports provide the kind of information helpful in facilitating positive attitude and behavioral change. They help defendants assess and explore their driving behavior.

A SPECIALITY TEST: The **Violation Analysis Inventory (VAI)** is a brief, easily administered and automated (computer scored and interpreted) test specifically designed for use with defendants convicted of moving violations.

The **VAI** contains 114 items, requires a fifth to sixth grade reading level and can be administered in 15 minutes. The VAI is a self-report assessment that is administered and scored on-site. Reports can be available within two or three minutes of test completion. The VAI has been researched on moving violation defendants.

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Risk Level Classification

Each VAI scale score is classified in terms of the risk range it represents. These risk level classifications are calculated individually for each of the five empirically based scales as follows:

PERCENTILE RANGE	RISK RANGE
0 TO 39th percentile	Low Risk
40 to 69th percentile	Medium Risk
70 to 89th percentile	Problem Risk
90 to 100th percentile	Severe Problem risk

A defendant scoring in the zero to 39th percentile range is considered a **low risk**. This is a very positive score for the scale (Truthfulness, Driver Risk, Self-Esteem, Attitude and Stress Coping Abilities) that is being discussed. A score in the 40th to 69th percentile range is what is considered the average or **medium risk range**. Scores at or above the 70th percentile are indicative of a problem on the scale being considered. For example, a Driver Risk Scale score in the 73rd percentile, suggests that the defendant is a careless and/or aggressive driver. **Scores in the 70th to 89th percentile range are designated “problem” scores.** These scores indicate potential problems. Scores at or above the 90th percentile indicate **“severe problems”**. The 90th to 100th percentile range is designated the “severe problem” range.

Score interpretations on the VAI report are carefully worded so they aren't offensive. The intent is to make the defendant aware of his/her areas of concern, so they can positively accept these problems and constructively work them through. Problem areas are identified for awareness and remediation. VAI reports are worded to facilitate acceptance and cooperation for positive change.

Truthfulness Scale

An important advancement in testing has been the development of the Truthfulness Scale, which measures how truthful the client was while completing the test. It would be very naive to believe that everybody taking tests always answers questions truthfully. **The Truthfulness Scale detects denial, minimizing problems and faking.** The Truthfulness Scale identifies attempts to "fake good" or underreport problems and concerns.

When reviewing a Violations Analysis Inventory (VAI) report you should check the Truthfulness Scale score. **A Truthfulness Scale score at or below the 89th percentile is indicative of accurate, truthful and valid results. In contrast, a Truthfulness Scale score at or above the 90th percentile reflects inaccurate and invalid VAI results.** Reasons for inaccurate results are many and include reading impairments, reading things into questions that are not there, emotional turmoil, denial and faking. **Regardless of the reason, a Truthfulness Scale score at or above the 90th percentile means scale scores are inaccurate and likely distorted.**

Truth-Corrected Scores

The Truthfulness Scale establishes how truthful the client was while completing the VAI. The amount of error variance associated with untruthfulness is determined for each scale and then applied to each scale resulting in Truth-Corrected scores. **Truth-Corrected scores are more accurate than raw scores because they account for the measured amount of untruthfulness while the client completed the VAI.** Raw scores may only reflect what the client wants you to know. Truth-Corrected scores reveal what the client is trying to hide.

Validity

Definition: Within the context of assessment, **validity** is a general term for accuracy of measurement. Valid test results are essentially free from error. They are accurate. In contrast, invalidity refers to distortion of test results due to errors in measurement. Invalidity may be due to guardedness, denial, faking, reading things into questions, emotional instability, reading impairments, etc. An invalid tests results are distorted and not accurate.

When handed a VAI report, staff should check the Truthfulness Scale score. If the Truthfulness Scale score is below the 70th percentile -- test results are valid and accurate. Truthfulness Scale scores between the 70th and 89th percentiles are likely valid, but should be interpreted cautiously. **Truthfulness Scale scores above the 90th percentile are invalid.**

Driver Risk Scale

The Drive Risk Scale is a measure of the defendant's driver risk, independent of the defendant's involvement with alcohol or other drugs. This scale is helpful in identifying the abstaining, yet irresponsibly aggressive driver. Some people are careless, indifferent or aggressive drivers who represent a risk to self and others while driving.

Self-Esteem Scale

The Self-Esteem Scale consists of antonyms (opposite terms) which are rated on a five-point scale for self-description. This provides a rapid and accurate self-rating. Guilford (1954) and Garner (1960) noted that reliability of rating scales tends to be proportional to the number of scale points. Derogatis (1977) noted that self-perceptions of symptoms and personal problems are typically finite and established a 5-point scale in the SCL-90R. The VAI employs a 5-point scale in the Self-Esteem Scale.

Self-esteem refers to a person's perception of himself or herself. It reflects an explicit valuing and appraisal of oneself. Self-esteem incorporates an attitude of acceptance-approval versus rejection-disapproval of oneself. The Self-Esteem Scale is descriptive of the person one believes oneself to be.

Stress Coping Abilities Scale

This scale measures the client's ability to cope with stress. How effectively one copes with stress determines whether or not stress affects one's overall adjustment. Stress exacerbates other symptoms of emotional, substance abuse and adjustment problems. Markedly impaired stress coping abilities are frequently correlated with identifiable mental health problems. Thus, the Stress Coping Abilities Scale facilitates evaluation of this important area of inquiry in

a non-offensive and non-intrusive manner. A Stress Coping Abilities Scale score at or above the 90th percentile warrants consideration of a more comprehensive psychological evaluation.

The Stress Coping Abilities Scale is much more than just a measure of stress. It measures how well the client copes with stress. Two people can be in the same stressful situation, however, one person is overwhelmed and the other person handles it well. The Stress Coping Abilities Scale accounts for these different reactions to stress.

The Stress Coping Abilities Scale correlates significantly (.001 level of significance) in predicted directions with the following MMPI scales: Psychopathic Deviate (Pd), Psychasthenia (Pt), Anxiety (A), Manifest Anxiety (MAS), Ego Strength (ES), Social Responsibility (RE), Social Alienation (PD 4A), Social Alienation (SCIA), Social Maladjustment (SOC), Authority Conflict (AUT), Manifest Hostility (HOS), Suspiciousness/Mistrust (TSC-III), Resentment/Aggression (TSC-V), and Tension/Worry (TSC-VII). Stress exacerbates other symptoms of emotional problems. **A high risk (90 to 100th percentile) Stress Coping Abilities score is indicative of markedly impaired stress coping abilities and very likely reflects identifiable emotional and mental health problems.**

Staff Members Should Not Take the VAI

Sometimes a staff member wants to simulate the client taking the VAI. It is strongly recommended that staff do **not** take the VAI. The VAI is not standardized on staff. And staff do not have the same mental set as a client. Staff would likely invalidate, distort or otherwise compromise their VAI profile.

Check Answer Sheet for Completeness

Check the client's answer sheet to be sure it has been filled out correctly when it is turned in and before the client leaves. No items should be skipped and true and false should not be answered for the same question.

The client should be informed that each question must be answered in accordance with instructions, and be given the opportunity to correct or complete their answer sheet. **Skipped answers are scored by the computer in the deviant direction, as it is assumed that these items were omitted to avoid admitting a "negative" response.**

Present, Past or Future Tense

Client's should answer questions as the questions are stated -- in present tense, past tense or future tense. Questions are to be answered literally as they are presented. There are no trick questions. If an item wants to know about the past, it will be stated in the past tense. If the item inquires about the present, it will be stated in the present tense. And, if an item asks about the future, it will be stated in the future tense. Just answer each question as it is stated.

Special Modified Report, or 99th Percentiles

When the Truthfulness Scale score is at or above the 95th percentile all other scale scores are automatically set to the 99th percentile. In other words the VAI report is modified due to the extremely inaccurate test protocol. And in place of the scale descriptions or paragraphs explaining scale scores, a one-page explanation of validity - invalidity is printed. A test protocol is inaccurate and invalid when the Truthfulness Scale score is at or above the 90th percentile. This modified report dramatizes the extremely high Truthfulness Scale score (95th percentile or higher). We will await user feedback before deciding to implement this 99th percentile procedure for Truthfulness Scale scores at the 90th and above percentile score.

Accurate - Inaccurate Profiles

The term “inaccurate” is being used instead of invalid. The term validity refers to accurate assessment. In contrast, invalidity refers to distortion of test results due to clients attitude, reading abilities, minimization of problems, reading things into the questions, denial and faking. However, many people do not understand the terms valid or invalid. Consequently we are substituting the terms **accurate** and **inaccurate** for valid and invalid.

Inaccuracy is defined in terms of a client’s Truthfulness Scale score being at or above the 90th percentile. **A Truthfulness Scale score at the 90th percentile or above results in inaccurate tests results, and all scale scores should be considered inaccurate.** Yet, different accurate - inaccurate VAI profiles can be identified. Five examples are discussed.

Example #1. An elevated (at or above the 90th percentile) Truthfulness Scale score with all other scale scores at or above the 90th percentile. This profile is often associated with impaired reading skills, acute emotional turmoil, or a very deviant response set . . . Further inquiry is needed with the client before deciding whether to retest. If emotionally upset, you may want to settle the client down before retesting. Although rare, some client’s do not take the testing situation seriously and randomly respond. Regardless of the reason this VAI profile is inaccurate and invalid.

Example #2. An elevated Truthfulness Scale score with at least one other scale score above the 69th percentile and one other scale score below the 40th percentile. This may be an accurate profile where the client was either inadvertently “reading things into the questions” or attempting to be “absolutely honest” . . . After reviewing the instructions with the client this person would likely be retestable. However, a “focused interview” may be all that is needed to complete this assessment.

Example #3. An elevated Truthfulness Scale score with all scale scores at or below the 39th percentile. This client was attempting to minimize problems and “look good” but was detected by the Truthfulness Scale . . . **This is a classically invalid profile.** This client can be expected to be defensive and manifest denial. A direct approach is recommended, e.g., you were either attempting to minimize your problems or you were reading things into questions that weren’t there. Retest would be contingent upon the client’s attitude.

Example #4. A low risk Truthfulness Scale score with other scale scores

variable is usually considered a valid profile. However, in very rare cases this represent a “test wise” client or staff member playing “beat the test.” Earlier it was noted the VAI was not standardized on staff and it was recommended they do not take the VAI. Yet, some do. And it would be very rare or unusual for a client to be that “test wise.” First year college students in psychology classes were asked to “lie but don’t get caught” and were detected. This respondent’s motivation needs to be established in interview.

Example #5. In very rare instances a client might answer all test items true or false. If all items are answered true the Truthfulness Scale would automatically be set to the maximum score. This response set is very rare. Similarly, **if all items were answered false** the Truthfulness Scale score would be very high. The very high Truthfulness Scale score shows the test protocol is inaccurate or invalid . . . Should either of these situations occur, straightforward inquiry is all that is usually needed to clarify the matter. Contingent upon the clients attitude, retesting might be considered after the oral instructions are reviewed.

Oral Instructions

The literature is clear that many clients tend to minimize their problems by substantially under-reporting their problems and concerns. This emphasizes the importance of oral instructions to the client before he/she begins the VAI. A straightforward approach is recommended. For example:

“This questionnaire contains a truthfulness measure to determine how cooperative and truthful you are while completing it. It is also important that you do not read anything into the questions that is not there. There are no trick questions or “hidden meanings.” Your court records may be checked to verify the accuracy of your answers. Please answer all the questions honestly. Just answer each question truthfully.

Giving the client an example often helps them understand. The example that you use will be influenced by your client population, experience and intent. Your example should be individualized to your situation and needs. The following example is presented for clarification as to how an example might be included in your oral instructions to the client.

“Last week a client told me while taking the MMPI that he could not answer this question true or false. ‘I am attracted to members of the opposite sex.’ When asked why, the client replied, ‘If I answer true you will think I am a sex maniac. If I answer false you will think I am a homosexual.’ I told the client that this item does not ask about being a sex maniac or homosexual. It simply asks if you are attracted to members of the opposite sex. When you interpreted it to refer to sex maniacs or homosexuals you were answering different questions. Do not read anything into these questions that isn’t there, because if you do, you will invalidate the test and you may have to take it over. Simply answer the questions true or false. There are no trick questions or hidden meanings. If you misinterpret or change the questions in the test, you will invalidate the test.”

Expanding Database

A database is a large collection of data in a computer, organized so that it can be expanded, updated and retrieved rapidly for statistical analysis or annual summary reports. A database of test-related information can be very useful.

Used VAI diskettes are returned (without client names) to Behavior Data Systems and test data is downloaded into the VAI expanding database. Annual database analysis ensures ongoing research and accuracy of assessment. And, the VAI database enables ongoing test program summary reports which describe the population that was tested in terms of demographics, court history, assessment accuracy and much more.

Retest

When a client invalidates their VAI, it is recommended that they be given the opportunity to be retested. **Prior to retesting the oral instructions should be reviewed.** If the retest is invalid, the client may not be testable at that time.

Time Savings

The VAI is designed to provide a vast amount of relevant information quickly and accurately. The VAI facilitates a “focused interview” which may take 30 minutes to complete with no compromise in effectiveness or quality. **Focused interviews “zero in” on client problems and concerns.** Problem areas are identified with the VAI so the interview or discussion can focus on those areas of concern.

Test Data Input Verification

This procedure allows the person that is inputting the test data from the answer sheet into their computer to verify the accuracy of their data input. **In brief, the test data is input twice and any inconsistencies between that first and second data entries are highlighted until corrected.** When the first and second data entry match (or are the same) you may continue. This data input verification procedure is optional.

You may enter client test data and print reports until the diskette is filled, or if you wish, you may check to verify that data entries from the answer sheet were accurate. You have the option of verifying any data that you enter, whether you wish to verify all tests or randomly pick a few tests to verify that were entered from a diskette. The choice is yours. More information on the Data Input Verification procedure is provided in the Computer Operating Guide.

When you enter a test you may choose to perform the test data input verification procedure after all the test data has been entered. A message is displayed asking if you want to “verify” data input. **Type “y” for “yes” if you want to perform test data input verification, or type “n” for “no” and you will return to the main menu.**

Delete Client Names, Confidentiality

You have the option to delete client names from the diskette before returning it. This is optional. If you want to use this option, remember that once you delete client names from a diskette -- they are gone and can not be

retrieved. We recommend you only use this option before returning used diskettes to Behavior Data Systems. Deleting client names does not delete demographic or test data. When you use this option it only deletes client names. **This option is provided to protect client confidentiality.** Once the names have been deleted, there is no way for you to retrieve them.

VAI Summary

In addition to the five VAI scales, the VAI copyrighted database provides both a research and client screening program summary capability that has not been available before. Each year that the VAI screening program is in place, users can be confident that the program is better able to meet their needs. Tests are most accurate when standardized on the population they are used to evaluate. Moreover, the VAI system includes free ongoing database research and annual defendant screening summary reports.

The VAI system is like having your own test--modified for your agencies assessment needs, standardized on your clients, with reports individualized to your client criteria. Each year the VAI is re-standardized via ongoing database research. Each year large volume users are provided an annual summary report of your assessment program. The result is a truly a "state-of-the-art" assessment system.

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