

1st OFFENSE INVENTORY

TRAINING MANUAL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Scales	2	Control of Reports.....	5
Advantages of Screening	3	Check Answer Sheet for Completeness	5
Test Data Input Verification	3	Past, Present or Future Tense	5
Delete Names (Confidentiality).....	4	Special 99% Reports	5
Truthfulness Scale	4	Accurate-Inaccurate Profiles	5
Truth-Corrected Scores.....	4	Oral Instructions.....	6
Validity	4	Significant Items	7
Staff Should Not Take the 1 st Offense.....	5	Multiple Choice Items.....	7
		Retest.....	7
		Time Savings.....	7

1st Offense Inventory

Non-Violent, First Offense Assessment

The **1st Offense Inventory** is designed for first offender (male and female) assessment. This test is particularly useful in defendant (misdemeanor and felony), pretrial, presentence, and probation settings.

The 1st Offense Inventory consists of 122 true-false and multiple choice items. It takes 20 to 25 minutes on average to complete this test which has a high fifth grade reading level. Reports are complete and printed on-site within 2 minutes of data entry. The **1st Offense Inventory** has seven measures (scales):

Seven 1st Offense Inventory Scales (Measures)

1. **Truthfulness Scale:** measures how truthful the offender was while completing the test. It would be naïve to assume that respondents always tell the truth - particularly in court and probation settings. The Truthfulness Scale detects denial, problem minimization and attempts to “fake good.”
2. **Alcohol Scale:** measures alcohol use and when appropriate the severity of abuse. Alcohol refers to beer, wine and other liquors. This scale measures the severity of alcohol abuse so the assessor can match problem severity with treatment intensity.
3. **Drugs Scale:** measures the severity of drug (marijuana, crack, ice, ecstasy, LSD, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturates, heroin, etc.) use and when appropriate abuse. The Drugs Scale measures the severity of drug abuse so the assessor can match problem severity with treatment intensity.
4. **Antisocial Scale:** measures antisocial attitudes and behaviors. It identifies offenders that are opposed to society and are aggressive, irresponsible and destructive. Antisocial people are opposed to existing social organization and moral codes.
5. **Peer Pressure Scale:** measures a person’s susceptibility to peer pressure or the influence of others. By definition: pressure from one's peers to behave in a manner similar or acceptable to them.
6. **Entitlement Scale:** measures a person’s beliefs and entitlement related attitudes. Some people believe they “are entitled,” “deserve,” or “have a right to” more material goods, benefits or other services. Some people believe they are “entitled” to more than others.
7. **Self-Esteem Scale:** measures a person’s perception of self. Self-esteem incorporates an attitude of acceptance-approval versus rejection-disapproval of oneself. This scale describes the person one believes oneself to be.

Why use the 1st Offense Inventory? Early detection of problem severity facilitates prompt intervention which contributes greatly to successful recovery. And measuring the severity of problems enables evaluators to match problem severity with treatment intensity. We now know this is a necessary prerequisite for treatment effectiveness.

In 20 to 25 minutes staff can screen important behavioral, attitudinal, and self-awareness factors important in understanding first offenders, their risks (problems) and treatment needs (intervention, counseling or treatment). It is important to note that each scale measures problem severity. This is a necessary prerequisite for matching problem severity with appropriate treatment intensity referral.

1st Offense Inventory reports can be individualized to a states court and/or probation department available referral alternatives. To participate in such “test individualization” staff needs to establish their preferred referral options for low, medium, problem and severe problem treatment/intervention referrals. These matched problem severity - treatment intensity relationships could then be incorporated into the 1st Offense Inventory reports. Test individualization is rare.

The 1st Offense Inventory is an automated (computer scored with reports printed within 2 minutes of data entry) self-report test that is completed by defendants and/or offenders individually or in group

testing settings. Group testing saves staff time. And these 1st Offense Inventory reports eliminate the need for tedious, time consuming and error prone hand scoring. 1st Offense Inventory reports are scored and printed within 2 minutes of data entry. **Staff report writing, selection of appropriate referral alternatives, substantiation of decision making and record keeping needs are met with 1st Offense Inventory reports.**

Sometimes budgetary restraints and tie obligations restrict staff specialization. In these instances the 1st Offense Inventory can help staff identify the defendant/probationer risk (problems) and needs (appropriate intervention or treatment). Using the 1st Offense Inventory can actually save staff assessment and referral time.

More specialized assessment instruments or tests (e.g., substance abuse, domestic violence, sex offender screening, suicide evaluation and more) are presented on Professional Online Testing Solutions, Inc. website www.online-testing.com.

Advantages of Screening: Screening or assessment instruments filter out individuals with serious problems that may require referral for a more comprehensive evaluation and/or treatment. This filtering system works as follows:

Risk Ranges		
Risk Category	Risk Range Percentile	Total Percentile
Low Risk	0 - 39%	39%
Medium Risk	40 - 69%	30%
Problem Risk	70 - 89%	20%
Severe Problem	90 -100%	11%

Reference to the above table shows that a problem is not identified until a scale score is at the 70th percentile or higher. This procedure is eminently fair and it avoids extremes, i.e., over or under-identification of problems.

In approximately 20 minutes staff can screen important behavioral and attitudinal areas of inquiry. And, as noted earlier, each 1st Offense Inventory scale measures problem severity that is appropriately matched with recommended treatment intensity.

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. The choice is yours.

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. This is optional. If you want to use this option, remember that once you delete client names -- they are gone and can not be retrieved. We recommend you use this option. Deleting client names does not delete demographic or test data. When you use this option it only deletes defendant names. **This option is provided to protect client confidentiality.** Once the names have been deleted, there is no way for you to retrieve them.

Truthfulness Scale. An important advancement in testing has been the development of the Truthfulness Scale, which measures how truthful the defendant 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 is particularly important in court-related settings. The Truthfulness Scale identifies attempts to "fake good" or underreport problems and concerns.

When reviewing a 1st Offense Inventory 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 1st Offense Inventory 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 defendant was while completing the 1st Offender Inventory. The amount of error variance associated with untruthfulness is determined 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 defendant completed the 1st Offender Inventory.** Raw scores may only reflect what the defendant wants you to know. Truth-Corrected scores reveal what the defendant is trying to hide. Truth-Corrected scores are more accurate than raw scores.

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, minimization of problems, emotional instability, reading impairments, etc. An invalid tests results are distorted and not accurate.

When handed a 1st Offense Inventory 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 not accurate.**

Staff Members Should Not Take the 1st OI. Sometimes a staff member wants to simulate the defendant taking the 1st Offender Inventory. It is strongly recommended that staff do **not** take the 1st Offender Inventory. The 1st Offense Inventory is not standardized on staff. And staff do not have the

same mental set as a defendant. Staff would likely invalidate, distort or otherwise compromise their 1st Offense Inventory profile.

Control of 1st Offense Inventory Reports. 1st Offense Inventory reports contain confidential information. Some of the vocabulary may be misunderstood by the defendant and others. For these reasons the defendant should **not** be given his/her 1st Offense Inventory report to read. **Instead we recommend a staff person review 1st Offense Inventory results with the defendant, but does not give the 1st Offense Inventory report to the defendant to read.** The defendant should **never** be allowed to remove an 1st Offense Inventory test booklet or report from the premises. 1st Offense Inventory test booklets and reports are privileged, highly sensitive and confidential.

Request for Information. If, or when, third parties (attorneys, relatives, agencies, etc.) request 1st Offense Inventory materials they should be informed that all 1st Offense Inventory materials (1st Offense Inventory booklets, Manuals, etc.) are copyrighted and 1st Offense Inventory users are licensed by Behavior Data Systems, Ltd. **As appropriate -- they should be allowed to review their clients 1st Offense Inventory report during normal working hours -- but not photocopy or remove it from your office.** If they persist, they should be advised to contact Behavior Data Systems, Ltd., P.O. Box 44256, Phoenix, Arizona 85064-4256.

Check Answer Sheet for Completeness. Check the defendant'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 defendant 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. Defendants 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 1st Offense Inventory 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 (as compared to the 95th percentile and higher) 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 defendant's 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 defendant'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 1st Offense Inventory 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 defendant before deciding whether to retest. If emotionally upset, you may want to settle the defendant down before retesting. Although rare, some defendant's do not take the testing situation seriously and randomly respond. Regardless of the reason this 1st Offense Inventory 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 defendant was either inadvertently "reading things into the questions" or attempting to be "absolutely honest" . . . After reviewing the instructions with the defendant 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 defendant was attempting to minimize problems and "look good" but was detected by the Truthfulness Scale . . . **This is a classically invalid profile.** This defendant 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 defendant'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 represents a "test wise" defendant or staff member playing "beat the test." Earlier it was noted the 1st Offense Inventory was not standardized on staff and it was recommended they do not take the 1st Offender Inventory. Yet, some do. And it would be very rare or unusual for a defendant 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 defendant 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 defendant's attitude, retesting might be considered after the oral instructions are reviewed.

Oral Instructions. The literature is clear that many defendants tend to minimize their problems by substantially under-reporting their alcohol and drug use or violent acts. This emphasizes the importance of oral instructions to the defendant before he/she begins the 1st Offender Inventory. 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 defendant 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 defendant.

“Last week a defendant 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 defendant 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 defendant 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.”

Significant Items. Significant items are self-admissions or important self-report responses. Significant items are identified for reference. Sometimes they help in understanding the defendant. **Significant items alone do not determine scale scores.** Significant items are listed at the end of the 1st Offense Inventory report for the Alcohol, Drug and Antisocial Scales.

Multiple Choice Items. The last sequence of multiple choice questions reflect important self-report motivational, attitudinal and perceptual information. Client answers to Section 3 multiple choice items are printed on the last page of the 1st Offense Inventory report. These answers represent the defendant’s perception of his/her situation and needs, consequently they may differ from objective scale scores. **This enables comparison of the defendant’s subjective attitude and motivation with their empirically based objective scale scores.** For example, a defendant may report “no problem” with regard to alcohol-related problems, even though the Alcohol Scale score is at or above the 90th percentile (severe range) score.

Retest. When a defendant invalidates their 1st Offender Inventory, 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 defendant may not be testable at that time.

Time Savings. The 1st Offense Inventory is designed to provide a vast amount of relevant information quickly and accurately. The 1st Offense Inventory facilitates a “focused interview” which may take 30 minutes to complete with no compromise in effectiveness or quality. **Focused interviews “zero in” on defendant problems and concerns.** Problem areas are identified with the 1st Offense Inventory so the interview can focus on those areas of concern. The 1st Offense Inventory combined with the focused interview can result in significant time savings -- with no compromise in the quality of the services being provided.