

FORMAL vs. INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

Below is a summary of the discussion when the question was asked, “When would you choose to use an informal versus formal assessment tool?” All of the comments shared below focused on why individuals choose informal rather than formal assessment tools. It is noted that formal assessment tools can be highly effective, however the writer is summarizing the group discussion which did not include when a formal assessment would be preferable.

Informal Assessment May Be Chosen Because:

- 1) Typically less expensive.
- 2) Counsellor does not possess qualifications required to interpret a formal assessment.
- 3) It can offer greater cultural sensitivity.
- 4) Wording can be adjusted for individuals who may have lower literacy levels or where English is a second language.
- 5) Sometimes informal can be more fun, creative and flexible
- 6) Age group – norms of formal assessments are not appropriate
- 7) More effective when a client’s level of self awareness is low
- 8) Informal assessment can be used to augment formal assessments in situations where there are conflicting or invalid results, or in cases where a client needs to increase their self awareness