

III. POLICY STATEMENT

For the above reasons, the Commission's policy with respect to use of personality tests is as follows:

Use of personality tests prohibited

Available personality tests, questionnaires, inventories, and related methods that seek to appraise personal characteristics have not generally been designed for occupational placement. They are appropriately used by professional persons for clinical diagnostic and counseling purposes.

For this reason and because results of such tests are subject to various kinds of misinterpretation, the Commission does not itself use and prohibits agencies from using personality tests as such in any personnel action affecting employees or positions in the competitive service.

This does not, of course, relate to the proper use of such tests by a qualified psychiatrist or psychologist when, in his professional judgment, they would assist in his total study of an individual in connection with medical determinations for employment or fitness for duty.

The above policy restricts the use of current personality test methods intended to gage personal characteristics. The Commission will consider proposals for the use of a particular personality test only when it has been shown by systematic research to have a direct value in making personnel decisions.

As distinguished from tests of personal characteristics, psychological tests measuring qualifications, such as knowledge and aptitudes, are appropriate and useful for job placement purposes.

For further background information as to the reasons for this policy, see the discussion of personality tests in appendix A to part II, Handbook X-118. This is now being revised and elaborated to provide a more complete review of the nature, proper uses, and limitations of personality tests.

This is the statement, Mr. Chairman, that has been released to the personnel officers of the Government in the past week.

The additional work that I referred to in the final paragraph is underway and will be incorporated as a part of the guidance material provided by the Civil Service Commission to all of those who make personnel decisions throughout the Federal Service.

Let me say again, thank you for the opportunity to be here with you, to present to you these facts and opinions. I hope they will be useful to you and your committee in the important work you are doing.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have as a result of my statement.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The Chair would like to congratulate you for your very profound statement of policy. I think that everyone in our civil service owes you a debt of gratitude for this statement. I believe that the rippling effect of your statement will be extremely meaningful to anyone in this country who has to work for a living or has a desire to serve in the Government of the United States.

We do have some questions and before we get to them, I would like you to clarify one thing. I gather you are not referring to any exception permitting mass testing merely because psychologists are utilized?