

Foreword

FOR twenty-five years psychologists, counselors, and personnel men have used interest inventories in diagnosing interests and in estimating prospects of success and satisfaction in various fields of work. One of their fundamental assumptions has been that men and women who are interested in their work and who have interests like those of others in their vocation will find satisfaction in their work. Interest inventories have therefore become a principal tool of counselors and personnel workers, and of these Strong's Vocational Interest Blank is one of the most carefully developed and widely used.

The foundation of Strong's work was the finding that persons successfully engaged in an occupation have interests which differentiate them from men or women in other occupations. Despite a quarter century of fruitful research, however, two important questions have been insufficiently explored by Strong and other interest researchers. These are, first, the relationship between inventoried interest and work satisfaction (as distinguished from success or continued employment), and secondly, the differentiation of specialties within an occupation.

In the research reported in this monograph, Dr. Schwebel has added significantly to our knowledge of both these topics. Selecting pharmacists as the subjects of his study, he has worked with an occupational group which has recently been submitting itself to much self-study because of the dissatisfaction which is widespread among pharmacists and which has created recruiting problems for that profession. Developing several scoring scales, using both Strong's method and methods of his own which contrast satisfied with dissatisfied members of the occupation and members of one specialty (apothecaries) with members of another specialty (retail business), Dr. Schwebel has shown that the interests of most prescription and research pharmacists are not clearly different from those of most retail druggists, he has confirmed the validity of Strong's men-in-general reference point in interest scale construction; and he has demonstrated the need for, and value of, adding a satisfaction criterion to the occupational success and stability criteria used by Strong in selecting criterion groups. In addition to these theoretical and technical contributions, Dr. Schwebel has made available a new scoring key for Strong's Vocational Interest Blank, thereby making that widely used test useful also for counseling and selecting potential pharmacists.

These contributions should be of interest to vocational counselors and to personnel workers using interest inventories in counseling individuals or in selecting employees, to industrial relations specialists interested in problems of work and job satisfaction, and especially to personnel psychologists who are engaged in test construction and evaluation.

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