



### I19 Reviewing and Synthesizing Culturally Responsive Forensic Psychological Data in Pre-Employment Psychological Evaluations

Ronn Johnson, PhD\*, University of San Diego, 3525 Del Mar Heights Road, #302, San Diego, CA 91230

After attending this presentation, attendees will be able to articulate some of the data information sources frequently used in forensic psychological evaluations conducted on police applicants. The presentation will also cover how the process is explored for using other data to craft a culturally-responsive psychological interview format.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by presenting how long-term results may be observed through work products noted by negligent hire or appellant hearing outcomes.

The forensic psychological examiner is often confronted with an extremely large data set (e.g., MMPI-2 RF Scales, personal history statement, background reports, etc.). The credibility and defensibility of any forensic evaluation is directly related to synthesis (i.e., sorting and prioritizing) of the most valid data available. And, it is at the integration section that salient cultural factors are at the greatest potential to either augment or detract from the decision-making of the examiner. Cultural factors are identified in several practice reference resources (e.g., APA, ABFP, and the DSM-5) used by for forensic psychologists. The Culturally-Responsive Integrative Model (CRIM) is may function as a practice guide for approaching the forensic evaluation process of police officers. It is hypothesized that forensic examiners exposed to the content of this session will be able to apply this knowledge with the cultural context of the evaluation process.

There are three primary learning objectives expected from this presentation. First, following the completion of this presentation, attendees will be able to articulate some of the data information sources frequently used in forensic psychological evaluations conducted on police applicants. For example, background reports and consultation with background investigators can serve as a value sourced of informing used to frame the semi-structured interview of an applicant. Second, the process is explored for using other data to craft a culturally-responsive psychological interview format. For example, ethical standards set forth by the American Psychological Association require forensic psychologists to administer, adapt, score, interpret, or use assessment techniques, interviews, tests, or instruments in a manner and for purposes that are appropriate in light of the research on or evidence of the usefulness and proper application of these forensic evaluation approaches.

While forensic psychologist may elect use different psychological tests, they are still ethically-bound to be able to defend such evaluation tools under a legal standard (i.e., *Daubert vs. Frye*). In addition, a State's definition of mental health criteria for a police officer may directly impact a forensic psychologist's decision to use or not use certain data sources. In this case, a forensic examiner practicing in several jurisdictions or states may need to be ever mindful that there could be little mobility or transferability of standards from department to department. More importantly, these same factors may be rigorously examined during cross-examination during appeal hearings or subsequent litigation stemming from some action or inaction of an officer screen by the forensic psychologist.

Finally, a rubric is offered for weighing the relevance of information from divergent sources of information over time. For example, psychological tests validated for use with police populations include those that assess psychopathology such as the MMPI2-RF or PAI, those that assess normal psychological functioning such as the CPI, and those that measure cognitive abilities such as the Wonderlic. One forensically-relevant question is how does an examiner consider the problematic tests results in the absence of corresponding negative biopsychosocial information?

A case study will be used to demonstrate how this forensic decision making occurs. It is a process that includes research, forensic psychological expertise, and attention to cultural or racial factors associated with the individual being evaluated. The long-term results of this presentation may be observed through work products noted by negligent hire or appellant hearing outcomes.

**Forensic Psychology, Pre-Employment Psychological Evaluations, Culturally Responsive**