

Preface

Within the field of psychology, there has been an emerging interest in and emphasis on *evidence-based* practice—that is, on interventions and assessment strategies with an empirical basis. When I was in graduate training, conclusions regarding psychological test results frequently were based on professional folklore and “cookbook” guidelines that often had no supporting documentation. The findings detailed in psychodiagnostic reports were frequently poetic, but one was left wondering, “Where did this come from?” with the suspicion that interpretations were idiosyncratic and probably illuminated more about the psychologist than the patient.

Psychological assessment reports have huge impacts on the lives of those who undergo the exams, and errors in interpretations can have major ramifications. The results of psychological testing are relied upon in determinations of whether individuals should receive disability compensation, lawsuit damages, classroom accommodations, and medications, as well as whether they are competent to stand trial or manage their own affairs (including independent living, parenting, handling finances, and driving). Therefore, it is critical that test interpretations be reliable and accurate, and this can only occur if they are grounded in the empirical literature. The purpose of this book is to challenge and assist neuropsychologists to pursue evidence-based clinical forensic practice.

Chapter 1 covers topics related to conducting a neuropsychological exam, with a focus on issues specific to forensic practice. These include requests for observers, treater–expert relationships, and demands that test names be provided to the test taker and counsel prior to the exam. Critical

