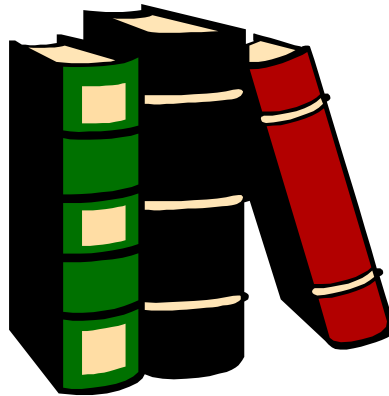


Vocational Preparatory Instruction

Staff Self-Training Program

History of VPI Module

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**HISTORY
OF
VOCATIONAL PREPARATORY INSTRUCTION (VPI)**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
PRE-TEST	1
INTRODUCTION	3
FLORIDA STATUTE 239.213	4
PROGRAM OVERVIEW	6
PURPOSE	8
VPI PHILOSOPHY	9
POST-TEST	11
REFERENCES	13
APPENDIX A (GLOSSARY)	14
APPENDIX B (PRE-TEST ANSWERS)	15
APPENDIX C (POST-TEST ANSWERS)	16

PRE TEST

Directions: For questions 1-5, choose the best answer.

1. Vocational Preparatory Instruction programs are located in:
 - a) Correctional institutions and skills centers
 - b) High schools and community colleges
 - c) Vocational-technical and Indian reservations
 - d) All of the above.
2. The Vocational Preparatory Instruction model was designed to:
 - a) Identify vocational students basic skills deficiencies
 - b) Develop an instructional prescription
 - c) Provide individualized instruction for remediation of the deficiencies
 - d) All of the above
3. The first IMTS lab opened at:
 - a) Miami-Dade Community College
 - b) West Palm Beach: Adult Center
 - c) Lively Vocational Technical Center
 - d) Lawtey Correctional Institution
4. At the peak of its fame, there were as many as _____ IMTS labs operating in Florida.
 - a) 28
 - b) 67
 - c) 89
 - d) 105
5. One of the reasons Florida established Standards of Achievement was:
 - a) To expand the IMTS program
 - b) To cut funds for the IMTS program
 - c) To promote greater accountability for funding
 - d) None of the above

True or False

6. The goal of Vocational Preparatory Instruction is to enable the program participants to succeed in vocational education and subsequent employment.
7. The curriculum frameworks incorporate basic skills instruction required for completion from a vocational certificate program and the SCANS competencies.
8. Any student enrolled in vocational certificate programs that lack a minimal level of basic skills for such programs can participate in vocational preparatory instruction programs.

True or False, continued

9. VPI is an adult general education program through which persons attain academic and workplace readiness skills at the level of functional literacy or higher.
10. Florida's Division of Vocational Education adopted the IMTS model for serving academically disadvantaged students in 1967.
11. IMTS became known as the System for Applied Individualized Learning as a result of new terminology in the Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Act.
12. SAIL became known as Vocational Preparatory Instruction to correspond with terminology used in Senate Bill 1688 in 1999.
13. A student may receive a certificate of vocational program completion prior to demonstrating the basic skills required in the curriculum framework for the vocational program.
14. Due to recent legislation, the minimum grade level for functional literacy is 8.0.
15. The Florida Commission on Vocational Education concluded that schools completely integrate academic and vocational education.

HISTORY OF VOCATIONAL PREPARATORY INSTRUCTION (VPI)

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, career education has experienced a major growth spurt. Along with growth came changes in demographic patterns, new workplace requirements, and continuing dissatisfaction with the academic performance of vocational students in the classroom. Vocational educators became increasingly concerned about delivering basic skills instruction in conjunction with vocational curricula. The U.S. Department of Labor recognized the need for innovative approaches to basic skills instruction in vocational education. From the early 1960s to the middle 1970s, the Department sponsored several research projects under the Manpower Administration. These projects were conducted through a consortium lead by Technical Education Research Centers (TERC).

As a member of the consortium, the state of Florida participated in a demonstration project funded by the United States Department of Labor called the Manpower Training System in 1971. This system utilized language and mathematics materials adopted or modified from the Individually Prescribed Instruction System (IIS) developed by the Rehabilitation Research Foundation (TERC, 1972). Florida's Division of Vocational Education (DVE) adopted the Individualized Manpower Training System (IMTS) as a model for serving its academically disadvantaged students, and in 1972, the project resulted in the implementation of an IMTS lab at Lewis M. Lively Vocational-Technical Center in Tallahassee, Florida.

The model was designed to identify vocational students' basic skills deficiencies, develop an instructional prescription, and provide individualized instruction for remediation of the deficiencies (Program Guide, 1990). IMTS concentrated on basic skills in reading, arithmetic, and language. Other components of the program included employability behaviors, complementary skills, and occupational exploration.

During the 1980s, IMTS labs expanded to over 100 sites throughout the state. After a shift in the emphasis of federal funding, a change in state proviso language, and a shift in program structure within the Department of Corrections, the number of Florida's IMTS labs decreased slightly (SAIL Guide, 1992).

Also in the early 1980s, legislators began to seek greater accountability for the allocation of funds. In response to their concerns, Florida established Standards of Achievement. In 1984, Florida implemented Section 239.213, F.S. (amended in 1998), which states:

VOCATIONAL PREPARATORY INSTRUCTION

- (1) *The state board for Career Education shall adopt, by rule, standards of basic skill mastery for certificate career education programs. Each school district and community college that conducts certificate career education programs shall provide vocational preparatory instruction through which students receive the basic skills instruction required pursuant to this section.*
- (2) *Students who enroll in a certificate career education program shall complete an entry-level examination within the first six weeks of admission into the program. The state board shall designate examinations that are currently in existence, the results of which are comparable across institutions, to assess student mastery of basic skills. Any student deemed to lack a minimal level of basic skills for such programs shall be referred to vocational preparatory instruction or adult basic education for a structured program of basic skills instruction. Such instruction may include English for speakers of other languages. A student may not receive a certificate of vocational program completion prior to demonstrating the basic skills required in the state curriculum framework for the vocational program.*
- (3) *Exceptional students, as defined in s. 228.041, may be exempted from the provisions of this section. A student who possesses an associate of arts, baccalaureate, or graduate level degree, who has completed the college-level communication and computation skills examination pursuant to s. 240.107, or who is exempt from the college entry-level examination pursuant to s. 240.107, may be exempted from the provisions of this section.*

This statute had a tremendous impact on the IMTS program because many school districts designated IMTS as the program to provide remediation to vocational students in their district. In addition, proviso language designated IMTS as a high priority for funding; thus, the number of students served in the programs grew immensely.

In 1989, the Division reviewed the goals and purposes of IMTS with the intent of proposing changes as needed. The program's name was changed to the "System for Applied Individualized Learning" (SAIL) to include "Applied Learning" and to delete "Manpower" from its original title. The new terminology was in keeping with the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technical Act (Public Law 101-392). The Perkins Act also included provisions that assured members of special populations would have the opportunity to participate in vocational programs and support services. By then, 89 public institutions within the state's adult centers, community colleges, skill centers, high schools, Indian Reservations, vocational-technical centers, and correctional institutions were operating SAIL programs. In past years, over 53,000 students have been served yearly in SAIL programs statewide.

In the program year 1999-2000, the System for Applied Individualized Learning (SAIL) was renamed to Vocational Preparatory Instruction (VPI) to correspond with the terminology used in the Senate Bill 1688. Due to recent legislation, VPI is an adult general education Program (AGE) through which persons attain academic and workplace readiness skills at the level of functional literacy (grade levels 6.0–8.9) or higher so that such persons may pursue certificate career education or high-level career education (TAP, 1999).

The curriculum frameworks reflect the students' need for academic, vocational-technical, and workplace readiness skills. They incorporate basic skills instruction required for completion from a vocational certificate program as well as the Secretary's Competencies on Achieving of Necessary Skills (SCANS) foundation competencies (TAP, 1999). Literacy Completion Points (LCPs) are achieved when a student masters the basic skills grade levels required for completion of the vocational certificate program in which the student is enrolled.

A renewed emphasis is placed in the VPI program to provide the basic skills remediation within the content of job preparatory course content. The Florida Commission on Vocational Education concluded, "If schools are to successfully prepare students for life, they must completely integrate academic and vocational education," making both meaningful to the students' career growth and development (Blueprint for Career Education). Academic curricula should relate to careers and careers to academic curricula. State and national goals are challenging educators to improve the graduation rates and to help more students become gainfully employed.

The goal of vocational preparatory Instruction (VPI) has been consistent throughout its brief history; that is, to enable the participants to succeed in vocational education and become gainfully employed. The system is based on the recognition of labor force needs, the untapped resource of existing human potential, and the need for a systematic approach to educating and training special needs students (SAIL Guide, 1992). There is a high rate of growth in the population to be served through IMTS, and instituting and streamlining such services has become necessary (Center for Policy Studies, 1990). Vocational Preparatory Instruction continues to meet the challenge of making a difference in the lives of vocational and special population students.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The VPI program is designed to improve the probability of success for the vocational student whose lack of academic skills, knowledge, or positive attitude may prevent success. The program begins with a meeting between the student and the learning manager (interview); then measures basic skills and deficiencies (diagnose); develops an instructional prescription to remediate identified deficiencies based on the student's learning style (prescribe); provides individualized instruction in four broad areas (remediate); and provides constant feedback (evaluate). VPI incorporates the following areas of instruction:

- 1) **Basic Skills** (reading, mathematics, and language)
- 2) **Academic Skills**, as needed (science, social studies, and advanced math)
- 3) **Workforce Readiness Skills** (interviewing, resume writing, job-seeking and job-keeping skills, SCANS, etc.)
- 4) **Complementary Skills** (study skills, test-taking skills, note-taking skills, life skills, etc.)
- 5) **Occupational Exploration** (optional, but recommended)

These areas of instruction are designed to enable students to benefit from occupational training. On an individual basis, help is given in setting goals, assessing learning difficulties, and prescribing learning modules to satisfy the needs of the student who would not otherwise be successful in a regular vocational program.

The VPI program is characterized by open entry/open exit, self-paced instructional modules related to the student's occupational goal and learning styles, flexible schedules, and performance-based (non-graded) evaluation.

In the VPI laboratory setting, multi-media technical equipment is used. A characteristic element in any VPI setting is the "personalized" approach, the unique relationship established between the student and the Learning Manager.

The VPI system is a highly motivational one, which takes into account a person's learning preferences. Because of the variety of resources available in the VPI lab, a student's prescription can be developed using the learning modes best suited to the individual, which will maximize the opportunity to succeed.

The goal of VPI is to enable students to succeed in vocational education and subsequent employment. This is accomplished through participation in VPI components designed to remedy individual academic deficiencies. Throughout the remediation process, academic concepts relevant to the workplace are emphasized and vocational courses are coordinated with academic instruction.

Technical assistance is available through the Division of Workforce Development, Bureau of Program Improvement and Accountability. Topics to address include, but are not limited to:

- Needs assessment
- Planning
- Identification of resources
- Funding
- Grant writing
- Integration of academic and vocational education
- Facility design
- Program review
- Project review
- Administrative matters related to programming
- Staff Development
- Self-study models
- Program models
- Interagency articulation

The VPI concept may also be adapted to be an integral part of a drop out prevention program. In VPI, students are assisted in:

- Establishing realistic and achievable academic and occupational goals
- Determining their motivational strengths and weaknesses
- Identifying academic and/or vocational learning deficiencies
-

- Identifying personal learning styles
- Correcting academic and/or vocational deficiencies
- Applying higher order thinking skills (SCANS)
- Developing "desirable" behavior patterns which enhance or increase employability potential
- Making serious and durable career choices

The entire VPI system is based on the recognition of labor force needs, the untapped resource of existing human potential, and the need for a systematic approach to educating and training special needs students. When the VPI system is effectively utilized, the results include:

- A lower student dropout rate
- Higher student retention in occupational programs
- Faster student progress
- Employees with greater employability potential
- Workers with greater ability to acquire employment and remain employed
- Workers with greater capability to advance
- Integration of academic and vocational education
- Increase in completions
- Informed career choices

PURPOSE

Florida is the nation's fastest growing state and fourth most populous. The state's total population will reach 15 million. Florida has the fourth largest Hispanic and sixth largest African-American population in the nation.

Most workers change jobs at least five times and change their occupations at least three times during their working lives. Therefore, many of today's workers will need retraining in order to keep their jobs, to be promoted, or to be kept abreast of changing technology.

Florida schools have grown at an explosive rate during the late 1990s. The largest enrollment growth took place in four districts: Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Orange counties. Schools had to adapt to the needs of an increasingly diverse population. Minorities, particularly immigrant groups with special language and cultural needs, students with exceptionalities, and students from disadvantaged families constitute a very large portion of the increase.

Statistics show that nearly 50% of students entering post-secondary institutions need remedial work in mathematics and 25% need remedial work in reading and writing.

The VPI program is designed to support vocational education job preparatory programs to meet the remediation needs of those students.

The VPI program provides for a diagnostic assessment of learning deficiencies and individualized prescriptive instruction and guidance for students who need special assistance to succeed in vocational education. The basic program encompasses a combination of instructional components consisting of reading, mathematics, language, critical thinking skills, complementary (life) skills, and workplace readiness skills. Each student is assessed by personnel trained in VPI concepts and program procedures to identify needs in each of the instructional components. Therefore, the purpose of VPI is to provide the following skills:

1. EDUCATIONAL
2. OCCUPATIONAL (optional)
3. WORKPLACE READINESS
4. COMPLEMENTARY

VPI PHILOSOPHY

- The system should provide for the greatest amount of learning in the shortest period of time for the student.
- The system should provide for individualized assessment and prescriptive treatment using a variety of media and instruction.
- Individualized instruction requires the least amount of time to accomplish its objectives.
- Stability should be maintained in program administration.
- Materials should be complete and without duplication, and should integrate academic, vocational, and workplace readiness skills.
- Evaluation should be continuous with feedback from students, coordinators, managers, and outside consultants/business partners.
- Analysis of feedback data should be the basis for changes in methodology, materials, and equipment.
- Materials should be provided to each student based on the student's deficiencies and individual learning style.
- The VPI program should prepare students for successful completion of their vocational program and entering the workforce or advancing in their job.

- All students can learn: however, some may require more time and different methods.
- These programs must be staffed with enthusiastic teachers who care about all students.

POST-TEST
HISTORY of VOCATIONAL PREPARATORY INSTRUCTION
IN FLORIDA POST TEST

Directions: For questions 1-6, choose the best answer.

1. The first IMTS lab opened at
 - a) Miami-Dade Community College
 - b) West Palm Beach: Adult Center
 - c) Lively Vocational-Technical Center
 - d) Lawtey Correctional Institution

2. At the peak of its fame, there were as many as _____ IMTS labs operating in Florida.
 - a) 105
 - b) 89
 - c) 67
 - d) 28

3. Which of the following is not part of the VPI Philosophy?
 - a) The system should provide for the greatest amount of learning in the shortest period of time for the student.
 - b) Some students will never be able to learn: however, some may require more time and different methods.
 - c) The system should provide for individualized assessment and prescriptive treatment using a variety of media and instruction.
 - d) Evaluation should be continuous with feedback from students, coordinators, managers, and outside consultants/business partners.

4. One of the reasons Florida established Standards of Achievement was:
 - a) To expand the IMTS program
 - b) To cut funds for the IMTS program
 - c) To promote greater accountability for funding
 - d) None of the above.

5. Which of the following does not characterize VPI?
 - a) Self-paced
 - b) Grade based evaluations
 - c) Open entry/exit
 - d) Individualized

6. The IMTS model was designed to:
 - a) Identify basic skills deficiencies
 - b) Develop an instructional prescription
 - c) Provide individualized instruction
 - d) All of the above

Directions: For questions 7-15, state whether the sentence is True or False.

7. SAIL become known as Vocational Preparatory Instruction to correspond with terminology used in Senate Bill 1688 in 1999.
8. A student may not receive a certificate of vocational program completion prior to demonstrating the basic skills required in the curriculum framework for the vocational program.
9. Florida's Division of Vocational Education adopted the IMTS model for serving its academically disadvantage students in 1972.
10. Due to recent legislation, the minimum grade level for functional literacy is 6.0.
11. SAIL became known as the System for Applied Individualized Learning as a result of new terminology used in Senate Bill 1688 in 1999.
12. The goal of VPI changed much throughout its history.
13. The Carl Perkins Act included provisions for special population students.
14. VPI philosophy states that materials used need not necessarily integrate academic and vocational skills.
15. VPI is an Adult General Education Program.

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APPENDIX A – Glossary

AGE: Adult General Education

Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technical Act (Public Law 101-392):
Legislation focusing on vocational education, including provisions ensuring that special populations would have access to vocational programs and support services.

DVE: Florida's Division of Vocational Education

IIS: Individually Prescribed Instruction System

IMTS: Individualized Manpower Training System

LCPs: Literary Completion Points

SAIL: System for Applied Individualized Learning

SCANS: Secretary's Competencies on Achievement of Necessary Skills

Section 239.213, F.S.: Florida state legislation that established Standards of Achievement in 1984.

TERC: Technical Education Research Center

VPI: Vocational Preparatory Instruction

APPENDIX B

Answer Key to Pre-Test

1. D
2. D
3. C
4. D
5. C
6. True
7. True
8. True
9. True
10. False
11. True
12. True
13. False
14. False
15. True

APPENDIX C

Answer Key to Post-Test

1. A
2. C
3. B
4. C
5. B
6. A
7. False
8. True
9. True
10. True
11. True
12. False
13. True
14. False
15. True