The Neuropsychology Toolkit
Neuropsychology is not a particularly forgiving profession. The stakes of our evaluations are often high. Costly damage claims or disability awards may hinge on our findings. Our reports can form the basis on which rights and autonomy are denied for some, or the basis on which legal responsibility is absolved for others. Some patients and family members take offense when we identify cognitive impairment, and some take exception when we do not. Carefully built reputations may come under attack when attorneys hire neuropsychology experts to scrutinize our scoring, critique our test selection, and contradict our interpretations. And the paper trail of our work is always long, not only the records we must retain, but also the transcripts of our depositions and court testimony, which seemingly survive into perpetuity.

All of which makes for a challenging and meaningful profession, but one in which minimizing mistakes is generally preferable to learning from them the hard way. This manual is offered with the intention of helping new and developing neuropsychology practitioners minimize errors, omissions, and misconceptions and move more rapidly and painlessly towards proficiency.

Part I presents guidelines for improving the assessment and reporting process, with the rationale for each guideline, correct and incorrect examples, and exceptions or clarifications as needed.

Part II provides tools for gathering background information and writing reports more efficiently and clearly.

And Part III proposes wording for use in difficult-to-write sections of neuropsychological reports.
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Feedback: This handbook will undoubtedly elicit reader comments regarding my own errors, omissions, and misconceptions, and I invite submission of these to NeuRules@gmail.com.
Currently I serve as Chief Psychologist and Clinical Professor in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of California, Davis, Medical Center. Prior to arriving here in 1987, I directed neuropsychological and psychological services in a CARF-accredited free-standing brain injury rehabilitation center. Other previous activities include 15 years of part-time private practice, consultation to brain injury rehabilitation programs, and service as an Expert Reviewer for the California Board of Psychology. I am honored to have been elected a Fellow of the National Academy of Neuropsychology.

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