

Practice Analysis: What, Why, and How



- Higher level of risk to the association
- The market and/or regulators may use certification for high-stakes decisions
- Technical guidelines dictate “right practice” (vs. best practice)
- And ...

Certification is NOT like other association products/services

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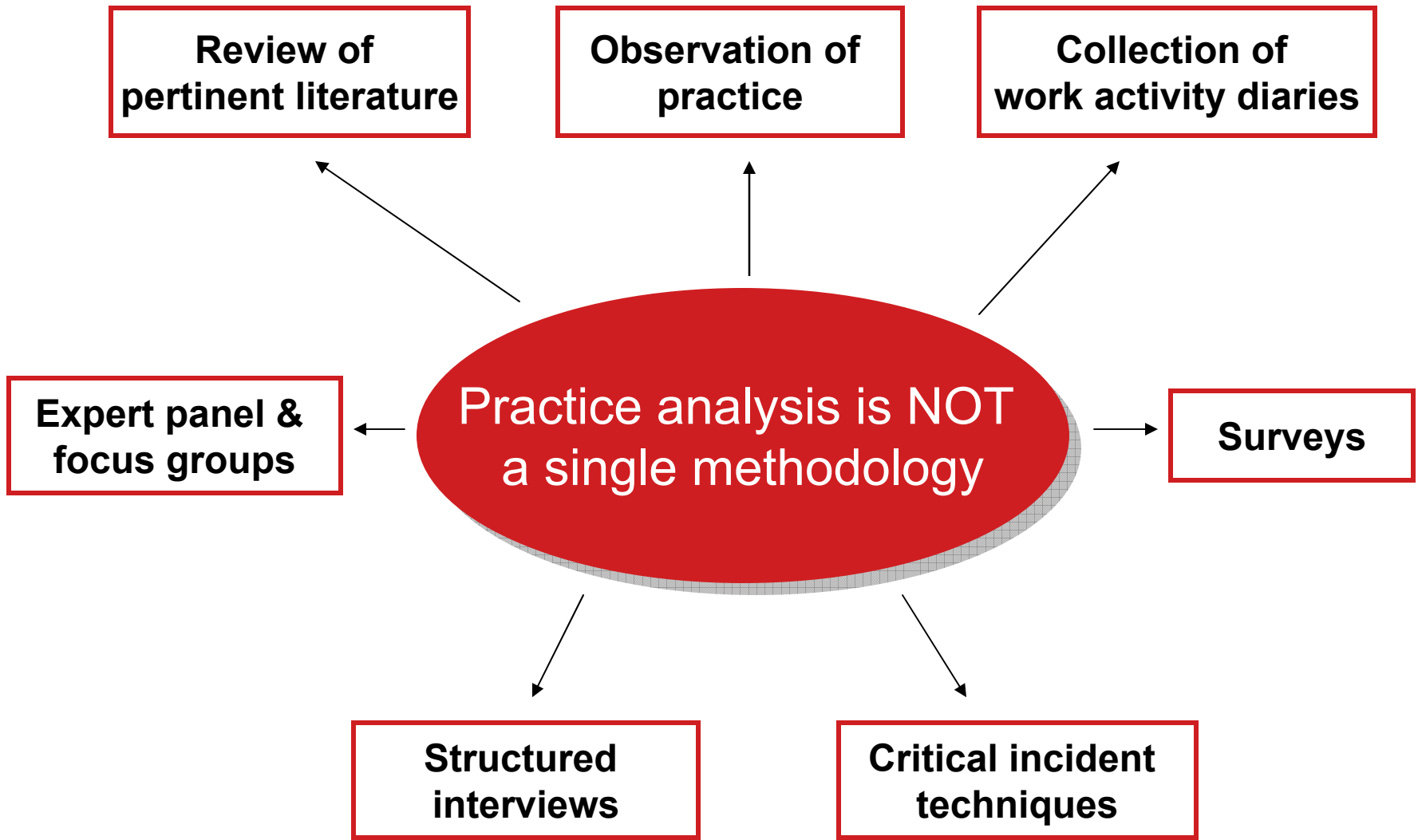
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Decisions should be based on what is in the best interest of the standard for the profession – NOT what will make members happy



What is a practice analysis?

A systematic collection of data describing the knowledge, skills and/or competencies required to competently practice a profession



We all know what we do.

Why is a practice analysis needed?

To confirm the validity of the examination content and the eligibility requirements

Validity ...

The extent to which an assessment method actually measures what it purports to measure

To conform to standards of the testing and certification industries

- The certification program must analyze, define, and publish performance domains and tasks related to the purpose of the credential, and the knowledge and/or skill associated with the performance domains and tasks, and use them to develop specifications for the assessment instruments (*Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs*, NCCA)
- Appropriate methodology and procedures (such as collecting and maintaining statistical data) shall be defined to reaffirm . . . the fairness, validity, reliability, and general performance of each exam (*ISO/IEC 17024*)
- The content domain to be covered by a credentialing test should be defined clearly and justified in terms of the importance of the content for credential-worthy performance in an occupation or profession. A rationale should be provided to support a claim that the knowledge or skills being assessed are required for credential-worthy performance in an occupation and are consistent with the purpose for which the licensing or certification program was instituted. (*The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*, AERA, APA, & NCME)



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To enhance the legal defensibility of
the certification program

- Establishes a profile of the profession
- Tracks trends in professional practice
- Informs the development and refinement of professional development programs
- Promotes the certification program
- Builds credibility for the program
- Fosters transparency
- Provides an avenue for stakeholder involvement in the certification process



How do we conduct a practice analysis ...



that is consistent with best practices?

- Participation of key stakeholders (e.g., professionals, employers)
- Representative sampling (generalizability)
- Captures current practice while anticipating future change
- Competency vs. knowledge-focused
- Confirmation of representativeness of content
- Replicable methodology
- Reliability of raters and data collection tools
- Collection of confirmatory quantitative data
- Timeliness
- Development of test specifications informed by both practice analysis data and subject matter expertise

What to consider when selecting practice analysis methodologies/procedures



- Is the methodology commonly used?
- How much time is required for implementation?
- What is the cost?
- Will the methodology yield high-quality results?
- What is the reliability of the method (i.e., consistency of results)?
- How might stakeholders view the methodology (e.g., pertinence, user-friendliness)?
- What is the potential value-added?

Overall cost-benefit?