Instructions for Scoring the Work Locus of Control Scale, WLCS

Paul E. Spector

The Work Locus of Control Scale or WLCS, has half of its items written in each direction--external and internal. Scores on the scale can range from 16 to 96. Each item can have a score from 1 to 6 if original response choices are used. High scores on the scale represent externality, so the scores on the internally worded items must be reversed before summing. This is because a score of 6 representing strongest possible agreement on an externally worded item is equivalent to a score of 1 representing strongest possible disagreement on an internally worded item. Below is the step by step procedure for scoring.

1. Responses to the items should be numbered from 1 representing strongest disagreement to 6 representing strongest agreement with each. This assumes that the scale has not be modified and original response choices are used.

2. The internally worded items should be reverse scored. Below are the reversals for the original item score in the left column and reversed item score in the right. The rightmost values should be substituted for the leftmost. This can also be accomplished by subtracting the original values for the internal items from 7.

1 = 6

2 = 5

3 = 4

4 = 3

5 = 2

6 = 1

3. Internally worded items are 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 11, 14, 15.

4. Sum responses to all 16 items after the reversals from step 2.

5. If some items are missing you must make an adjustment otherwise the score will be too low. The best procedure is to compute the mean score per item for the individual, and substitute that mean for missing items. For example, if a person does not make a response to 1 item, take the total from step 4, divide by the number answered or 15, and substitute this number for the missing item by adding it to the total from step 4. An easier but less accurate procedure is to substitute a middle response for the missing items. Since the center of the scale is between 3 and 4, either number could be used. Usually one would alternate the two numbers as missing items occur.