International Ombudsman Association (IOA)

Job Analysis Report

2008

Executive Summary

In April, 2008, the International Ombudsman Association (IOA) set out to conduct a scientific research study, a Job Analysis, to define the role of the Certified Ombudsman. The mechanism for this study was a survey. IOA worked with Schroeder Measurement Technologies, Inc. (SMT) to develop and conduct a Job Analysis study that would describe the important tasks, knowledge and skills required for competence in the Ombudsman profession. The results of the Job Analysis study provide the basis for making a valid claim of appropriate test score inference.

IOAs Job Analysis Process

IOA appointed a committee of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to provide content expertise on the Ombudsman profession. The committee was comprised of Ombudsmen who represented a diversity of experience, geographic regions, and practice settings. Course materials, job descriptions and evaluations, and literature in the Ombudsman profession were used to develop an exhaustive list of the tasks and knowledge elements required for competent practice. The committee revised and approved the list of tasks and knowledge elements, which was then incorporated into a survey. The survey contained an importance scale used to rate tasks and knowledge elements performed by an Ombudsman. IOA developed a demographic questionnaire to gather confidential data describing the survey respondents. SMT then converted the demographic questionnaire, tasks, and knowledge elements into an online survey instrument.

IOA sent e-mail invitations to participate in an online survey to 472 Ombudsman professionals. A total of 200 surveys were successfully completed, for a response rate of 42.37%. Approximately 97% of the respondents indicated the survey either completely or adequately described the important tasks and knowledge elements required for competent Ombudsman practice.

SMT conducted a second meeting with a new committee of Ombudsmen to present the results of the survey for review. The goal of the meeting was to establish task element exclusion criteria to differentiate between the important and unimportant tasks and elements involved in the Ombudsman practice based on respondents' ratings. Of the original 181 elements, 11 tasks and knowledge elements were removed because survey respondents listed them as infrequently performed and not very important in the profession. In addition, the committee created three new tasks and knowledge elements based on respondents' comments. The committee included 173 tasks and knowledge elements on the final exam content outline. The committee also assigned the percentage of importance for each domain, which determines the percentage of test items per domain.

The approved tasks, knowledge, and skills establish the link between the competencies necessary to perform a Certified Ombudsman's job and evaluation of competency.

Introduction

Survey Overview: The Content Validation Model

The foundation of a valid, reliable, and legally defensible professional certification program is the result of a well-constructed Job Analysis study. The Job Analysis study establishes the link between test scores achieved on certification exams and the competencies being tested. Therefore, pass or fail decisions correlate to competent performance. When evidence of validity based on examination content is presented for a specific professional role, it is critical to consider the relative importance of the competencies being tested. *The Joint Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, and NCME, 1999)* state:

> Standard 14.10
>
> When evidence of validity on test content is presented, the rationale for defining and describing a specific job content domain in a particular way (e.g., elements, knowledge, skills, abilities or other personal characteristics) should be stated clearly.
>
> Standard 14.14
>
> The content domain to be covered by a credentialing test should be defined clearly and justified in terms of importance of the content for the 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.

Purpose of the Job Analysis Study

The International Ombudsman Association (IOA) worked with Schroeder Measurement Technologies, Inc. (SMT) to develop a certification examination program meeting the above mentioned standards. A full-scale Job Analysis research study was conducted, starting in April, 2008, which included establishing and implementing a survey instrument that described the performance activities (tasks) and Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) required for the competent certified Ombudsman. Based on the results of the Job Analysis, a comprehensive list of tasks and KSAs was finalized.

This report provides an overview of the survey design, analysis, and results. Survey results of demographic data are displayed graphically. In addition, the implications of these results on examination development are discussed.

Survey Methodology

Survey Development

Following the meeting with the Ombudsman Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) on April 16-17, 2008, SMT placed the tasks from the content outline into a survey format. A copy of the entire survey can be found in Appendix A. The list of meeting participants can be found in Appendix K.

IOA and SMT completed the following survey development tasks:

1. Provided background information about the Ombudsman profession
2. Reviewed and developed the draft task activity and knowledge element list
3. Developed a survey rating scale
4. Finalized demographic questions
5. Established a sampling protocol

Task Element Rating Scale

SMT and IOA established the following importance rating scale for the survey:

> *This section lists activities or knowledge elements that are performed by Ombudsmen in their work under various environments. These activities or knowledge elements were developed by a diverse group of currently practicing Ombudsmen. You are asked to indicate if you perform each activity or knowledge element in your practice and to assign an importance rating to it. For convenience purposes, this section is organized into three web-pages.*
>
> *How important is this activity or knowledge element to the practice of an Ombudsman? Please choose "Not Performed" for activities and knowledge elements that you never use or perform as an Ombudsman.*

> 0 = Not Performed
> 1 = Of No Importance
> 2 = Of Little Importance
> 3 = Moderately Important
> 4 = Very Important
> 5 = Extremely Important

Demographic Questions

In order to evaluate if importance ratings of tasks or knowledge elements varies based on respondents' years of experience, geographic region, and other pertinent information, SMT included a detailed demographic questionnaire. These demographic questions, produced by SMT and IOA, gathered the following information:

1. IOA Membership Status
2. Geographic Region
3. Years of Experience
4. Primary Practice Sector
5. Education
6. Full-time or Part-time
7. Predominant Client Interaction
8. Organization Size
9. Average Number of Cases

Sampling Methodology

SMT and IOA made sure the instructions on the survey were clear and complete, and the online data collection program worked successfully. The invitation cover letter from the IOA Board served as a preamble to the survey, encouraging participation, describing the process for finding and completing the online survey, and highlighting the critical nature of the respondents' decisions and opinions. During the eight weeks the survey was available, IOA sent regular reminders via e-mail.

Data Collection

After the survey administration was complete, SMT collected the online data and transferred it from the Excel® computer program into SPSS ©, a computer-based statistical software program. The total number of respondents collected is provided in the Survey Results section.

Survey Results

Results are combined into three sections: Survey Adequacy and Reliability Information, Demographic Results, and Decision Criteria for Task and KSA Exclusion.

A. Survey Adequacy and Reliability Information

Survey Return Rate

Invitations to take the online survey were sent to 472 Ombudsmen. There were 200 respondents for a response rate of 42.37%.

Survey Adequacy

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked about the adequacy of survey content. Of the 200 respondents, 67 did not answer this question. Approximately 97.0% (129) of the respondents indicated that the survey either adequately or completely covered the important elements of being an Ombudsman. Figure 1 presents this data. Frequency outputs are in Appendix B.

> *How well did this survey cover the important tasks performed by an Ombudsman in his/her work?*

> <u>*Drop-down list:*</u>   *Completely*
> *Adequately*
> *Inadequately*

Survey Adequacy

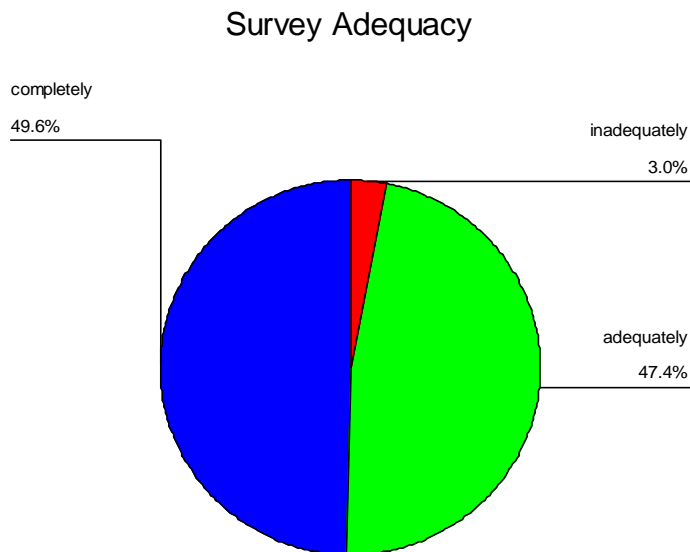completely
49.6%

inadequately
3.0%

adequately
47.4%

Figure 1

Following the survey adequacy rating question, respondents were provided three 75-character text boxes to provide additional information. The text boxes contained the following instructions: *Also you have an opportunity to specify Organizational Ombudsman job activities or knowledge elements that you feel were overlooked.* For those individuals who listed "inadequately" as their reply, SMT provided a text box to freely answer the following directive: *If you feel the survey covered the task inadequately, please specify why.* These free responses can be found in Appendix C.

Scale and Respondent Reliability Estimates

SMT calculated two reliability estimates to evaluate the amount of error associated with the survey analysis and the agreement among the respondents. To evaluate the internal consistency of the instrument, SMT calculated a statistic known as coefficient alpha. The estimates are affected by the number of questions and the number of respondents. For this survey, all the content domains had alpha reliability estimates greater than .86.

SMT also calculated a second reliability statistic, intra-class correlation, to establish reliability estimates for the respondent group raters. All the domains had reliability ratings over .90. Separate analysis of the total number of tasks completed by all respondents provides a reliability of .95, sustaining confidence in the overall reliability of the survey. Table 1 outlines these calculations.

Table 1. Reliability Estimates

Domain	No. of Elements	N*	Alpha Coefficient	Intra-class Rater Reliability
1. Conflict Management	18	163	.86	.97
2. Effective Communication	23	162	.90	.97
3. Addressing Issues	38	91	.93	.98
4. Outreach and Education	17	149	.91	.97
5. Policies, Procedures, and Organizational Culture	11	155	.92	.90
6. IOA Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice	55	120	.95	.96
7. Feedback to the Organizations	19	142	.92	.93
Survey as a Whole	**181**	**54**	**.97**	**.95**

* To be included in the calculations for each content area, judgments must have been recorded for each element within the content area. [i.e., if respondents selected the zero (*Not Performed*) rating, they were excluded].

B. Demographic Results

IOA Membership Status

Respondents were asked to provide their IOA Membership status. All respondents answered this question. The majority of respondents (83.0% or 166) listed their status as "Member." Results are displayed in Figure 2. Appendix B displays frequency outputs. Appendix C provides "other" replies listed by survey respondents.

What is your IOA Membership Status?

Responses provided: *Member*
                                   Associate Member
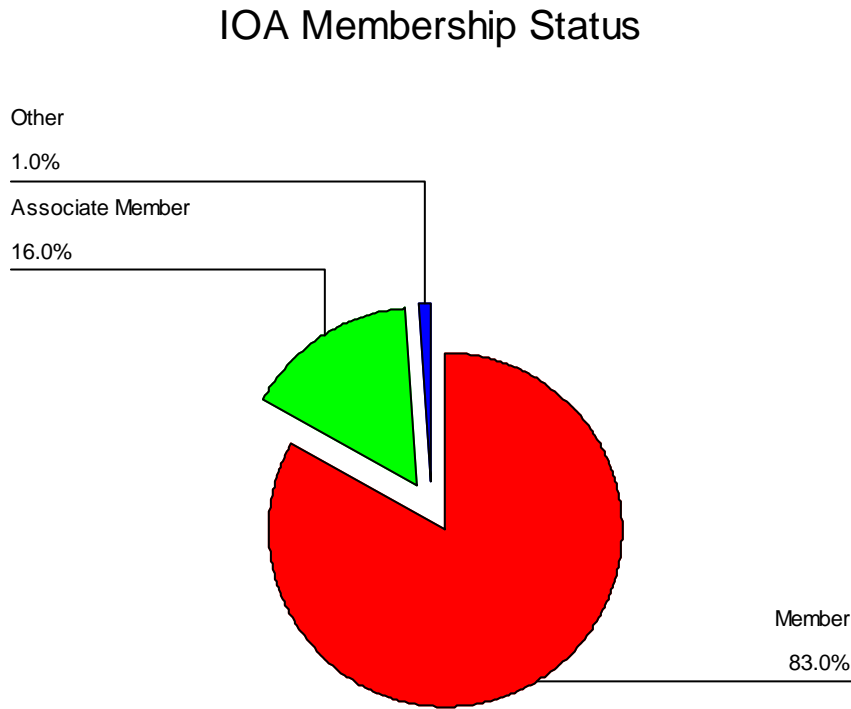   *Other (please specify)*

IOA Membership Status

Other
1.0%

Associate Member
16.0%

Member
83.0%

Figure 2

Geographic Region

Countries. To better understand the geographic location of the IOA population, respondents were asked to list their country. The majority of respondents, 86.5% (173) live in the U.S. or one of its territories, and 13.5% (27) of respondents come from non-U.S. countries. Table 2 provides the number of respondents from each country. Appendix B provides frequency outputs.

In which country do you work?

Responses provided are listed below.

Table 2: Countries in which Survey Respondents Work

Country or U.S. Territory	Frequency	Percent
Australia (AU)	2	1.0
Brazil (BR)	1	0.5
Canada (CA)	14	7.0
Switzerland (CH)	2	1.0
Denmark (DK)	1	0.5
Israel (IL)	1	0.5
India (IN)	2	1.0
Italy (IT)	1	0.5
Jamaica (JM)	1	0.5
Japan (JP)	1	0.5
Tunisia (TN)	1	0.5
United States (US) *	173	86.5
Total	**200**	**100**

US* = includes respondents who listed their country as a US state or territory. The following US territories were listed: Puerto Rico (four respondents) and the Virgin Islands (one respondent).

U.S. States/Provinces. U.S. survey respondents were asked to list the state where they worked. Respondents were grouped according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Region classification system. Thirteen respondents did not list a state or province. Respondents who lived in a U.S. territory, Canadian province, or did not list their state of residence were grouped into the category "US/Territory/Province." The largest group worked in the Southern U.S. with 31.0% or 58 respondents. Figure 3 presents this data. Appendix B provides frequency outputs.

In which state/province do you work?

Drop-down list: *Northeast (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT, NJ, NY, PA)*
                                     Midwest (IN, IL, MI, OH, WI, IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD)
                                     South (DE, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV, AL, KY, MS, TN, AR,
                                            LA,OK, TX)
                                     West (AZ, CO, ID, NM, MT, UT, NV, WY, AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)
                                     Canadian Provinces (AB, BC, MB, NB, NL, NS, NT, NU, ON, PE,
                                            QC, SK, YT)
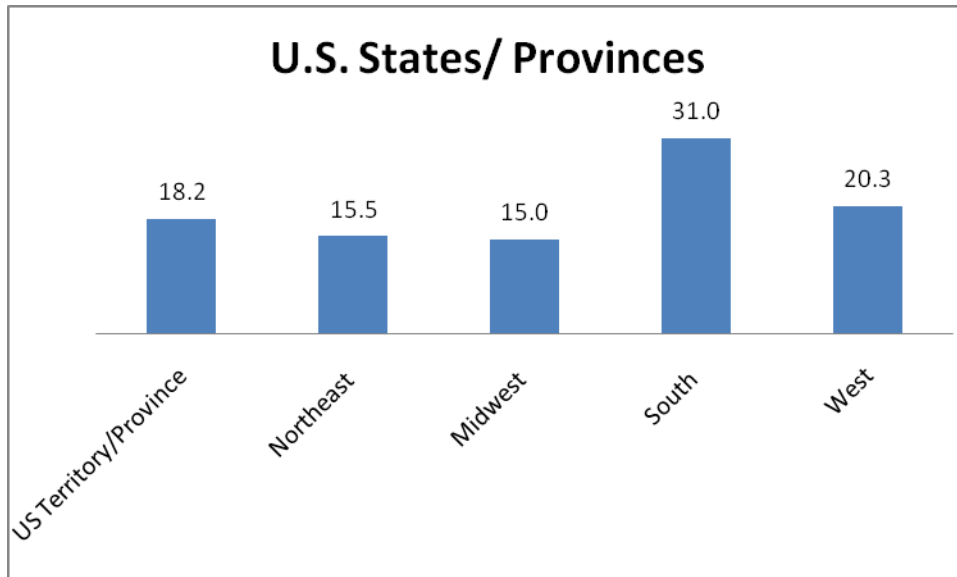   *U.S. Territories (AS, FM, GU, MH, MP, PR, PW, VI)*

Figure 3

Years of Experience

IOA asked respondents to provide their years of experience. All respondents answered this question. The most common response was "0-2 years" with 68 respondents or 34.0% providing this answer. Figure 4 presents the data. Appendix B provides frequency outputs.

How many years of experience do you have as an Organizational Ombudsman?
(Note: If not a complete year, select the lower range, e.g., 2.5 years, select 0-2 years)

Responses provided: *0-2 years*
                                   3-5 years
                                   6-9 years
                                   10-14 years
                                   15-19 years
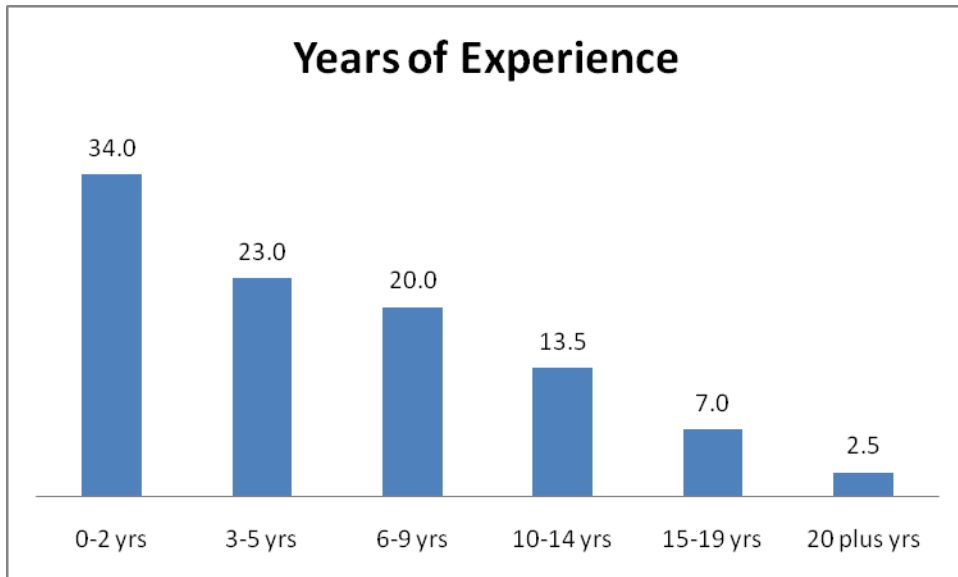   *More than 20 years*

Figure 4

Primary Practice Sector

In addition to demographic information, respondents were asked to provide information about their work setting. This question asked respondents to provide their primary practice sector. All respondents answered this question. "Educational Setting" was the most frequently listed with 49.5% (99) responses. Figure 5 presents the data. Appendix B provides frequency outputs. Other responses are listed in Appendix C.

> *What is your primary practice sector?*
>
> *Responses listed:*   *Educational Setting (College/University)*
>   *Government*
>   *Corporate*
>   *International Organizational*
>   *Healthcare*
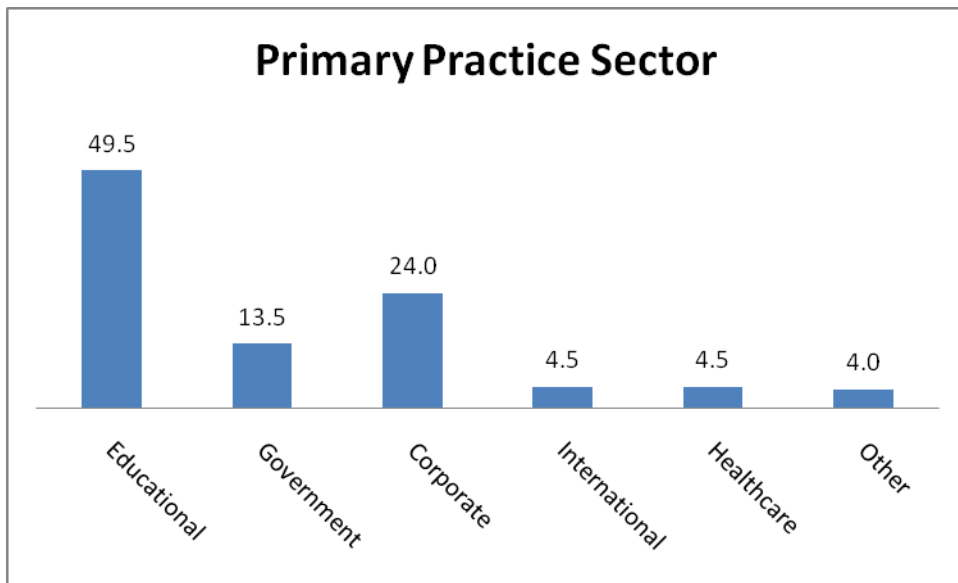>   *Other (please specify)*

Figure 5

Education

In order to obtain information on the education background of respondents, participants were asked the question listed below. All respondents answered this question. The most frequent responses listed were "Master's degree" with 40.0% or 80 respondents and Doctorate with 33.0% (66). Figure 6 displays these results. Appendix B displays the frequency outputs.

What is your highest level of education?

Responses provided: *High school degree*
                           Associate degree
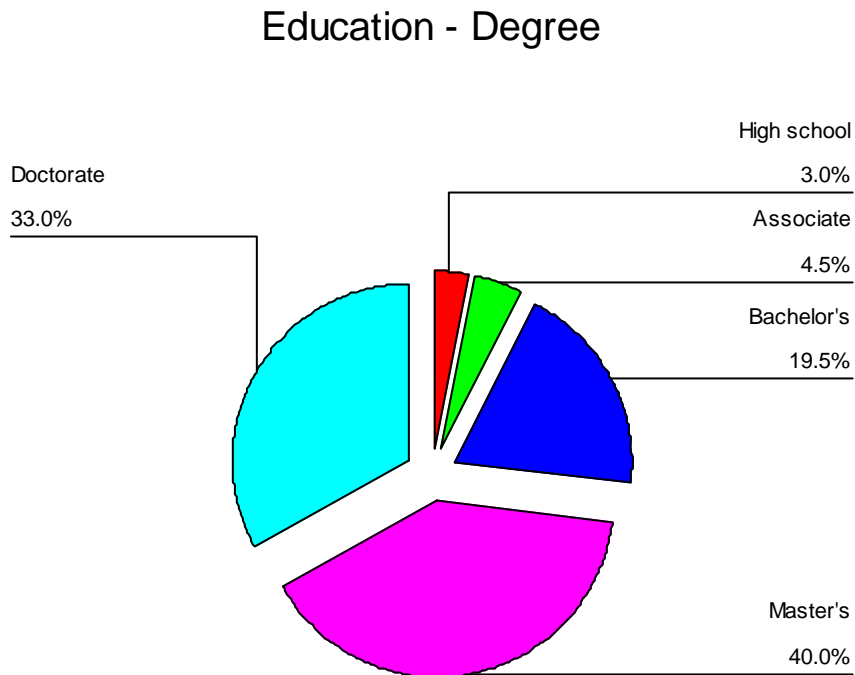   *Bachelor's degree*
                           Master's degree
                           Doctorate

Education - Degree

High school
3.0%

Doctorate
33.0%

Associate
4.5%

Bachelor's
19.5%

Master's
40.0%

Figure 6

Full-time or Part-time

The question listed below asked respondents to indicate their work status as either full-time or part-time. All respondents answered this question. The majority of respondents (73.0% or 146) listed full-time. Figure 7 presents the data. Frequency outputs can be found in Appendix B.

Do you work on a full-time or part-time basis?

Responses listed: *Full-time*
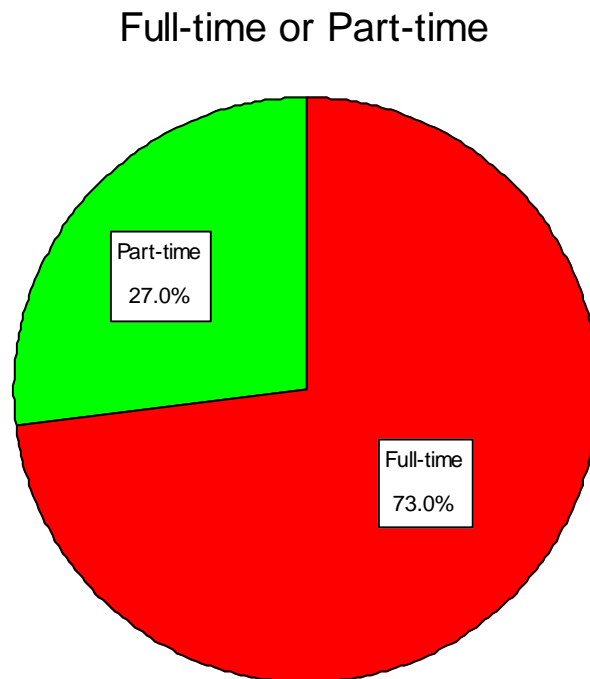   *Part-time*

Full-time or Part-time

Part-time
27.0%

Full-time
73.0%

Figure 7

Predominant Client Interaction

The question listed below asked about the predominant form of client interaction. All respondents answered this question. The majority of respondents (63.5% or 127) listed "In-person" as their response. Figure 8 presents the data. Appendix B lists the frequency outputs. Other responses are listed in Appendix C.

What is your predominant form of interaction with visitors or callers?

<u>*Responses listed:*</u>   *In person*
             Telephone
             E-mail
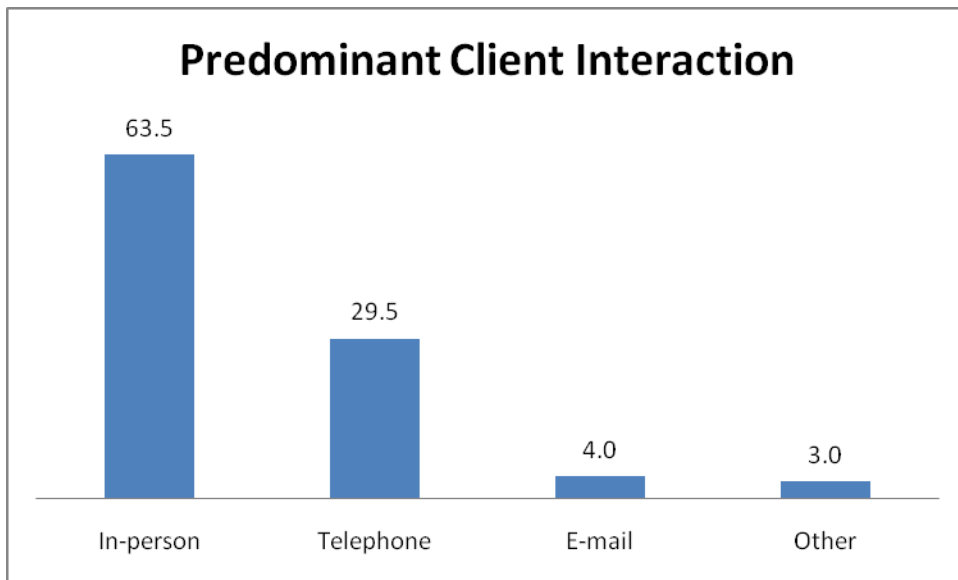   *Other (please specify)*

Figure 8

Organization Size

In order to gain more information on respondents work environment, IOA asked the question below. All respondents answered this question. The most common response was "1001-10,000" with 33.0% (66) responses. Figure 9 presents the data. Frequency outputs are provided in Appendix B.

What is the size of your organization (of your constituency)?

Responses provided: *1-100*
                              101-500
                              501-1000
                              1001-10,000
                              10,001-20,000
                              20,001-30,000
                              30,001-50,000
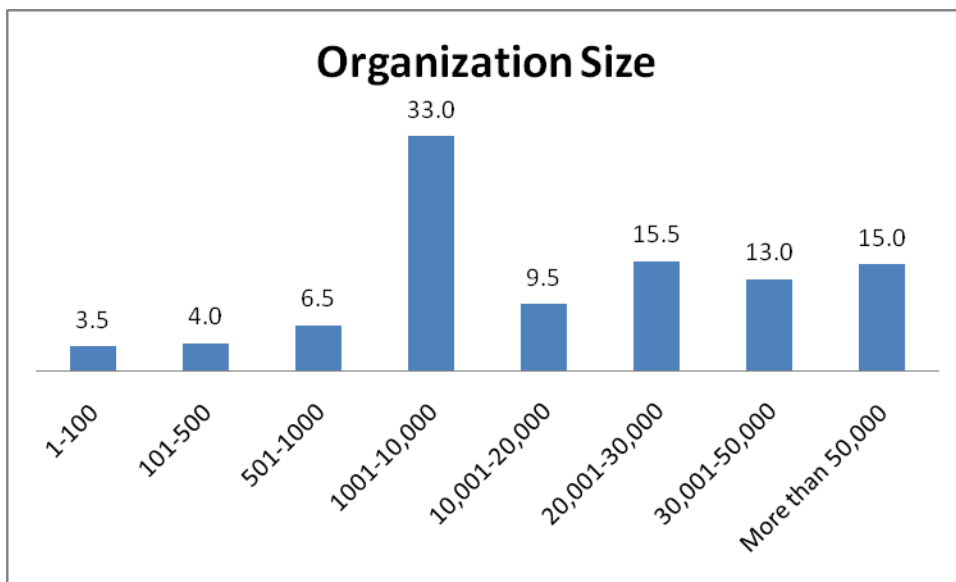   *More than 50,000*

Figure 9

Average Number of Cases

In order to gain more information on work environment, respondents were asked to provide the number of cases they handle per year. All respondents answered this question. The most common response was "101-300" cases per year with 48.0% (96) providing this answer. Figure 10 presents the data. Frequency outputs can be found in Appendix B.

What is the average number of cases you individually handle each year?

Responses provided: *Less than 100*
                              101-300
                              301-600
                              More than 600

Average Number of Cases

600+ cases
4.5%

301-600 cases
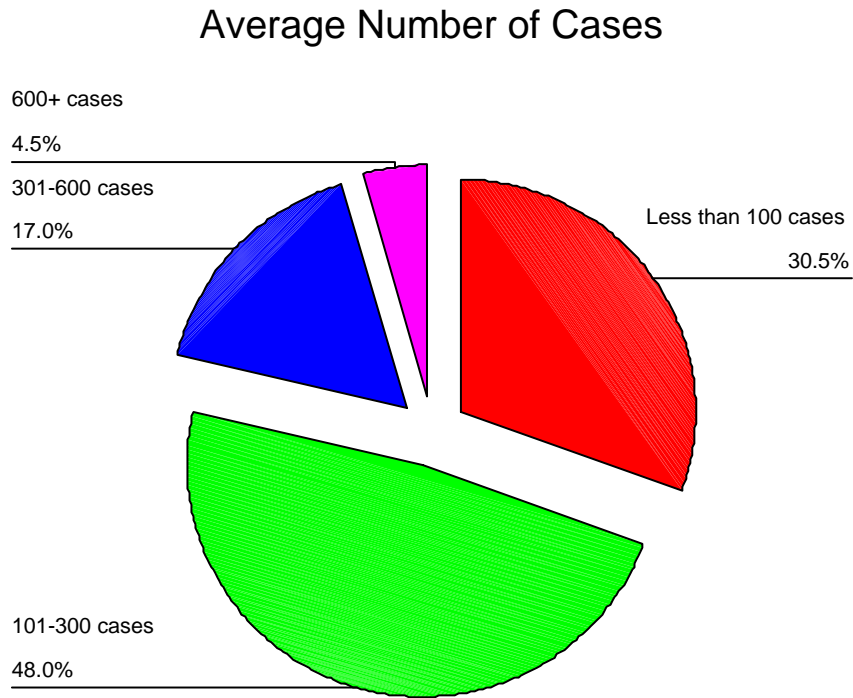17.0%

Less than 100 cases
30.5%

101-300 cases
48.0%

Figure 10

Domain Weightings by Survey Respondents

To evaluate the importance of each domain toward practice, IOA asked the question below. Out of 200 respondents, 52 did not answer this question. Conflict Management was listed as the most important domain, with an importance rating of 20.82 %. Table 3 presents the data.

Considering the relative importance of the seven major domains of the Ombudsman's job area, what percentage of examination questions would you assign to each domain?

Table 3. Average Domain Weightings provided by Survey Respondents

	Domain	Mean (%)	Standard Deviation	Number of Respondents
I.	Conflict Management	20.82	13.10	148
II.	Effective Communication	18.66	7.50	148
III.	Addressing Issues	16.47	7.47	148
IV.	Outreach and Education	9.68	4.86	148
V.	Policies, Procedures, and Organizational Culture	9.93	4.79	148
VI.	IOA Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice	14.23	10.77	148
VII.	Feedback to the Organizations	10.22	5.17	148
	Total	**100.00***		

* *Due to rounding error, the total percentage may not be exactly 100.00%.*

C. Decision Criteria for Task and KSA Exclusion

SMT conducted a conference call on October 14, 2008, to present the results of the survey data analyses to a committee of SMEs for their review. A couple of days prior to the meeting, SMEs received a copy of the survey analysis report and meeting information to review. In Appendix K, demographic information on the SMEs participating in the review of the survey results is provided. The main purpose of this meeting was to identify important tasks and KSAs that should be included in the exam, exclude the unimportant tasks and KSAs, finalize the domain weights, and approve tasks and KSAs. The SMEs created Task exclusion decisions based on the following analyses:

1. Percent Not Performed
2. Mean Importance Rating
3. Sub-Group Analysis
   a. Mean Importance by Geographic Region
   b. Mean Importance by Years of Experience
   c. Mean Importance by Primary Practice Sector
4. Subject Matter Expert Committee Decision

Rule 1. Percent Not Performed
The first decision rule developed by the SMEs was that tasks rated as "not performed" by 10% or more of Ombudsman respondents will be excluded from the content outline. In other words, only tasks rated as being performed by 90% or more of survey respondents will be included in the content outline. Based on this criterion, 10 tasks, listed in Table 4, were eliminated from the content outline. Appendix F presents a full listing of all the survey elements, sorted in descending order, by percent not performed.

Table 4. Tasks which were not Performed by 10% or more of Survey Respondents

ELEMENTS SORTED BY FREQUENCY NOT PERFORMED					
Elem	Description	Mean	St.Err	Not Performed	No.
III.Ciik	AI: Identify options - Adv/disadv- Arbitration	2.88	0.13	42.50%	181
III.Ciim	AI: Identify options - Adv/disadv- Exit interview	3.18	0.11	25.00%	181
III.Ciit	AI: Identify options - Adv/disadv- Compliance hotline	3.40	0.11	23.27%	180
VI.A1iia	SOP: Principles-Clarify termination grounds	3.93	0.09	20.78%	181
III.Ciil	AI: Identify options - Adv/disadv- Seek feedback	3.16	0.11	18.24%	180
IV.Ciii3	OE: Build relationships -Partnership-external constituents	3.63	0.10	15.63%	181
III.Ciiq	AI: Identify options-Adv/disadv-Time may heal(distance)	3.11	0.11	13.75%	178
III.Ciig	AI: Identify options - Adv/disadv- File a grievance	3.65	0.10	13.29%	180
III.Ciis	AI: Identify options - Adv/disadv- Career change	3.33	0.10	13.04%	180
III.Ciir	AI: Identify options - Adv/disadv- Allies	3.34	0.10	12.50%	179

Rule 2. Mean Importance Rating

The SMEs made a decision rule stating the mean importance rating must be at least 3.50 or above to be included in the final outline. This figure represents "Moderate to Very Important" on the rating scale. Based on this criterion, no additional items were removed from the content outline. Appendix E provides a complete listing of elements sorted by mean importance ratings. Appendix D provides mean importance ratings of elements in survey order.

Rule 3. Sub-Group Analysis

Sub-group analyses were conducted to make certain that tasks performed by Ombudsmen are not influenced by respondents' years of experience, geographic regions, and primary practice sector. The SMEs established Rule 3, stating that tasks excluded from the list had mean ratings below the 3.44 cut-off score in the majority of sub-groups. This cut-off point is the mean rating of 3.50 minus one standard error of all tasks (.06). The standard error of .06 was calculated by averaging the standard error of all 181 tasks and knowledge elements.

a. Mean Importance by Geographic Region

To examine responses of Ombudsman professionals in different geographic regions, SMT analyzed and reviewed the mean importance ratings of the four U.S. Census Bureau classifications and other countries and U.S. territories. Non-U.S. countries and U.S. territories were grouped together in the "other" category due to the low number of respondents in the individual groups.

Geographic Region
Group 1:   Northeast U.S.
Group 2:   Midwest U.S.
Group 3:   South U.S.
Group 4:   West U.S.
Group 5:   Other

Applying Rule 3, no new tasks were removed due to geographic region. For all the tasks, mean importance ratings were above 3.44 in the majority of groups. Appendix G presents task element means, based on geographic region.

b. Mean Importance by Years of Experience

To evaluate whether respondents' years of experience influenced their ratings, SMT analyzed the data in relation to three groups of respondent's years of professional experience.

Years of Experience Groups:
Group 1:   0-2   years
Group 2:   3-5   years
Group 3:   6-9   years
Group 4:   10   plus years

Applying Rule 3 criterion, no additional tasks were removed. Appendix H presents task element means, based on years of experience.

c. Mean Importance by Primary Practice Sector

To evaluate whether "Primary Practice Sector" influenced respondent ratings, SMT analyzed the data in relation to the primary practice sector listed by respondents. Since these groups had low numbers of respondents, the "Other" category included Ombudsman working in Government, Corporate, Healthcare, International, and Other organizations. The two primary practice sectors are listed below.

Primary Practice Sectors:
Group 1:   Education
Group 2:   Other

Since there were only two groups, tasks were to be considered for elimination if the mean rating of half of the groups (1 out of 2) was below 3.44. Based on the sub-group criterion, one new task was removed according to this rule. This task is listed in Table 5. Appendix I presents task and knowledge element means, based on primary practice sector.

Table 5. Tasks with mean ratings below 3.44 in half of the groups

ELEMENTS SORTED BY PRIMARY PRACTICE SECTOR					
		Educational		Other	
Element	Description	Mean	N	Mean	N
II.Bib	EC: Questions-Closed-ended	3.76	87	3.39	92

Rule 4. SME Committee Decisions
After applying the statistically based decision rules, the committee had the final decision regarding which tasks to include in the final content outline. The committee's decisions were based on their holistic review of the respondents' ratings, survey comments, and group discussion. To determine if any important tasks or KSAs were left out of the content outline, SMEs examined the Free Comments listed by survey respondents in Appendix C of the report. Based on these survey comments and review of the content outline, SMEs added the following three tasks and knowledge elements listed in Table 6.The final content outline with the revised tasks and KSAs is provided in Appendix J.

Table 6. Tasks and KSAs Added to Content Outline

Outline Placement	Element Description
II.C.v	Ability to exhibit patience and flexibility in communication style
II.C.vi	Demonstrate the ability to understand the emotional aspects of conflict
IV.D.iii	Establish recognition of the Ombudsman office as a safe environment for everyone

Committee Decision on Domain Weights

The committee of SMEs was asked to assign percentages to each domain based on its importance to the field. The SMEs were informed the percentage assigned would determine the number of items per domain included in the exam. The committee reviewed the respondents' domain weight ratings (Table 3) and survey comments as guidelines. Based on this information, the committee came to a consensus on the domain weight percentages and number of items per domain, as provided in Table 7.

Table 7. IOA Domain Weights based on the SMEs Decision

	Domain	Mean Percentage (%)
I.	Conflict Management	20 %
II.	Effective Communication	20 %
III.	Addressing Issues	15 %
IV.	Outreach and Education	10 %
V.	Policies, Procedures, and Organizational Culture	10 %
VI.	IOA Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice	15%
VII.	Feedback to the Organizations	10%
	Total	**100%**

IOA Final Content Outline

Domain I: Conflict Management (20% of exam)

A.   Analyze the source of conflict by:
      i.   a. Identifying issues that are presented
            b. Identifying underlying issues
      ii. Identifying the following:
            a. Rights
            b. Positions
            c. Interests
            d. Needs
      iii. Identifying parties and stakeholders

B.   Apply the following "Conflict Management Skills":
      i.   Communication skills
      ii. Multi-cultural competence
      iii.   a. Understanding conflict styles
            b. Understanding conflict dynamics
      iv. Understanding sources of power

C.   Manage the conflict resolution process by:
      i. Examining all possible resolution options
      ii. Applying the following conflict resolution techniques:
            a. Facilitation
            b. Shuttle Diplomacy
            c. Negotiation
            d. Coaching
            e. Mediation

Domain II: Effective Communication (20% of exam)

A.   Practice the following "Active Listening" skills:
      i.   Active observation
      ii. Non-verbal cues
      iii. Building trust
      iv.   a. Respectful intention - convey respect
            b. Empathetic intention - convey empathy
      v. Reflecting
      vi. Use of silence

B.   Communicate using the following types of questions:
      i.   a. Open-ended questions
      ii.   a. Probing questions
            b. Skillful questions

        iii.   a. Identify big picture
                    b. Identify details

C.   Communicate by sending and receiving (effective expression):
      i. Capacity to motivate individuals, groups and organizational systems to act/change in order to manage conflict
      ii. Convey appropriate neutral response
      iii. Convey information effectively
      iv. Effectively interact at all levels
      v. Ability to exhibit patience and flexibility in communication style
      vi. Demonstrate the ability to understand the emotional aspects of conflict

D.   Effectively communicate with individuals from various cultures by:
      i.   a. Demonstrating the ability to recognize cultural cues - skillful questioning to uncover cultural differences
             b. Demonstrating the ability to recognize cultural expressions
      ii. Obtaining education/information about differences/styles
      iii. Gaining awareness of:
             a. Stereotypes
             b. Biases
             c. Prejudices

Domain III: Addressing Issues (15% of exam)

A.   i.   Clarify issues
       ii.   Clarify interests

B1.   Gather information on the issue by:
      i.   Asking questions
      ii.   Assessing relevancy
      iii.   Identifying additional needs (to narrow the informational gap)
B2.   Analyze information on the issue by:
      i.   Asking questions
      ii.   Assessing relevancy
      iii.   Identifying missing information needed (to narrow the informational gap)

C.   Facilitate identification and assessment of options:
      i. Remind visitor of the role of the ombudsman
      ii. Develop and/or coach visitor regarding options for resolution- demonstrate understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of:
             a. Do nothing
             b. Engage in direct communication (oral)
             c. Write a letter
             d. Utilize third party communication (by neutral, supervisor, advocate)

     e. Utilize generic methods (e.g. training, or normal management, audit or review process)
     f. Complain through chain of command
     g. Practice shuttle diplomacy
     h. Use mediation/facilitation techniques
     i. Negotiate
     j. Apologize
     k. Refer to appropriate resource
     l. Understand that time may heal
   iii. Coaching/training:
     a. Apply conflict resolution theory and research - interests vs. positions, know types of conflict approach
     b. Help balance of power for resolution - discuss and prepare for the effects of power imbalances
     c. Motivate to resolve problem by discussion and/or action

 D. Prioritizing options:
   i. Identify alternative perspectives
   ii. Reality test
   iii. Support visitor's awareness of time limits for some options
   iv. Help visitor assess pros and cons of different options

 E. i. Provide visitor with closure
   ii. Follow-up with visitor on how to carry out

Domain IV: Outreach & Education (10% of exam)

 A. Practice the following skills when performing a presentation:
   i. Be clear, simple, relevant
   ii. Understand the audience
   iii. Be well organized
   iv. Maintain appropriate demeanor

 B. Practice the following when conducting training:
   i. Identify and develop appropriate content
   ii. Use interactive activities effectively
   iii.Provide appropriate methodology

 C. Build relationships:
   i. Show respect for the appropriate authority of the hierarchy
   ii. Become familiar with organizational structure
   iii. Develop a strategic partnership through
     1. Formal channels
     2. Internal networking
   iv. Be aware of boundaries
   v. Identify appropriate external resources

D. Market ombudsman office:
    i.   a. Develop appropriate materials (electronic and written)
        b. Disseminate appropriate materials (electronic and written)
    ii. Promote a consistent message regarding the role and functions of ombudsman
    iii. Establish recognition of Ombudsman office as a safe environment for everyone

Domain V: Policies, Procedures, and Organizational Culture (10% of exam)

A. Apply knowledge of internal organization policies, procedures and resources:
    i.   a. Explicit policies, procedures, and resources
        b. Unstated policies, procedures, and resources
    ii. Communicate policy information to visitors, as needed
    iii.   a. Identify the organization's key interpreters of each policy
        b. Communicate with key interpreters about possible appeal process
    iv. Understand context of other policies, procedures, regulations, and laws

B. Have awareness and knowledge of organizational culture and practices:
    i.   a. Identify code and standards of conduct
        b. Articulate code and standards of conduct
    ii. Understand implicit (unwritten, unstated) practices
    iii.   a. Understand practices related to the application of code of conduct
        b. Communicate practices related to the application of code of conduct

Domain VI: IOA Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice (15% of exam)

A. Establish & uphold structure & principles of ombudsman function:
  1. Establish the structure & principles in the ombudsman function
    i. Know to whom the ombudsman reports
    ii. Compose a charter
    iii. Define criteria to evaluate effectiveness
  2. Uphold the structure & principles in the ombudsman function
    i. Uphold IOA code of ethics (professionalism and integrity)

B. Awareness of confidentiality process:
    i. Awareness of limits to confidentiality
    ii. Awareness of the scope of (cannot be waived)
    iii. Knowledge of how to manage information
    iv. Knowledge of what constitutes "notice"
    v. Knowledge about privileged communication

C.   Remain impartial / neutral:
     i. Awareness of scope of impartiality/neutrality

     ii. Challenges to being impartial/neutral
          a. Avoid conflicts of interest
          b. Establish separation from collateral duties
          c. Boundaries
            1. Set ombudsman role boundaries
            2. Maintain ombudsman role boundaries
          d. Withhold judgment
     iii. Advocate for fair processes for all
     iv. Be accessible to all

D.   Maintain independence:
     i. Awareness of scope of independence
          a. Create an independent office
          b. 1. Maintain ombudsman authority as defined by the office charter
            2. Maintain discretion
          c. 1. Maintain organizational structure independence
            2. Clarify that reporting structure does not compromise independence
            3. Provide access to ombudsman office without interference
          d. Ombudsman has access to all information in the organization
          e. Provide protections (free to act properly within role without fear of intimidation or limitation)
          f. Maintain independence despite reporting relationship to the highest level
     ii. Awareness of challenges to independence
          a. Avoid unclear parameters or role definitions
          b. Manage tensions with formal offices (e.g. HR, Legal, Provost,etc.)
          c. Manage alliances
          d. Resist inappropriate legal pressure
          e. Avoid overlapping of functions
          f. Avoid oversights in establishing independence (e.g. lack of a Charter, inadequate understanding of role)
          g. Avoid collateral duty in compliance functions
     iii. Ombudsman access
          a. Ombudsman has access to all information in the organization
          b. Access to individuals

E.   Maintain informality:
     i. Clarify and require voluntary participation by visitors
     ii. Maintain separation of ombudsman practice from formal processes
     iii. Ombudsman does not make binding decisions
     iv. Promote awareness of scope/definitions of informality
     v. Maintain awareness of challenges to informality
     vi.   a. Remain informal

b. Provide off the record resources
vii.   a. Remain flexible
b. Be aware of the absence of direct power

F.   Practical considerations:
i. Determine suitable office location, consistent with independence
ii. Setting up an office
a. Find a practical location
b. Make sure the office has sound proofing
c. Maintain confidentiality in information protocols
d. Maintain security (locks, panic buttons)
e. Make staff aware of confidentiality
f. Clarify office policies
iii.Clarify expectations of ombudsman role

Domain VII: Feedback to the Organizations (10% of exam)

A.   Assist with surfacing & early warning of potentially significant issues:
i.   a. Understand ethical ramifications
b. Understand legal ramifications
ii. Identify appropriate channels of communication
iii. Awareness of "notice" issues

B.   Annual report overview/considerations:
i. Protect individual confidentiality
ii. Provide appropriate data sharing
iii.Provide appropriate dissemination

C.   Considerations for trend and pattern reporting:
i. Protection of individual confidentiality
ii.   a. Judgment of timing (when to share information)
b. Judgment of level (with whom and at what level of the organization should information be shared)
c. Judgment of location (where should information be shared)
iii.Determine appropriate data to collect
iv. Identify new emerging issues
v. Identify problem areas
vi.Acknowledge beneficial change

D.   Recommend system change:
i.   a. Identify changes to improve organizational policies and processes
b. Identify mechanisms for achieving congruence with standards of conduct
ii. Identify changes to promote adherence to organizational standards of conduct
iii. Facilitate processes for recommended system change