

Review of the ECAF-2

Timothy F. Field

Shahnasarian, M. (2010). *Earning Capacity Assessment Form (2nd ed.)*. Lutz, FL: PAR, www.parinc.com

The *ECAF-2* is a product designed to assist the forensic rehabilitation and economic professional in determining the earning capacity of an individual. Based on research and writing over the last decade, Dr. Michael Shahnasarian has developed a method and approach that is well-founded in rationale, research, and related literature that is both easy to understand and use.

The *ECAF-2* comes in the form of a kit (attractively boxed) which contains a 40 page booklet, and 25 rating forms (11 x 17 sheet folded to 8.5 x 11). It would be my estimation that a professional, new to this product, would be able to study the booklet and develop an estimate of earning capacity of an individual within a few hours. Subsequent evaluations would, of course, take much less time as practice would quickly speed the process.

The booklet is the essence of this product. The four chapters will provide the professional with all that is needed to successfully utilize this method in case evaluations. Chapter 1 presents a discussion of related methodologies, the rationale for the development of the *ECAF*, the rating form, and the development process of the early *ECAF* and *ECAF-2*. Chapter 2 is the longest section which details the administration and scoring of the rating sheet in determining earning capacity. This section is particularly well-done and it is here that the reader will need to spend the greatest amount of time in learning the process. Likewise, Chapter 3 is an equally important section which discusses the various interpretations of the *ECAF-2 Rating Form*. Finally, Chapter 4 presents data and information on such critical factors as validity, reliability, and related statistics of the *ECAF-2*'s development. Understanding these elements is important when the *ECAF-2* is used in cases that could potentially involve litigation. In the world of admissibility of expert testi-

mony, one needs to be acutely aware of the requirements as set forth in the famed *Daubert* trilogy (*Daubert v. Merrill Dow Pharmaceutical*, *Carmichael v. Kumho Tire*, and *General Electric v. Joiner*), and, in particular, *Federal Rules of Evidence 401, 403, and 702*. In my opinion, the *ECAF-2* would meet the "reliability" and "relevance" requirements inherent to admissibility in federal (and state) court.

With regard to this product being "generally accepted," and "peer reviewed," Dr. Shahnasarian again has provided ample evidence of both requirements in the Reference section of the booklet. Since 2001 and beyond, Dr. Shahnasarian has consistently and progressively published empirical and discussion papers in peer reviewed journals on the *ECAF* approach. For seven of those articles, I was serving as editor of two peer reviewed journals in which Dr. Shahnasarian published, thus giving me some perspective over time of the continuing developing and research on the *ECAF-2*. In my opinion, Dr. Shahnasarian has made a significant contribution to the assessment and evaluation of earning capacity with an individual. The *ECAF-2* could reasonably become part of a professional's stable of resources for earning capacity assessments that could result in defensible outcomes in the forensic arena. I recommend strong consideration of this resource to rehabilitation and economic professionals who are involved in making assessments of earning capacity.

Author Notes

Timothy F. Field is President of Elliott & Fitzpatrick, Athens, Georgia and is a publisher of resources for the forensic rehabilitation profession.