



# Quality and outcomes in the Jersey supervision skills study

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CREDOS Vilnius 2011

A progress report (see also Chapter 6 of 'Offender Supervision' eds.  
McNeill, Raynor and Trotter)



# Background

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- Long-term interest in 1:1 supervision
- Concerns about implementation of 'What Works' in England and Wales, e.g. lack of official interest in individual supervision contributing to programme attrition
- Concerns about distinction between 'offender management' and 'interventions'
- Particular research opportunities presented in Jersey

# 'Why Jersey?'

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# 'Where's Jersey?'

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- British Channel Island close to France
- Area 118 sq. km.; population 87,700
- Part of Normandy in 933
- In 1204 chose to remain with English King when Normandy became French
- Self-governing with its own legal system
- Laws in Norman French
- Agriculture, tourism, finance
- Low reported crime: 59.6 per 1000 population in 2005 (England and Wales had 112.7)





**Doing research in Jersey**



# Projects so far:

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- Risk-need assessment validation
- Sentencing and reconviction (recurrent)
- Parish Hall Enquiries (including PhD studentship)
- Community safety studies (two PhDs) ongoing
- Supervision Skills study (ongoing)
- Youth Justice: Options for Change (included also Glamorgan, Edinburgh, Swansea YOS)



# Jersey Probation and After-Care Service

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- Small: c. 13 officers + support staff
- Implementing 'What Works' since early 1990s
- Risk/need assessment of all offenders
- LSI-R (Andrews and Bonta) selected as most practical instrument
- Resources and programmes to concentrate on medium and high risk
- Repeat assessment to measure changes in risk
- Reconviction monitoring to validate assessment
- Consultancies for implementation and research









## Particular features of the 'skills' study

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- Research partnership with Swansea since 1996
- Early evaluations demonstrably benefited Service
- Officers needed to be convinced to undertake video recording
- Aimed to video record and assess 100 interviews and compare with outcomes
- Study was negotiated step by step with officers – hence very slow



# Issues in assessment design

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- Strong voluntary principle means rebuilding support for study at intervals
- Officers confuse the study with management and appraisal (also not unknown for managers to do this)
- Officers 'forget' to record
- Previous instrument modified (following CREDOS discussion) to be less judgmental in tone and to include more 'structuring' skills in addition to 'relationship' skills



## Analysis so far

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- 95 videotaped interviews collected and assessed
- 14 participating staff
- 384 supervisees with initial and follow-up LSI-R assessments (NB not all staff have caseloads containing these)
- Focus on two areas: checklists and outcomes



# Influenced by: Andrews and Bonta's list (2003) of Core Correctional Practices

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- Relationship skills
- Structuring skills
- Effective reinforcement
- Effective modelling
- Effective disapproval
- Structured skill learning
- Problem solving
- Advocacy/brokerage
- Effective authority + legitimacy





## Dowden and Andrews (2004):

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- Effective use of authority
- Modelling and reinforcing anticriminal attitudes
- Teaching problem-solving skills
- Effective use of community resources
- Relationship factors – open, warm, enthusiastic, mutual respect, therapeutic alliance, + communication skills



# Skills checklist version 7c covers:

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- Set up S
- Non-verbal communication N
- Verbal communication V
- Use of authority A
- Motivational interviewing M
- Pro-social modelling P
- Problem solving S
- Cognitive restructuring C
- Overall interview structure O
- Total

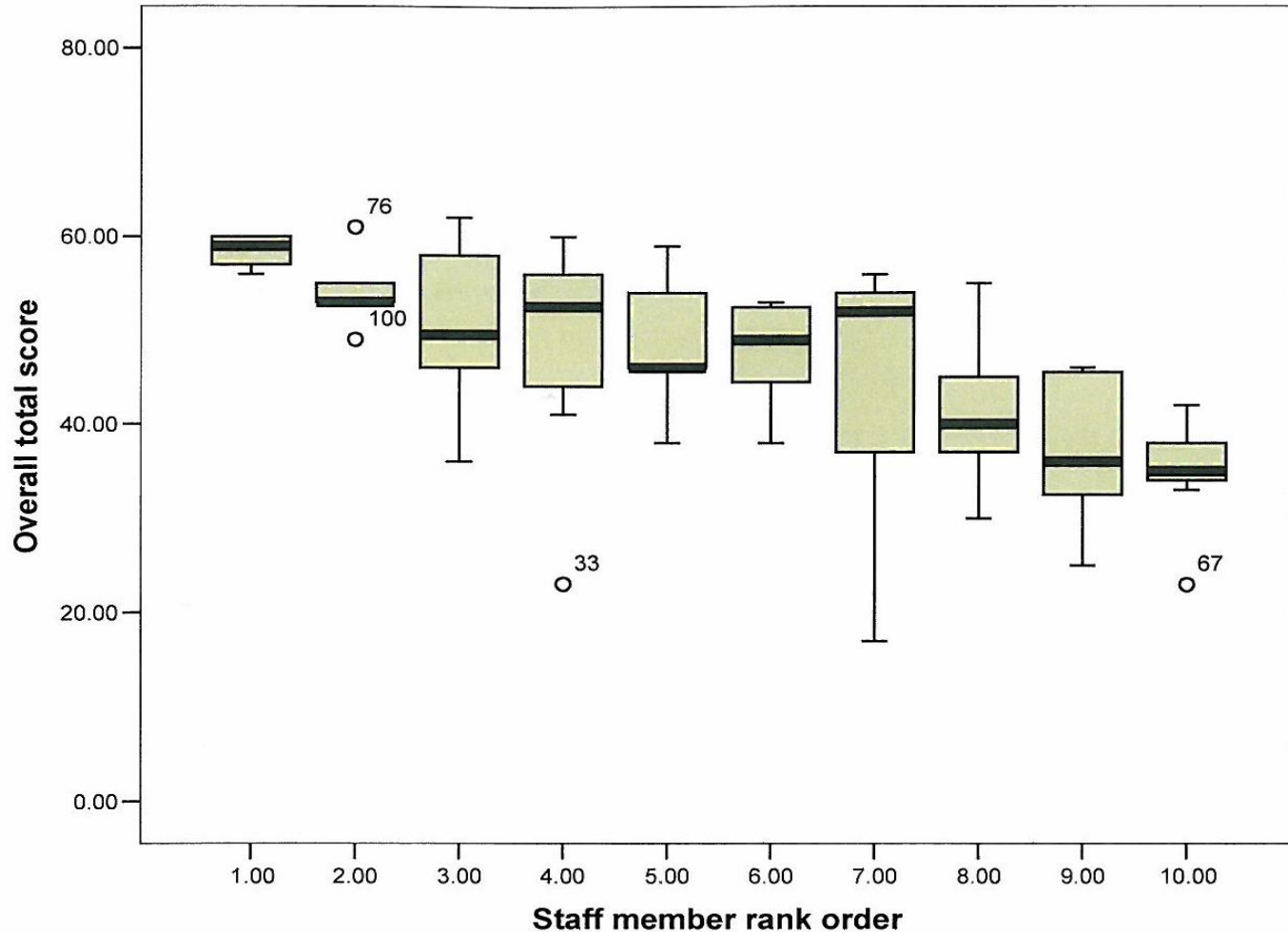


# What does the checklist tell us?

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- Does 7C distinguish between officers?
- Are officers consistent in the skills they use?
- Do officers who use more skills do so over a wide range of interviews?
- Ten officers with 5-15 interviews in database
- Boxplots show median, interquartile range and outliers

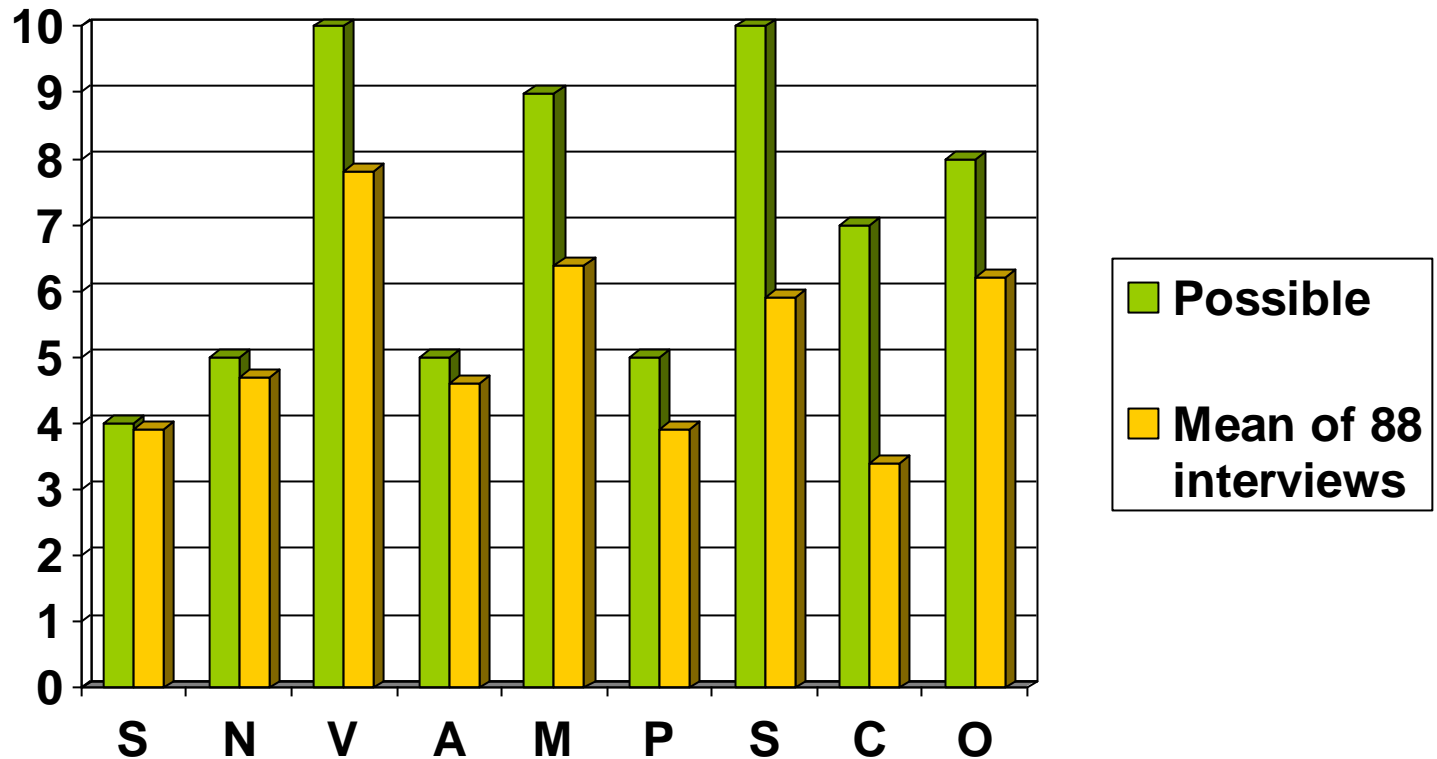
# Boxplots for ten officers, 88 interviews





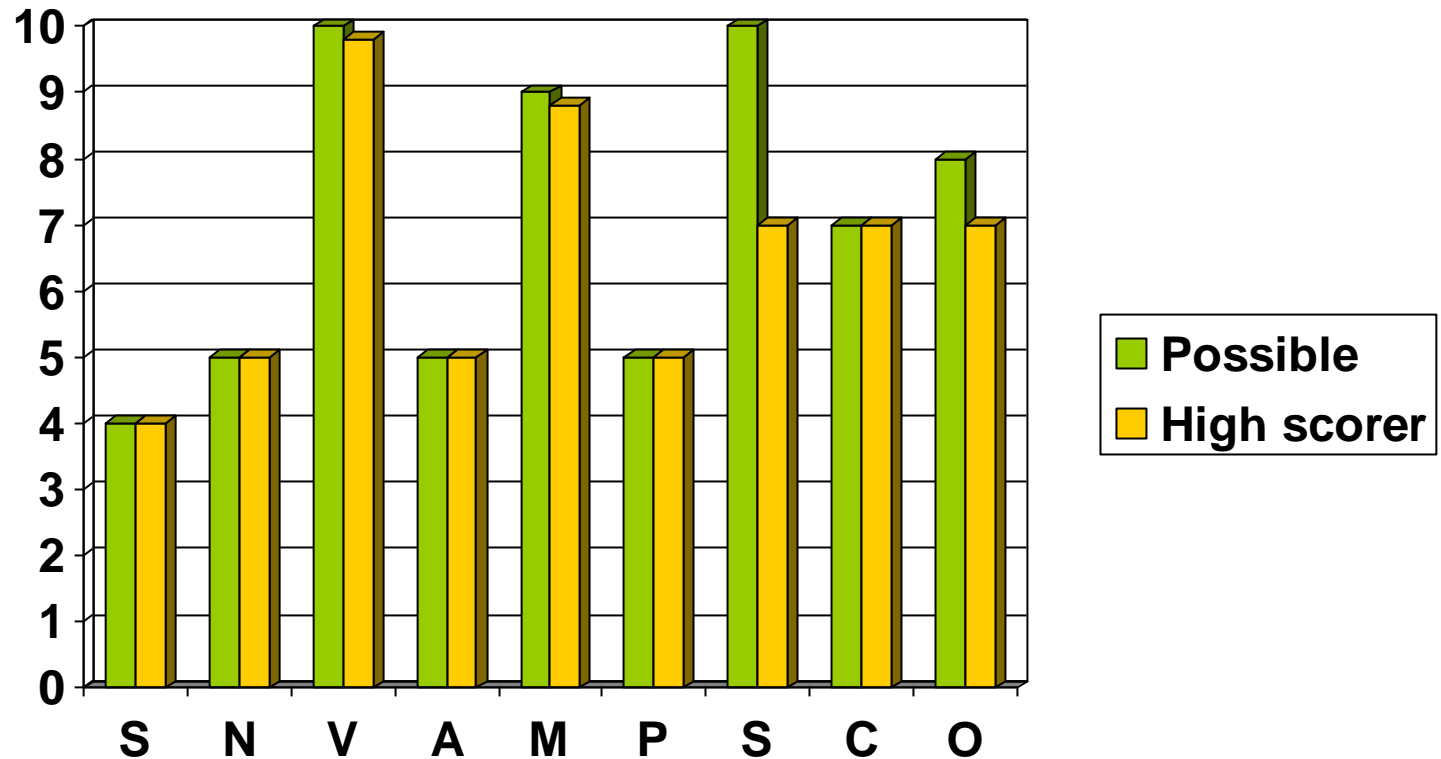
# Mean scores for group of 10 compared to possible scores

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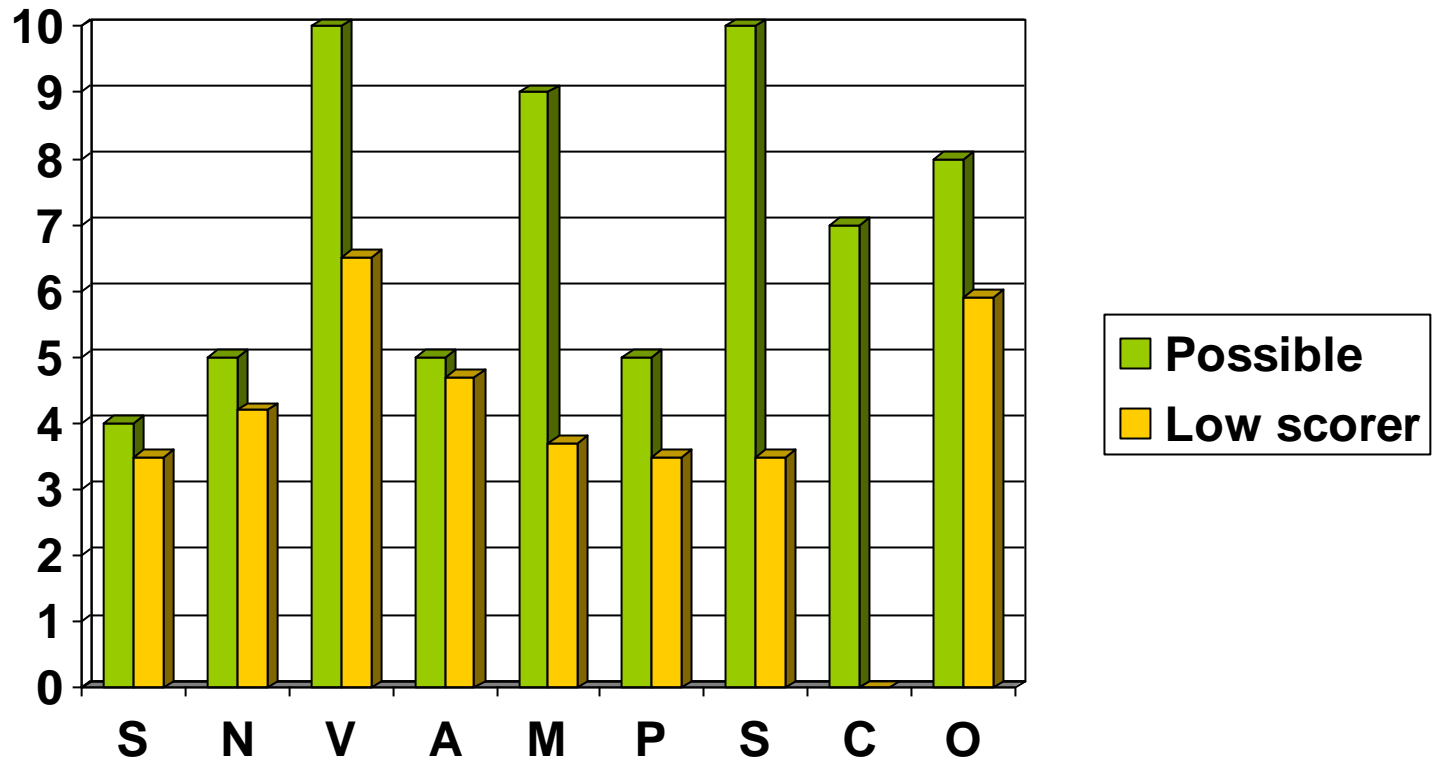
# A high-scoring officer compared to possible scores

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# A lower scoring officer compared to possible scores

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# Differences between officers are:

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- Substantial
- Consistent across a number of interviews (for most officers)
- Consistent across different types of interviews (for most officers)
- More evident in 'structuring' skills (maybe reflecting social work training of the Jersey officers: they mostly score well on 'relationship' skills)
- Next: outcome measures





# Outcomes so far

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- Based on all officers with 2 or more interviews observed, and caseload of supervisees with initial and follow-up assessments – so 11 officers, 72 interviews (different from analysis of checklist scores because not all officers had appropriate caseloads)
- All caseloads showed, on average, some positive change in LSI-R scores (known from previous research in Jersey to be associated with reduced risk of reconviction)
- Officers with *above average* checklist scores had, on average, *more* positive change in LSI-R scores in their caseloads

# Skills checklist scores and LSI-R improvement

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Officers with:	Mean score	Mean LSI-R change
Checklist score below mean (N = 6)	<b>38.45</b>	<b>-1.30</b>
Checklist score above mean (N = 5)	<b>52.18</b>	<b>-2.37</b>



# Proceed with caution:

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- These figures should be treated very cautiously: they are based on a small sample and not statistically significant; also, there are exceptions in the data, i.e. some high-scoring officers have low change scores and vice versa, but the overall figures do show a difference in the expected direction and arguably make a case for further investigation.
- Of the skill clusters in the checklists, the **strongest association with positive change** was found in '**Use of authority**' and '**problem-solving**'. Again these were non-significant findings which would benefit from investigation in larger samples.



# Desirable next steps

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- Improve evidence base:
  - In Jersey sample: look at actual contact not just case-management responsibility; look at actual interviewees; look at reconvictions
  - Beyond Jersey: increase sample and data availability
- Improve the checklist:
  - Obtain feedback from users
  - Try for better fit with outcomes
  - Still a work in progress



# References and contacts:

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Early stages are covered in: Raynor, P., Ugwudike, P. and Vanstone, M. (2010) 'Skills and strategies in probation supervision: the Jersey study', in McNeill, Raynor and Trotter (eds) *Offender Supervision: New Directions in Theory, Research and Practice*. Abingdon: Willan.

Results so far in forthcoming Ministry of Justice *Offender Engagement Research Bulletin*

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