



# THINGS to CONSIDER

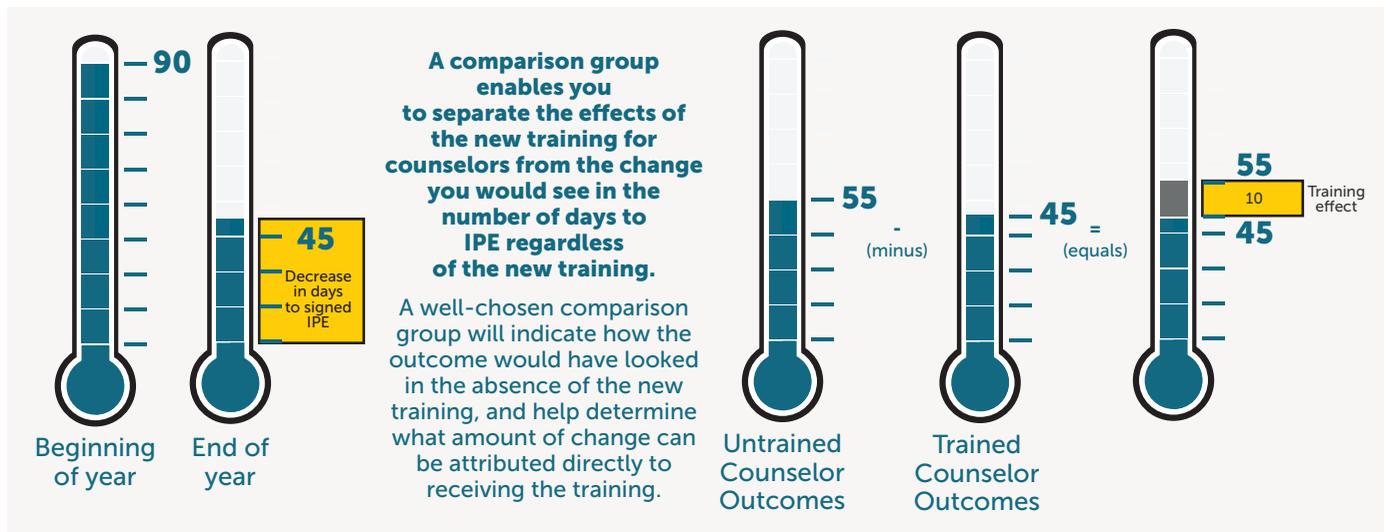
## Using a Comparison Group



When you are interested in understanding how outcomes changed as a result of a vocational rehabilitation (VR) service change, you may wonder why you can't just look at outcomes for clients or counselors that receive the service.

Consider, for instance, if some counselors received a new training and you want to test whether that training is associated with a reduction in the number of days to obtain signed individualized plans for employment (IPEs) for clients. Some counselors will finish the IPE process faster than others regardless of any particular training. However, if you

look at days to IPE only for those counselors who received the training, there is no way to determine whether the outcome is a result of the training or a result of client motivation, counselor quality, other supports, or background characteristics. Without a comparison group, we may erroneously conclude that changes in the outcome are solely the result of the training.



By using a comparison group, you can reasonably conclude that any differences in outcomes between counselors who receive the training and those who

do not are due to the training and not to other factors, such as client motivation, counselor quality, other supports, or background characteristics.

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