



Virtual Vision Technologies

www.VirtualVisionTech.com

Since 1991 Incorporated as Young Opportunities, Ltd

Workplace accessibility for people with disabilities
Access solutions that *work*.

Headquarters:
6 East Wayne Ave.
Aldan PA, 19018

Phone: (610) 734-0711
Fax: (484) 461-8724
National Woman Owned Small Business - CMA 4879

Access Learning Center:
9 South 69th Street
Upper Darby, PA 19082

AT-SAM: ACCESS TECHNOLOGY SKILLS ASSESSMENT MEASURE™

An access/assistive technology skills evaluation for workers and students with disabilities

Overview : The **Access Technology Skill Assessment Measure (AT-SAM)** is *the standardized test instrument* to evaluate the skill level of a person who uses assistive technology to access a Windows computer equipped with Microsoft Office applications.



The AT-SAM evaluation tool is a **person-to-person skills assessment** battery intended to produce a baseline functional evaluation of the computer-linked access technology (or “assistive technology”, hereby called *AT*) skills of a person with visual impairment. AT-SAM is a *remotely delivered V-Learning™* ([VVT Virtual Learning](#)) process. The person taking the assessment could be physically located anywhere in the world using a Windows computer that is equipped with Microsoft Office applications and which is set up with the AT-SAM assessment files (*with* or *without* Internet access). VVT’s AT-SAM Assessors interact with and monitor the person being assessed remotely from the VVT [Access Learning Center](#) located in Greater Philadelphia, PA. Usually there is also a vocational counselor or an HR representative present to observe and assist with any needs of the person taking the assessment.

The person being assessed may be blind, have low vision, or have other visual issues, or learning/physical disabilities that limit their ability to read hard copy print or operate a standard Windows PC and common office productivity software tools without the aid of AT hardware, software, or peripheral equipment (including computer Braille). In the **vocational world**, the person being assessed may be a job candidate, a new hire, or an employee in need of assessment for AT skill-training connected to job risk, job change, or promotion within an enterprise or agency. In the K-12 and higher **education spaces**, the students can be reliably assessed for the key performance factors that directly impact educational success.

AT-SAM Versions: To address the differences in these two primary categories of AT users and their goals, VVT has two corresponding general versions of the assessment: AT-SAM *Pro (Professional)* and AT-SAM *SE (Student Edition)*. The new hire/employee vocational emphasis describes the main focus of the **Professional** version. The **Student Edition** was developed with orientation toward the needs of high school juniors and seniors, 1st – 2nd year higher education students, or any other person bound for university study or higher education programs.

Why evaluate people for access technology skills? Since its first use in large corporate enterprises, AT-SAM has been **99% reliable** as a predictor of success for job candidates with disabilities hired into computer-linked roles. *After one year of using AT-SAM as part of the screening process at one Fortune 50 corporation, **all** candidates that were hired through that process were still in their jobs. In fact, most of these employees excelled with high rates of productivity, efficiency, and accuracy when compared to their sighted colleagues. In contrast, visually impaired candidates hired into corporate positions **without AT-SAM** skill screening resulted in a **50% job failure/turnover rate**.* For further reading about AT-SAM's potential in vocational settings, check out the AT-SAM *Pro* documentation: http://VirtualVisionTech.com/AT-SAM_Pro

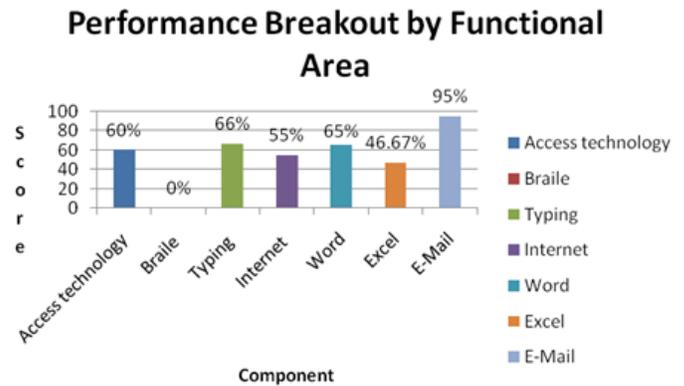
This same screening technique, when applied specifically to the *educational environment* (using the **Student Edition**) yields comparable results and similarly defines any additional training in AT applications that will prepare them for the challenges inherent to the higher educational experience. Additionally, VVT can customize the AT-SAM assessment for your particular business or industry needs and even brand it as a custom evaluation tool specific to your organization!

Reporting & Evaluation Metrics: Using functional performance measurements and careful V-Learning observation methodologies, the AT-SAM assessment team develops a baseline measurement of the blind or low vision person's abilities to operate a standard Windows computer equipped with Microsoft Office using Assistive Technologies, in a simulated high pressure work or educational environment. Since the person must use AT to access Windows computers, AT-SAM measures the person's technology performance skills in two arenas: mainstream & assistive software and hardware. Depending on the assessment type, there will be particular emphasis on using the various software titles in a more vocational capacity (with the AT-SAM Pro) or with more of an orientation toward educational research (with the AT-SAM SE).

The written AT-SAM Results Report gives VR Counselors, HR decision-makers, and educational professionals the **detailed scoring data** that they *need* to know about an applicant or student's AT abilities... and by implication, it is a strong **indicator of potential for success** in competitive employment or educational environments.

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The AT-SAM **Results Reporting** charts the position of an AT user with regard to current skill level measured against National standards and averages and even other real-world peers in similar roles. These metrics are based on many, *many* years of industry experience and AT-SAM evaluations performed by VVT, as well as current US (National and State) statutory training objective requirements. The outcome reporting *also* relates any deficits identified and recommends any necessary course work to achieve common vocational and educational goals and performance levels.



AT-SAM Assessment Features:

The following features are common to both the **Professional** and **Student Edition**:

- AT SAM is intended to be delivered remotely. The candidate is supported and guided by experienced VVT instructors/assessors who also provide team-based outcome reporting relating to the evaluation.
- AT-SAM assists the HR teams, VR Counselors, and other stake-holders in understanding how well their customer/new hire/student can use access technology with a Windows computer and MS Office applications.
- AT-SAM will identify what additional skills should be mastered to apply for employment or continuing education in entry level through to advanced corporate employment or educational options.
- AT-SAM Results Reporting provides high level narrative, as well as charted, graphical metric representation of AT skills to document proficiency and suitability for various general vocational and educational requirements.
- AT-SAM provides the person being evaluated with the self awareness and validation that their skills are appropriate for the level of a given position which improves professional presence and self confidence during interviews.
- AT-SAM Results Reports include recommendations for the specific courses required to bring current skills up to appropriate levels and to achieve goals defined in the IEP process or by job descriptions. These recommendations also focus and provide direction for the next steps in the training process.



General skills categories assessed by both versions of AT-SAM:

- Keyboard skills corrected to words-per-minute
- Windows file & folder management
- Ability to follow directions accurately and promptly
- Multi-tasking capabilities
- General Internet skills using *MS Internet Explorer*
- General navigation & basic formatting with *MS Word*
- Office tool productivity evaluation available for *MS Office 2007/2010* or previous (legacy) versions.

Features specific to AT-SAM Pro:

- *MS Word* document management/collaboration (security, track changes)
- E-mail, collaboration, & organizational skills with *MS Outlook* (messaging, calendar, tasks, etc.)
- Reading & navigation of spreadsheets with *MS Excel*
- Evaluation of **soft skills** including:
 - Customer service skills through role play
 - Working with grace under pressure
 - Ability to accept correction and supervision calmly & tactfully.

Features specific to AT-SAM SE:

- Using *MS Word* for formal research paper preparation & editing
- Using/reading & preparing *MS PowerPoint* presentations
- Using the Internet for academic research, data collection and analysis
- Working with Web-based learning management systems and e-courses
- Social networking familiarity
- Strategies for working with various standard document formats

Overall, the AT-SAM is an assessment tool that, when coupled with a window for remediation through training, can gauge ability *and* ensure the appropriate pairing of an AT user with his or her goals for employment or higher education. The AT-SAM *Pro* (combined with any resultant/recommended training) can ensure preparedness of an individual for competitive employment in today's technology-centric work place. Likewise, the AT-SAM *SE* will prepare the continuing student for the rigors of the higher educational environment and allow the student the opportunity to engage the challenges of contemporary disciplined learning in mixed-delivery environments.

Regardless of how it is applied, AT-SAM is **the only tool available**, and **the only tool you'll need** to benchmark the skill level of an AT user as an indicator for real-world success.