

Assessment Council News (ACN)

Presidential Message

By Deborah Whetzel, President



January 2013

Hello IPAC members! Welcome to our first issue of the Assessment Council News (ACN) for 2013. For this issue, I'd like to recognize the outstanding achievements of 2012 under Jeff Feuquay's leadership, and describe some upcoming events for 2013.

Achievements of 2012

- As attendees know, we had a spectacular conference July 22-25 in Las Vegas, NV. Keynote speakers were David Campbell, Wayne Cascio, Scott Highhouse, Kevin Murphy, and Rob Ployhart. Clearly an all-star cast! We had an excellent set of pre-conference workshops on a variety of informative topics. Members can access recordings of previous webinars, conference presentation slides, and much more on the IPAC website.
- The Steven E. Bemis award winner was Rod Freudenberg
- The James C. Johnson Student Paper Competition award winner was given to Garrett N. Howardson of George Washington University for the paper entitled, "Coming Full Circle with Reactions: Toward an Understanding of Affective Training Reactions through the Core Affect Circumplex."
- The Innovations in Assessment Award was given to Sandra Hartog & Associates/Fenestra. Their innovative assessment was the development of very technologically advanced assessment center for a consultative sales position. They won because they demonstrated a good use of technology and sound practice to make assessment center methodologies more available and affordable.
- Clyde Lindley award winner was Bill Waldron.

A special debt of gratitude is owed to the IPAC leadership team for 2012: **Jeff Feuquay, Julia Bayless, Shelly Langan, Reid Klion, Marianne Tonjes, Warren Bobrow, and Lee Frier**. This team of dedicated professionals provided excellent guidance and support to IPAC. Our outgoing Board Members **Julia Bayless, Warren Bowbrow, Shelly Langan, and Marianne Tonjes** have served faithfully on the Board for several years, and we will greatly miss their wealth of experience, ideas, and numerous contributions to the Board.

We also welcome our new leaders for 2013 – **Michael Blair**, President Elect, **Martha Hennen**, Secretary and our new Board Members **Scott Highhouse** and **Natasha Riley** ...2013 is certain to be a fantastic year!

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Presidential Message	1
Article: Affective Training Reactions	3
Student Paper Competition	4
Legal Update	6
Article: Analyzing Item Analysis	9
Article: Personality Traits	12
Conferences and Workshops	16
2013 IPAC Officers and Board Members	17
2013 IPAC Committee Chairs	18
About the ACN	19

(Continued from page 1)

In addition to the IPAC Board, we welcome our the IPAC Committee Chairs **Bill Waldron** (Electronic Communications Network Guru), **Ilene Gast**, **Lee Frier**, and **Joel Weisen** (Accreditation Committee), **John Ford** (ACN), **Natasha Riley** (Conference Chair), **Jeff Feuquay** (Bemis Award), **Warren Bobrow** (Innovations), **Mike Blair** (Nominations/Elections), **Dennis Doverspike** (Professional and Scientific Affairs), **Elizabeth Reed** (Membership), and **Lee Friedman** (University Liaison/Student Paper).

Upcoming events for 2013

- We have yet another terrific slate of keynote speakers! They are Fritz Drasgow, Doug Reynolds, Paul Sackett, Nancy Tippins, and Mike Zickar.
- We also have a great set of pre-conference workshops including a legal update, a tutorial on structured interviews and a session on developing competency models.
- Our website continues to provide previous webinars, presentation slides and an impressive library of work from IPAC members and other HR professionals. We are looking to update the “look and feel” of our website and you will hear more about that in coming months.

We are currently in the midst of our membership renewal campaign. IPAC operates on a calendar year membership basis and thus it is time to renew your membership for 2013. Membership dues are only \$75. Student membership is available for \$25. Renew your IPAC membership today!

Stay tuned for details on upcoming opportunities to network with fellow assessment professionals throughout the coming □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ of ways to get involved in IPAC, including participation on a committee or share your time and expertise...consider contacting a Board Member today to find the best fit for you!

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Coming Full Circle with Reactions: Towards an Understanding of Affective Training Reactions Through the Core Affect Circumplex

By Garrett N. Howardson, The George Washington University

Organizations invest billions of dollars annually to deliver training (Noe, 2010). One quick and inexpensive method of evaluating such investments is collecting trainee reactions, which are thoughts and feelings about the training. Early conceptualizations (e.g., Kirkpatrick, 1987) considered the trainee a customer and focused on satisfaction as the primary criterion. As thinking advanced, however, scholars adopted conceptualizations similar to the job satisfaction literature and acknowledged that training satisfaction has cognitive and affective components. Thus, a distinction was made between *affective* and *utility* reactions (Alliger, Tannenbaum, Bennett, Traver, & Shotland, 1997) to respectively represent the affective and cognitive components of general training reactions

Although the affective component of job satisfaction has since been expanded to include multiple affective states (e.g., Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), the training reactions literature maintains a limited view of affect. Thus, the goal of this research is twofold. First, the criterion space of affective training reactions is expanded and it is shown that affective reactions are multidimensional. Second, hypotheses drawn from self-regulation research argue that whereas certain reactions are positively related to learning, negative relationships are expected for others.

Core affect theory (Russell, 2003) posits that affective reactions are indicators of perceived affective states (Russell, 2003). Furthermore, affective reactions can be characterized according to two bipolar and orthogonally intersecting dimensions of *activation* and *valence*. The unique combination of activation and valence creates distinct sub-types of reactions, each of which uniquely influences self-regulatory behaviors (Carver & Scheier, 1998).

Pleasant and activating affective reactions (e.g., *excitement*) suggest that goal progress is occurring at faster-than-expected rate. In an attempt to maximize efficiency, effort is reallocated towards secondary goals where the rate of progress is slower-than-expected. Such goals are marked by unpleasant and activating affective reactions (e.g., *anxiety*). To avoid these unpleasant feelings, individuals must devise a plan for how to increase the rate of goal progress. Unfortunately, this planning often draws individuals'

attention away from the focal task at hand, which may actually reduce learning in the short-term (Kanfer & Ackermann, 1989). Conversely, pleasant and deactivating affective reactions (e.g., *serenity*) suggest that goal progress is happening as expected and that no change in effort is needed (Carver & Scheier, 1998). Assuming that learning is the foal goal during a training program, this suggests that both pleasant and unpleasant activating affective reactions (i.e., excitement and anxiety, respectively) will be negatively related to learning; pleasant and deactivating affective reactions (i.e., serenity) will be positively related to learning.

Drawing from core affect theory, a multidimensional measure of affective reactions was created and validated using confirmatory factor analysis. In line with expectations, excitement reactions were negatively related to declarative knowledge scores for a Microsoft Excel training course. Anxiety reactions were also negatively related to declarative knowledge scores. However, serenity reactions were positively related to declarative knowledge scores.

Although some research contends that all training reactions are unidimensional (Sitzmann, Brown, Casper, Ely, & Zimmerman, 2008), these positions restrict the affective components of reactions. Following reasoning in the job satisfaction literature, the current findings indicated that the affective components of training reactions are multidimensional. Furthermore, these different components convey unique information about which individuals performed well on a declarative knowledge evaluation. The implications of these findings are evident for the practice of training evaluation in organizations.

Most notably, these findings suggest that affective training reactions may supplement formal training evaluation. Specifically, affective reactions may be used to diagnose the precise reasons for sub-par training performance. For example, poor training performance might be due to unpleasant and activating training experiences. However, poor performance may also be due to pleasant and activating training experiences that shift the focus of effort to secondary, non-learning goals. This is important because each of these performance explanations requires a different

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

training intervention to improve performance. Thus, affective reactions might prove useful to organizations as supplemental diagnostic tools to hone in on and improve specific reasons for poor training performance.

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Garett N. Howardson is the winner of IPAC's 2012 James C. Johnson Student Paper Competition.



2013 James C. Johnson Student Paper Competition

The International Personnel Assessment Council (IPAC) is offering its annual James C. Johnson Student Paper Competition to recognize the contributions of students in the field of personnel assessment. IPAC is dedicated to the promotion of sound, merit-based personnel assessment practices, and encourages and provides assistance in efforts to improve assessment practices in such fields as personnel selection, performance evaluation, training, job analysis and organizational effectiveness.

IPAC supports student contributions to the field of personnel assessment and seeks to promote and recognize these efforts. The winner of the 2013 competition will be invited to present his or her paper at IPAC's 2013 Annual Conference to be held in Columbus, OH, July 21-24, 2013. The winner will receive up to \$600.00 in conference-related travel expenses, a free conference registration, and a one-year free membership in IPAC. In addition, the winner and honorable mention competitors will be recognized in the IPAC conference program and the IPAC newsletter. In addition, the University Department in which the student completed his or her research will be awarded a \$500 grant, as well as a plaque commemorating the student's IPAC award achievement.

Students do not need to be an IPAC member to enter. The deadline for receipt of entries is March 21, 2013. All papers should be e-mailed to Dr. Lee Friedman at leefriedman1406@yahoo.com. All IPAC Student Paper Competition Cover Sheets should be mailed hard copy to Dr. Friedman at 13481 Falcon View Court, Bristow, VA 20136 -- Phone: (571) 331-1388. For complete Call for Submissions materials, please contact Dr. Friedman.



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LEGAL UPDATE

By Richard Tonowski, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

As 2012 draws to a close, let's look back on some landmark legal developments that have involved personnel assessments and EEO issues. Here are my first (and probably last) annual awards.

MOST IMPORTANT COURT DECISION FOR TEST VALIDATION AND/OR ADVERSE IMPACT DETERMINATION

First Place: *MOCHA v. City of Buffalo*, Nos. 11-2184-cv, 10-2168-cv (2nd Cir. 7/30/2012). As a matter of law, the job analysis for content valid test development does not have to involve an organization where the test is used. The case comes with caveats. There were technical arguments that plaintiffs might have pursued more vigorously, rather than fighting primarily on a legal matter. Absence of a prohibition is not an endorsement, and specifically not an endorsement of validity generalization. Still, it's an important principle that was recognized.

Second Place: *Apsley v. Boeing*, 691 F.3d 1184 (10th Cir. 8/27/2012). This is the first time that a federal appellate court has taken effect size into account along with statistical significance in determining adverse impact. With large samples, it's relatively easy to get statistical significance with small disparities. How to determine adverse impact is the obvious technical question, but the underlying issue at law is that the courts have latitude to look at statistical evidence regarding adverse impact on a case-by-case basis, which makes having a simple mathematical rule difficult.

Dishonorable Mention: *EEOC v. Kronos*, No. 11-2834 (3rd Cir. 9/14/2012). This subpoena enforcement case has gotten some press coverage, perhaps more than deserved due to lack of real substance. The Court of Appeals ruled a second time that Kronos had to turn over validation and other information regarding use of its personality test. Employer-side organizations have bemoaned this case of one disability-related charge against one employer that morphed into a demand for information on all validation reports and race/ethnic adverse impact from the test publisher, part of the concern over EEOC's investigative strategy discussed next. The court said that access to available validation reports was appropriate, but pursuing race/ethnic impact was too much of a stretch beyond the disability charge. EEOC had picked up on race/ethnic because a research article indicated that the test had impact against minorities.

HOTTEST EEO ENFORCEMENT ISSUE

First Place: EEOC's alleged strategy to sue first and build a case later is under fire. EEOC may get an individual

charge involving an employment practice such as a selection procedure, but more than one charging party was likely affected. The employer may resist turning over information that expands a single complaint into a systemic investigation. EEOC may sue to get the discovery process started. But this could be construed as the agency's trying to make a big case based on nothing initially. A Court of Appeals drew the line in *EEOC v. CRST Van Expedited*, Nos. 09-3764/09-3765/10-1682 (8th Cir. 5/8/2012). EEOC's perspective is that when stonewalled it has to get litigation discovery or else spend years in administrative subpoena enforcement. A related issue has been how much effort EEOC has to put into individual claimant investigation and conciliation before it can bring a class case; this implies that all the claimants have to be identified before suit is filed. The agency got some end-of-year support with the Sixth Circuit's reversal of *Serrano v. Cintas Corp.*, Nos. 10-2629 & 11-2057 (6th Cir. 11/9/2012) after EEOC not only had its case tossed but was ordered to pay Cintas over \$2M in legal costs. The case is back; the award of costs is out.

Second Place: Anything involving OFCCP-- reader's choice. But I'd put pay equity in the next section since that issue is hot but still in play.

MOST INTERESTING CONTINUING EEO ISSUE

First Place: Pay equity investigations. The Obama Administration highlighted pay equity. The enforcement agencies have formed a joint task force. EEOC has done some pilot pay audits under the Equal Pay Act. OFCCP wants a new approach to analyzing employer data. The National Academies of Science was invited to comment on what kind of employer information should be collected to identify bad actors. The primary recommendation was that the agencies get a clear idea of what they'd do with the information if they had it. There's a trade-off between the level of detail that might be desirable for research and enforcement purposes and the practical burden for employers and the agencies of having to collect, report, and process that data. A challenge for those in personnel assessment will be to refine identification and measurement of competencies in selection and performance appraisal to go beyond rough-cut pay data, in a legal context where the assessment itself may be suspected of being contaminated by unlawful bias.

Second Place: Class actions. The U.S. Supreme Court has been unfavorable to class formation without persuasive commonality of interest. Key assessment issues for future big cases include measurement and influence of organiza-

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

tional culture as the common factor, detection and control of unconscious bias in systematically influencing employment decisions, and statistical methods for determining decision impact across multiple jobs and organizational units.

MOST ANTICIPATED U.S. SUPREME COURT EEO DECISION (AS OF THIS WRITING)

Oral arguments for both of these cases were heard by the Court in 2012.

First Place: *Vance v. Ball State University*, No. 11-556. This is important because it will resolve a circuit split on whether “lead” employees who are not formally supervisors are supervisors for purposes of Title VII liability. It can matter to the employer if the alleged perpetrator of sexual harassment, for example, was an agent of management or just a co-worker of the victim. A more expansive notion of supervisor as anyone who oversees or directs another’s work, not just someone who can take personnel actions, has implications for defining jobs to make them non-supervisory and EEO training for those who would be considered as supervisors.

Second Place: *Fisher v. University of Texas*, No. 11-345. This is a university admissions case about how much affirmative action is too much. University admission is not employment selection, and public entities are bound by constitutional restrictions not on the private sector. Still, whether the decision makes a bold statement on affirmative action, how the decision generalizes to employment, and if at least regarding legal thinking it affects private as well as public organizations make it worth watching.



This article first appeared in the Quarterly Newsletter of the Personnel Testing Council of Metropolitan Washington (PTC/MW, www.PTCMW.org). It is being re-printed with the permission of Dr. Tonowski and PTC/MW. Dr. Tonowski also writes a monthly column, Legal Update, that is published on the PTC/MW website around the first of each month.

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Analyzing Item Analysis: It's Not Easy

By Dennis Doverspike and Rosanna Miguel

Our column for this issue of ACN draws on our recent experience trying to explain item analysis to undergraduate students, graduate students, assessment professionals, attorneys, and other experts. In doing so, we find there is a great deal of confusion with regard to standards for item analysis and, therefore, the appropriate psychometric standards for a test. There is of course a good reason for this confusion as the basic assumptions underlying psychometrics do not align well with the practical constraints of public sector testing. So, our goal or learning objective for the current column is to outline and deal with what we see as the major areas of contention and confusion. But in the end, it's not easy.

We believe the problem is, and we usually teach our students this, is that reading item analysis statistics is like reading an X-ray, you need a great deal of experience with the types of tests and items generating the statistics. Thus, it is very difficult to automate this process, at least at present; it is also very difficult to give simple advice or provide general rules. There are programs that do a good job of providing item information and even of red flagging items, but even that feedback must be seen through the lens of experience. Nevertheless, one often finds programs, psychometricians, plaintiff's experts, textbooks, and LinkedIn and listserv commentators offering advice such as:

- For practical purposes, a test should have a reliability coefficient of .90 or .95.
- Items should have point-biserials of .40 or higher.
- If an item has a p value of over .90, it should be eliminated from a test because it is too easy.

The list could of course go on. However, the point is, despite the well-intentioned nature of such advice, it is misleading to the novice user because in many practical, public sector situations it is either simply not true or must be tempered by a number of caveats.

Disconnect or Misalignment

The problem with much of the advice is that it was developed based on a model that assumed that tests would be:

- Unidimensional, measuring only one construct or latent trait.
- Given to a large (several hundred people) random sample.

- Composed of a large number of randomly selected items.

Of course, the typical situation in public sector, merit testing, is quite different. In the public sector, testing is not a search for a latent trait, but a competition that occurs on one day, under standard conditions, and with a fixed set of rules. The typical assessment in the public sector often involves a job knowledge test for a position with a small number of incumbents and applicants where:

- The test is multidimensional or measuring many constructs or subject matter areas (the multidimensional nature of tests may be explicitly recognized in some areas such as situational judgment testing).
- Given to small numbers of people from highly select and prescreened samples.
- Composed of items that have been developed and selected with a great deal of care to make sure they meet a content validity model.
- Composed of relatively small numbers of items.
- There are other practical issues including poor reading ability among applicants, low motivation among applicants, speeded tests, and items that are not responded to or reached by a percentage of test takers.

As a result, for typical public sector tests of job knowledge, we do not get internal consistencies above .95, or even .90. We do not get high item-total correlations. We do not always get high discrimination indices, and we sometimes get very high item difficulties just because an item is very important, but everyone tends to know it.

Without knowledge of the type of test, items, constructs, and the characteristics of the applicants, simple reliance on KR20, coefficient alpha, or any item statistic can be misleading. The problem is that this is one of those areas where you really need a certain amount of expertise to understand what you are looking at (which is not to encourage test users to not look at their item statistics). Of course, all of these problems become magnified when we move to computer based testing, where we might have multiple correct answers and partial scoring.

The Counter Argument and the Conflict

There is a counter argument and that is that ultimately we

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

are calculating a single score. That is another reality of the public sector merit system. We are usually not happy with profiles of scores or subjective fit judgments. There is a demand to arrive at a single score representing merit. If we are arriving at a single total score, then there is the implicit assumption that there is a single something or construct being measured.

As a result, you find a classic conflict when relying upon any type of test of a multidimensional domain or a test based on a criterion oriented strategy. Bottom line, it is impossible to say that an internal consistency of .3, .6 or .9 would be preferable without knowing your exact purpose and the likely correlations between those domains. A reliability of .3 could be very good in some situations. However, then a critic might argue - why calculate a total score?

As a result, in constructing a test of job knowledge in your typical public sector selection situation, you have competing ideas or goals. You are calculating a total score, but you are calculating a total score based on adding together measures of independent constructs. Thus, an internal consistency of .3 might be good, a .6 might be good, or a .9 might be good, it all depends on what you are trying to achieve and what the correlation really is between those independent constructs. Finally, one could also argue it depends on other factors such as the number of items, number of people taking the test, and how much restriction of range you have.

It should also be remembered that you can have high test retest reliability with low internal consistency. It is possible, but again would depend on your measure and your theory.

Opportunities

We have often argued that the problem is we do not have a book written for the practical situations encountered in public sector testing. The major textbooks are providing guidance for unidimensional tests where you have pilot studies with 1000s of people. Very little of the advice presented in such textbooks applies to the typical public sector selection situation - a job knowledge test with small numbers of items and small numbers of test takers. We need some outstanding, talented assessment person to write such a book.

A second opportunity or need is for a simple index of reliability that is useful with multidimensional tests in real world situations (small numbers of test items and small numbers of people taking the tests). Methods of calculating the reliability of a multidimensional test do exist, but there is a need for a simple solution that practitioners can

apply easily.

A third area of opportunity is the definition of merit. We have been arguing this for some time now, but in the public sector there is a great deal of conversation around the idea of merit, but the definition of the construct of merit seems to attract very little attention from assessment professionals and Industrial-Organizational Psychologists; on the other hand, political scientists seem to pay a great deal more attention to defining merit. In order to adequately measure merit, we need to start by identifying the nature of the underlying construct.

Finally, we need to continue to call for the professionalization of assessment. As users become more knowledgeable in the theoretical underpinnings of assessment and more proficient in item analysis with real world tests and samples, their level of expertise grows. It is such expertise that we would argue is necessary for the accurate interpretation of item analysis output. Of course, we would recommend membership in IPAC and attendance at IPAC conferences as a way to develop that expertise.

Notes:

Dennis Doverspike is a Full Professor of Psychology at the University of Akron, Senior Fellow of the Institute for Life-Span Development and Gerontology, and Director of the Center for Organizational Research. He holds a Certificate in Organizational and Business Consulting from the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP) and is a licensed psychologist in the State of Ohio. He is a long term public employee and university professor. He can be reached at dennisdoverspike@gmail.com. In writing this column, he borrowed from a number of his replies or comments on the IPAC listserv.

Rosanna Miguel is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Management at John Carroll University (JCU). Prior to joining JCU, she was a full-time consultant for both public and private sector organizations. She specializes in test development and validation. In addition to her Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology, she earned a Senior Professional in Human Resource Certificate (SPRH) in 2010. She can be reached at rmiguel@jcu.edu.

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Personality Traits in Federal Pre-Employment Testing: Why the O in KSAO?

By Peter Leeds

In May 2010 President Obama directed the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to implement a major overhaul of the Federal hiring process with the goal of streamlining the hiring process for Federal jobs and making positions more accessible to more job candidates. As part of this initiative the written essay was removed as an initial application requirement and OPM mobilized to provide guidance to Federal agencies with regard to alternative forms of personnel assessment. To facilitate agency efforts to select and develop valid and reliable measures, OPM developed the Personnel Assessment and Selection Resource Center (www.opm.gov). One resource in the center is Assessment Decision Guide which discusses various personnel assessment options including personality tests. The guide describes these tests as....

designed to systematically elicit information about a person's motivations, preferences, interests, emotional make-up, and style of interacting with people and situations.

And continues to define personality tests as...

self-report inventories typically ask applicants to rate their level of agreement with a series of statements designed to measure their standing on relatively stable personality traits. This information is used to generate a profile used to predict job performance or satisfaction with certain aspects of the work.

Another resource in the Center is the Assessment Decision Tool which employs a decision tree with user input to recommend personnel assessment tool options for Federal hiring. Users may select competencies and the tool will recommend appropriate assessment measures. Where supervisors, managers, and executives are the focus of the proposed assessment, the tool presents OPM's 28 leadership competencies as optional targets for assessment. Some of these competencies are clearly reflective of one's personality and include Integrity/Honesty, Decisiveness, Interpersonal Skills, Public Service Motivation, Creativity and Innovation, Flexibility, and Resilience. In fact, the tool identifies personality tests as a "preferred" measure of Flexibility, Integrity/Honesty, Interpersonal Skills, and Resilience. Both the Assessment Decision Tool and Assessment Decision Guide describe personality tests as having moderate validity, moderate face validity/applicant reactions, low racial/gender group differ-

ences, high development costs, low administration costs, and high return on investment.

The Center goes on to cite modern research that shows that measures of personality can be valid predictors of performance across most occupations (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Tett, Jackson, & Rothstein, 1991), and show small differences in racial and gender group scores thus promoting social justice and organizational productivity (Hogan, Hogan, & Roberts, 1996). Such evidence has been persuasive in the private sector where, according to a study by Career-Intelligence, the use of pre-employment personality testing has increased since 1999 from 25% to nearly 40% among Fortune 500 companies. The study attributes this increase to the growing number of organizations who are concerned about the high costs of employee turnover and recognize the utility of these inexpensive and easy to administer assessments. OPM has also recognized Federal agency interest in and use of personality tests in a Staffing, Recruitment, Examining, and Assessment Policy statement which indicates that there have been...

numerous Federal agencies that are considering or have implemented non-medical psychological test(s) or Job Compatibility Assessments (JCA's) that are designed and used to measure personality and behavioral and other counterproductive behaviors that are incompatible with a position's essential requirements. These types of test(s) are typically used in the stages of a selection process that come before a tentative offer of employment and can be developed without OPM approval.

The need to consider employee personality at the pre-selection stage is further seen in OPM's guidance with regard to dealing with workplace violence. In their guidance OPM discusses the warning signs of violence (Part 1, Section 3, Prevention Pre-Employment Screening) and states that...

The first question many people ask when starting to develop a workplace violence prevention program is, How can we identify potentially violent individuals? It is understandable that people want to know this -- and that "early warning signs" and "profiles" of potentially violent employees are in much of the literature on the subject of workplace violence. It would save time and solve problems if

(Continued on page 13)

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managers could figure out ahead of time what behaviors and personality traits are predictive of future violent actions.

With a growing body of research supporting the use of personality assessment, OPMs hiring reform directive has prompted renewed interests in developing and validating such measures. OPM has contracted for the development of best practice testing programs to produce legally defensible assessments for Federal employees in job families including financial, management, human resources, information technology, security and administrative support. This effort has involved Government-wide job analysis with participants from over 50 agencies with the goal of developing and validating legally defensible, unprocured, online assessments including, among others, personality assessments. Since March 2011, large numbers of job applicants have been assessed for positions across the Federal government using such personality measures with largely favorable applicant reactions (PDRI, 2012).

Personality-Related Position Requirements

Prior to considering the use of personality measures, human resources professionals must first determine if aspects of employee personality are essential to job performance. They must also determine the degree to which the possession of such traits distinguishes among levels of performance. In order to be legally defensible there must be a clear linkage between the requirements of the job and competencies assessed on the test or measure. The goal of job analysis is to evaluate the knowledge, skills, abilities and "Other" requirements of the job. These "Other" requirements include personal characteristics or personality traits considered essential to job performance. However, where personality characteristics are concerned, little information is available to guide the investigation of these requirements. Subject matter experts are rarely attuned to what personality traits are necessary for higher level performance and require structured guidance for identifying such characteristics. Traditional position requirement determination efforts involve establishing job task (position description) and their associated knowledge, skills and abilities (qualification standard) and do not typically probe for personal characteristics and what are called "non-cognitive" aspects of job performance. Clearly, specialized tools and techniques are required. A purpose of this article is to offer suggestions for using readily available tools for collecting personality based job requirements.

Job analysis is the process of evaluating the extent to which a particular job requires specific knowledge, skills, abilities, and "Other" requirements critical to the performance of that job. Most person-oriented job analytic

methods seek to break jobs down into the knowledge, skills and abilities needed on the job. However, little guidance exists on identifying the "Other" job requirements. An examination of the human resources and industrial/organizational psychology literature revealed two tools that may be appropriate for Federal HR use in identifying personality trait requirements for jobs. The first tool we will discuss is the Personality-Related Position Requirements Form (PPRF) (Raymark, Schmit, & Guion, 1997). The second tool is the Performance Improvement Characteristics (PIC) form by Hogan Assessment Systems (Hogan & Rybicki, 1998).

The Personality-Related Position Requirements Form

The Personality-Related Position Requirements Form (PPRF) is a job analysis form designed to be used in identifying the personality traits considered by subject matter experts to be important to job performance. The PPRF focus on the job and not the person and presents questions to SMEs (e.g., incumbents, supervisors) asking if "Effective performance in this position requires the person to ____". These questions are broad enough to accommodate many jobs or job families. Each question was intended to be related to a personality trait identifies in the well researched "Big-Five" taxonomy which includes "Surgency" (leadership, visibility, or activity), Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and "Intellectance" (openness to experience). In addition, questions capture personality traits from 12 sub-dimensions including: General Leadership, Interest in Negotiation, Ambition, Friendly Disposition, Sensitivity to Interests of Others, Cooperative or Collaborative Work Tendency, General Trustworthiness, Adherence to a Work Ethic, Thoroughness and Attentionness to Details, Emotional Stability, Desire to Generate Ideas, and Tendency to Think Things Through.

The PPRF presents 107 job tasks and asks SMEs whether doing each is a) requirement for this position, b) helps one perform successfully, and c) essential for successful performance in this position. Some tasks statements include "lead group activities through exercise of power or authority", "take control in group situations", "motivate people to accept change", and "motivate others to perform effectively".

The authors of the PPRF gathered job descriptions from 260 different jobs and found that the tool including its 5 dimensions and 12 sub-dimensions could reliably differentiate jobs by the personality traits required by each job. **The PIC (Performance Improvement Characteristics)** The developers describe the PIC a "worker-oriented job analysis method designed to evaluate personality-related job requirements". In contrast to tools that identify task or behaviors related job characteristics, the PIC identifies

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

personal characteristics necessary to perform the job.

The PIC collects personality requirements based again on the same “Big 5” dimensions used by the PPRF and contains seven scales including a Adjustment (calm and self-accepting), Ambition (self-confident and competitive), Sociability (to need or enjoy social interaction), Interpersonal Sensitivity (perceptive, tactful, and sensitive), Prudence (conscientious and conforming), Inquisitive (creative and interested in problems), Learning Approach (to value learning for its own sake).

The PIC measures the degree to which having these traits improves job performance. Like the PPRF, SMEs complete the PIC to produce a profile that identifies the traits which are most important to success on the job. The PIC presents the SME with 48 behavioral characteristics linked to the 7 personality traits. For each characteristic the SME is asked to rate the extent to which each would IMPROVE the performance of a target job incumbent using a 0-3 point scale. Some characteristic items on the PIC include “Is steady under pressure”, “Is kind and considerate”, “Is not easily irritated by others”, “Understands others’ moods”, “Is relaxed and easy-going”, Likes being around other people”, and “Doesn’t worry about his/her past mistakes”.

Meyer and Foster (2007) present an aggregation of many studies that support the validity of the PIC as a tool for identifying the personal characteristics critical to the successful performance. The PIC was found to reliably differentiate the personal characteristics required for jobs and may be useful in selecting tests that assess personality-related dimensions that predict job performance.

Before people can be recruited, screened, and selected for a job, the requirements for performance on that job must be carefully and systematically analyzed. This article presents two tools for supporting personality trait job analysis as options for human resources personnel to consider as accomplishing this as the Federal Government explores the use of personality characteristics in pre-employment testing.

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- Jan 7-9** University of Maryland. Short Course. "Introduction to Structural Equation Modeling." College Park, MD. Contact: www.cilvr.umd.edu/Workshops/CILVRworkshoppageSEM.html
- Jan 9** PTC/MW. LUNCHEON MEETING. Dr. Lorin Mueller, Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy, Alexandria, VA. Topic to be announced. GMU, Arlington, VA. Contact: www.ptcmw.org
- Jan 10-11** University of Maryland. Short Course. "Advanced Topics in Structural Equation Modeling." College Park, MD. Contact: www.cilvr.umd.edu/Workshops/CILVRworkshoppageSEM.html
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February

- Feb 1** HR Leadership Forum. Breakfast Meeting. Izzy Gesell. "Improvisation and Leadership." Arlington, VA. Contact: www.hrleadershipforum.org
- Feb 3-6** Association of Test Publishers. Annual Conference. "Innovations in Testing." Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Contact: www.testpublishers.org
- Feb 13** **PTC/MW. LUNCHEON MEETING. Speaker to be announced. GMU, Arlington, VA. Contact: www.ptcmw.org**
- Feb 21-24** Society of Psychologists in Management. Conference. Scottsdale, AZ. Contact: www.spim.org
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March

- Mar 1** HR Leadership Forum. Breakfast Meeting. Marc Haussman, Strategic Communications Group. "Alignment of Social Media with Strategic Recruiting and HR Requirements." Arlington, VA. Contact:
- Mar 10-13** Society for Human Resource Management. Conference. "Employment Law & Legislation." Washington, DC. Contact: www.shrm.org
- Mar 13** PTC/MW. SPECIAL EVENT! BREAKFAST WORKSHOP (8:30-11:30 am). Speaker to be announced. GMU, Arlington, VA. Contact: www.ptcmw.org
- Mar 14** Personnel Testing Council of Northern California. Annual Conference. Sacramento, CA. Contact: www.ptcnc.org
- Mar 14-15** Development Dimensions International. International Congress on the Assessment Center Method. Stellenbosch, South Africa. Contact: www.assessmentcenters.org
- Mar 15-19** American Society for Public Administration. Annual Conference. New Orleans, LA. Contact: www.aspanet.org

If you have regional organization news or an item to add to the calendar, please contact the Editor by e-mail at johnf@us.net or by telephone at (240) 888-8537.

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