

MAPAC NEWS

Mid-Atlantic Personnel Assessment Consortium, Inc.
Fall 1996

MAPAC NEWS HAS A NEW LOOK!!

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About the MAPAC

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NEWS

MAPAC NEWS is issued three times a year, following each MAPAC meeting. This is the first issue assembled by your new Publications Committee chairs. The material was written by several contributors and we thank them very much for their fine work. We expect the look and content of the NEWS to evolve and hope you will be part of that evolution. The NEWS can be a useful forum for the exchange of information, but its success depends on your contributions. Please send us ideas for the kinds of articles you would like to see, questions you would like answered and pieces you've written that you would like shared with your colleagues in the measurement community. We'll need your input for the next issue by February 24, 1997. We look forward to hearing from you.

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January Meeting

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend MAPAC's January meeting in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The meeting will be at the Ramada Inn Market Square at 23 South Second Street in Harrisburg on **January 22** -

24, 1997. The first day will be devoted to a training session on job analysis; the regular meeting activities will occupy the second and third days. The agenda will be sent to you in a few weeks.

Accommodations are also available at the Ramada Inn Market Square. Room rates are \$65/night for a single and \$70/night for a double. Breakfast is included, and free underground parking is provided. To make your reservation, call (717) 234-5021. To be assured of a room at this rate, call right away. The absolute deadline for reservations is January 7, 1997.

To enhance your MAPAC winter experience, Bob Schneider has proposed a special dinner at the Country Chef restaurant, which is about a 30 minute drive south of Harrisburg. The Country Chef, offering a fixed menu at a fixed price, provides unique ambiance, excellent food and personal attention. Bob will arrange with the proprietor for a special evening for the MAPAC group if enough people indicate an interest. Please call Bob at (717) 787-5974, ext. 3539 to take advantage of this opportunity.



Fall Business Meeting Minutes

September 26 & 27, 1996

The meeting was called to order by President Paul Katanik.

Roll Call: Nine member jurisdictions were represented. The City of Rochester authorized Bob Schneider to represent them both days of the meeting, and Maryland and Baltimore County authorized him to represent them on September 27th.

Reports

Treasurer: We have \$1450.26 in the treasury. We have been spending more money than we have collected in the last three years.

Membership: A new chairperson is needed for this committee. **[Note: Beth Risser has since agreed to chair this committee.]** The Virgin Islands will attend our January meeting and present their case for membership. Their application will be mailed to the jurisdictions for review before the meeting. Six other jurisdictions also indicated interest in joining MAPAC.

Training: David Hamill reported that the Item Writing course held last July in Philadelphia generally went well. Job Analysis will be offered next and focus on competency analysis. The training committee is interested in co-sponsoring a class with IPMAAC and is also pursuing the establishment of a world wide web page.

Publication: Betsy Kaido (New York State) and Jill Campbell (Metro Washington Airport Authority) will chair this committee and alternate duties.

Program: Bob Schneider reviewed proposed speakers for the next two meetings. Bob suggested that agency directors be invited to a meeting to help them understand our purpose and to insure MAPAC is meeting agency needs for information and growth.

Old Business

Dues: Proposals to increase the Treasury were discussed. The bylaws state we must wait five quarters between the recommendation to raise dues and the fee increase. Lois Christensen made a motion to raise the dues to \$400 as of January 1998. Paul Katanik will send a mail vote out to the members.

Member Participation: The results of the survey asking for committee volunteers were presented. A call for more active participation was reiterated.

New Business

IPMAAC Speaker: We agreed to earmark \$500.00 to sponsor a speaker at the 1997 IPMAAC conference. Paul Kaiser will make the arrangements. The opportunity of receiving a video of the workshop along with a copy of the handouts should be pursued.

Suspended Membership: We voted to suspend the membership of the Port Authority of Trans-Hudson. Attempts to contact them have been unsuccessful and they have not paid their dues or attended meetings in a number of years.

Elections: David Hamill was elected President-Elect for 1997.

Meeting Sites: The January meeting

will be held in Harrisburg. The City of Philadelphia will be asked to host the May 1997 meeting and the Maryland Department of Highway Administration has volunteered to host the September 1997 meeting.

Fall Meeting Presentations

Considerations in the Use of Pre-Employment Medical Inquiries

David W. Arnold, Ph. D., Esq.
Reid Psychological Systems

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that employers use medical tests as part of a selection process only after making a **Conditional Offer of Employment. A Conditional Offer of Employment** should be in writing and contain as many specifics as possible such as salary, starting date, conditions of employment, etc. This session dealt with some of the problems relating to what is a "medical" test under ADA's definition.

Some of the evaluation factors used to determine if a test is "medical" include:

1. Test is administered by a health care professional
2. Results are evaluated by a health care professional
3. Test is designed to reveal a disability
4. Test is invasive (drawing blood, urine, breath, etc.)
5. Test measures physiological/psychological responses
6. Test is given in a medical setting
7. Medical equipment/devices are used in the test.

For example, if an employer has applicants for a job loading trucks -

actually load a truck to see if they are physically able to do the job. The test is then not a medical exam. However, if the employer uses measures of heart rate, blood pressure etc. to see if applicants are physically fit, these are medical tests.

Psychological tests must be evaluated carefully to determine if they are measuring aspects of a medical condition. For example, the MMPI has an item which reads: "***Tough most of the time.***" Such questions could alert a prospective employer to the possible existence of a medical condition, and would therefore be considered medical.

Generally, biochemical tests for drug use are considered medical tests and must be treated as such. Drug-use questionnaires can be used to ask about unlawful drugs and about drug use history without being considered medical tests. However, they cannot be used to ask about the extent of use. Alcohol testing is very similar to drug testing. A lot of how tests have been interpreted by the courts depends upon the intent of the user. This is particularly so for vision tests and physical ability tests.

The following are some specific non-medical inquiries that employers may ask applicants:

1. Can you perform the job?
2. Would you please demonstrate how you can perform the job?
(To use this type of question, employers must ask it of all candidates.)
3. Can you meet attendance requirements?
4. How much work have you missed?
(However, employers cannot ask how often an applicant has been sick)

Provisions of House Bill 4017 - Drug Free Workplace and Public Safety Assurance Act of 1996 would modify some of the provisions of the ADA. For those working in public transportation jobs, HB 4017 may affect two areas of inquiry: alcohol abuse within the past ten years (which is subject to review); and illegal drug use (for which there is no time limit on inquiries).

Dr. Arnold discussed two court cases which are related to medical test questions. In Thomson v. Borg-Warner (1994), the court ruled that the use of a psychological test is a violation of the ADA. The psychological test was labeled as a medical examination. By labeling the test as medical, Borg-Warner placed itself in a position to lose the case.

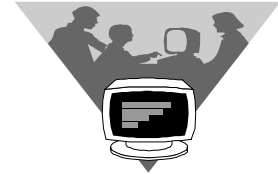
Grenier v. Cyanamid Plastics involved a worker who revealed the existence of a disability during a medical leave and was subsequently dismissed. Grenier was assigned from one shift to another because he was unable to get along with his co-workers on the original shift. He did not wish to move to the new assignment so he went on medical leave. During his medical leave, he revealed that he had a disability. He was dismissed for refusing to accept a different job assignment. After his disability benefits has expired, Grenier stated that he was ready to resume his job duties and wanted his old job back. The company refused to rehire him. Grenier then sued. The court ruled the company did not act improperly.

In summation, the use of medical examinations, and other types of tests which can be construed to have a medical aspect, involve a semantic nightmare. The issue of medical testing is still very confused because the courts and the EEOC do not always agree in their respective interpretations of the

ADA. Consequently employers need to be very careful in dealing with these questions.

Summary by:

Jim Frankart, Pennsylvania State Civil Service Commission



MAPAC On-Line

David Hamill

Maryland State Highway Administration

In this presentation, which included a preview of MAPAC's home page, David Hamill announced the creation of a new MAPAC Electronic Communications Network (ECN). Although the service will be expanded in the near future to include a home page at a website address, MAPAC's on-line capabilities are currently limited to a **Listserv** administered through the University of Baltimore.

A "Listserv" is an automated electronic mail (E-mail) system designed to provide quick and efficient communications to subscribers via computer modem. Subscribers may pose questions, exchange ideas and share information through a direct connection to the Internet or through an on-line service such as Compuserver or America-on-Line. Every subscriber will receive all the information posted to the list. Anyone who wishes to contribute to the discussion may do so at any time, while those who prefer to simply monitor the discussion without participating may do so. Obviously, the usefulness of the list increases as more people subscribe and participate.

Subscribing to MAPAC's Listserv is easy. Simply send an E-mail message to

listserv@ube.ubalt.edu. In the body of the message type: **subscribe** <**your name**> **MAPAC**. No subject heading is required. Within a day or so, you should receive a welcome message containing important information regarding the list. This message should be retained for future reference.

Summary by:

Pat Zarro, School District of Philadelphia

Biodata: When and How to Use It

Jay Gandy
Gandy & Associates

Biodata measures are among the best predictors of job performance if used very carefully. They generally have high validity (cross-validation coefficients range from the .20s to the .50s). However, validity varies greatly, depending on the quality of the items, criterion measure, key, and test administration. Biodata forms should be re-validated and, if necessary, re-keyed if the target jobs change or if the forms are to be applied to broader usage than originally intended.

Biodata also has relatively low adverse impact. Subgroup difference effect size is typically 0 - .5 of a standard deviation, compared to the typical 1.0 standard deviation for ability tests. There is typically no difference in the regression slopes and low to almost no difference in the intercepts. Also, applicants generally perceive the test items as fair.

Despite their advantages, biodata instruments have been criticized. Some of that criticism centers around test takers' perceptions of test invasiveness and the potential for faking and/or selecting socially desirable responses. Invasiveness appears to be truly in the "eye of the beholder." Studies have shown that when applicants are told

that the biodata items used in the test have been validated using measures of job success, that their answers would be used for hiring, and that only a summary score would be made available to any hiring organization, the applicants had fewer concerns regarding invasion of privacy. The more job-relevant the applicants perceived the items to be, the less invasive they perceived the items. However, two topics were considered invasive by most test takers: intimacy (dating, sexuality) and religious belief/affiliation.

Another criticism of biodata is its susceptibility to faking. There are two identifiable components: self-deception (thinking of oneself in a more favorable light) and impression management (deliberate misrepresentation of oneself). New studies show that the two components have a negative impact on both criterion and construct validity, with fakers scoring over one standard deviation higher on biodata measurements. Some of the concerns with faking may be mitigated by proper methods of test keying, scaling and scoring.

In summary, biodata are good predictors of future job success when developed and keyed appropriately. Biodata measurements should, however, be used along with other appropriate measures to create the best overall assessment. Given the current legal environment and the demands placed on organizations to show that their selection tests are valid, it is encouraging that the proper and careful use of biodata measures can actually reduce an employer's exposure to legal claims while increasing their tests' validity and utility.

Summary by:

Beth Risser, PA State Civil Service Commission

Validation & Use of the Municipal Police Selection Test

Bruce Davey
Bruce Davey Associates

The Municipal Police Selection Test (MPST) is a job analysis based multi-part examination battery which includes a specially designed Vocational Interest Questionnaire (VIQ) and a simulated training component designed to assess the amount and kinds of information candidates can remember and apply.

The assessment battery is supported with three aspects of validity evidence (content, criterion-related and construct). The essential KSAPs were identified through a multi-jurisdictional job analysis and then linked to sub-test areas and item types. The battery was then administered to a large group of candidates whose test scores were correlated with self-ratings of 23 abilities (N > 300 candidates), educational level (N > 2000 candidates), police related experience (N > 2000 candidates) and a composite of education, experience and self-ratings of abilities (N > 2000 candidates). Finally, test scores were correlated with police academy performance (5 studies and N = 173 subjects) and supervisory ratings of job performance (2 studies and N = 156 subjects). Three alternate forms of the examination have been developed to prevent over-exposure. All three forms are linked by intercorrelations.

The most notable part of the examination battery is the VIQ, which consists of 100 forced-choice items, 30 of which are specially scored to identify candidates whose disposition is likely to make them effective police officers. Unlike many other interest inventory type instruments, the VIQ was criterion-keyed to predict which candidates are likely to have higher job performance rather than those who

have the greatest level of interest. This was accomplished by administering the VIQ to a criterion group with known performance ratings. The data obtained were used to create item pairs, one alternative in each pair has a positive correlation with job performance, the other a negative correlation. The alternatives are also paired for popularity and apparent relationship to police work so that it is more difficult to fake responses. The VIQ yielded no evidence of adverse impact.

The MPST yielded uncorrected correlations with police academy grades ranging from .41 to .87 (weighted average of .60_{sig .001}) and uncorrected correlations with supervisory ratings of job performance ranging from .33 to .61 (weighted average of .45_{sig .001}).

Summary by:

Bob Schneider, PA State Civil Service Commission

Review of the Draft Standards for Educational & Psychological Tests

Wanda J. Campbell, Ph.D.
Edison Electric Institute

Five chapters of the latest proposed revisions to the Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests have been distributed for public comment. Dr. Campbell's analysis of these chapters suggests that the proposed Standards represent a significant departure from, and occasionally runs counter to, the practice of I/O psychology as it is understood today. Most of us would agree with the axiom that if a principle or practice within our field can be misinterpreted for purposes of litigation, it will be. A number of the concepts incorporated in the proposed Standards offer fertile ground for such

misinterpretation and potential abuse. Dr. Campbell's presentation highlighted some of the proposed changes which are potentially problematic.

Certain proposed changes appear to address issues related only to the educational testing environment (test coaching for example). However, as written, the proposed Standards do not differentiate between selection and educational measurement. Without such differentiation, the Standards would appear to apply equally . . . and inappropriately . . . in both environments.

In some respects, the draft Standards appear hostile to testing in general. The word "**JUSTIFY**" appears with disconcerting regularity, as though any testing action is a deviation from the norm that must be justified on an exception basis.

Some portions of the proposed Standards seem excessively research oriented, ignoring the constraints and practical limitations with which selection specialists must deal on a daily basis. For example, the Standards focus inordinate attention on the theoretical concept of construct validity, and seem to imply that any evidence for validity that lacks this theoretical framework is deficient. For most of us, the size of our applicant populations, the constantly evolving nature of many jobs and numerous other practical constraints effectively prohibit the development of construct validity evidence. Alternative validation strategies (i.e., content, criterion-related), are available to deal with these real world exigencies, and have been proven time and again to be very effective when used properly.

Other portions of the proposed Standards address technical issues

inappropriately, causing more confusion than clarification. For example:

The proposed Standards address **Reliability** as though it were an aspect of **Validity**. While test **Reliability** is a prerequisite for, and places an upper limit on, criterion-related validity coefficients, it is NOT an inherent characteristic of **Validity**.

The proposed Standards apply the term "Validity" to cut-off scores, as though there was only one "valid" cut score for any examination. The relationship between test scores and criterion measures are linear. Cut scores are based on considerations such as organizational goals, labor market conditions, and the relative utility of different cut scores. All cut scores along the score continuum would be equally "valid" . . . they simply reflect different organizational objectives.

The proposed Standards promote the concept of **Consequential Validity**, which links policy decisions (i.e., social evaluations about the relative desirability of various consequences which stem from the use of a test) with validity. While policy and validity are both important issues in a selection environment, they are separate and distinctly different.

The Standards require organizations to anticipate "plausible rival interpretations of findings by interested parties" then actively conduct research to disprove them. This is akin to requiring a search for "**THE ULTIMATE TRUTH**" . . . it just is not practical. At least some of those interested parties will be individuals who have performed poorly in a test. Such individuals may not be sufficiently knowledgeable to develop reasonable and cogent "rival hypotheses." The proposed Standards offer no protection

from any "rival hypothesis," no matter how outrageous it might be. The requirement to conduct research to disprove all rival hypotheses could raise the cost of employment tests to the point where organizations reject valid and reliable tests in favor of much less valid and reliable alternatives.

In summary, the proposed Standards could well lead to increased litigation and the decreasing use of sound employment tests which are demonstrably linked to legitimate and appropriate organizational goals. Dr. Campbell urged all of us who are selection practitioners to request copies of the proposed Standards for review, and carefully monitor the debate surrounding them.

Summary by:

Bob Schneider, PA State Civil Service Commission

What Does the Literature Say?



Some of the presenters at the fall meeting covered issues that have been written about relatively recently in professional journals. Following are two article summaries that cover topics related to what was presented. The first deals with aspects of the ADA other than those that Dr. Arnold covered, and the second with standard setting issues alluded to by Dr. Campbell in her talk on the Standards.

Fischer, R. J. (1994). The Americans with Disabilities Act: Implications for Measurement. Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice, 13(3), 17-26,37.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is not affirmative action legislation; it has no goals and timetables. It does require that disabled people be able to request accommodations to testing that will enable them to understand what the test is asking of them and provide a way for them to respond to the test tasks. Accommodation is not required if: (1) the test assesses essential job functions and any accommodation would fundamentally alter the test, or (2) accommodation would create undue hardship for the employer. Also, employers are not under obligation to provide all possible alternate ways of testing disabled applicants; they do have to offer a reasonable alternative. The best approach is to provide for applicants to tell the employer, well in advance of the test, that they will need an accommodation. Applicants should be required to document their disability, usually in the form of a letter from a health care provider. The employer should work in partnership with the disabled applicant to agree on the best form of accommodation. Accommodations are done on a case-by-case basis, using professional judgment to select an accommodation that meets the applicant's and test provider's needs.

ADA requirements translate into nothing more than good psychometric practice: procedures that result in test validity for all examinees. These procedures begin with a job analysis that documents the essential job functions. Research on the validity of alternate, accommodated testing is scarce, although ETS has done some studies. Results from research on the SAT indicate that appropriately modified tests for learning, sight and hearing disabled people have predictive validities (criterion is college performance) equal to the standard versions. Scores on standard and accommodated versions of the tests are not necessarily comparable, but there is little or no guidance from research to

inform the employer how to properly interpret scores from the accommodated versions. The best current practical advice is to use multiple indicators of performance, and to use performance measures (i.e., tests that mimic on-the-job tasks as closely as possible, such as in-baskets) rather than trying to modify standard written tests. The best overall guidance offered is to demonstrate good faith, tolerance, common sense and the genuine desire to consider those with disabilities.

Cizek, G. J. (1993). Reconsidering Standards and Criteria, Journal of Educational Measurement, 30(2), 93-106.

Most of the standard-setting literature from the last ten years has concentrated on critiques and revisions of procedures for determining cut-points. Aside from concerns for adequate levels of reliability, the strongest criticism is that all methods still are simply the result of subjective judgments. While he acknowledges this, Cizek points out the futility of this continuing criticism and suggests refocusing the study of standard setting along the lines of legal due process. In other words, do standard setters rationally derive, consistently apply, and explicitly describe the procedures for setting standards such that they can demonstrate to test takers and other stakeholders that the test takers received their "due process?" This due process model would address three concerns: 1) whether a legitimate purpose is being served; 2) whether adequate notice to stakeholders is provided; and 3) whether fairness exists (nothing in the process is arbitrary or capricious). Cizek argues that this reconceptualization will have several benefits: 1) the debate about the proper nature of standard setting will be reopened; and 2) the procedures will be improved so that they meet the due

process requirements, particularly that of clear and public explanations to the stakeholders of the legitimate need for standards, the process by which they were derived and their fairness.

Upcoming Events...

By Lance W. Seberhagen
Seberhagen & Associates

*[Reprinted from the Nov. 96 PTC/MW
Newsletter]*

Dec. 9 - Metropolitan New York Association for Applied Psychology. Dinner Meeting. New York, NY METRO Officers. "Visioning Town Meeting: What is Our Profession?" Contact: Dr. Sarah Henry, (212) 504-0140.

Dec. 10 - Behavioral Technology, Inc. Seminar. "Behavioral Interviewing." Arlington, VA Contact: (800) 227-6855.

Dec. 11 - PTC/MW Special Event! Pier 7 Restaurant, Washington, DC. Dr. Robert Hogan & Dr. Joyce Hogan, University of Tulsa. Luncheon Workshop (11:30 am -3:45 pm). "Personality Assessment for Employment." Contact: Jay Gandy, Gandy & Associates, Arlington, VA (703) 908-9692. Space is limited.

Dec. 12-14 - American College of Forensic Examiners. Annual Meeting. San Diego, CA Contact: ACFE, (417) 881-3818.

Dec. 18-20 - Inst. For Professional Education. Two Seminars: "Applied Statistics" or "Categorical Data Analysis". Washington, DC Contact: IPE, (703) 527-8700.

Jan. 8 - PTC/MW Luncheon Meeting. Pier 7 Restaurant, Washington, DC. Speaker to be announced. Contact: Dr. Beverly Dugan, HumRRO, Alexandria, VA (703) 706-5681.

Jan. 22-24 - MAPAC Winter Meeting!!

Jan. 23 - Metro New York Association for Applied Psychology. Dinner Meeting. New York, NY. Judith Sedgeman, Pransky & Associates. "Bringing Out the Best in People." Contact: Dr. Sarah Henry, (212) 504-0140.

Feb. 9-13 - Training Magazine. Annual Conference (featuring Scott Adams and Tom Peters.) Atlanta, GA Contact: (800) 765-7616.

March 3-5 - University of Michigan. Seminar,

"Job Analysis and Compensation." Ann Arbor, MI Contact: UM, (313) 763-1000.

March 6-7 - University of Michigan. Seminar. "Pay Program Strategy and Design." Ann Arbor, MI. Contact: UM, (313) 763-1000.

March 10-11 - ICON Multimedia Publishing, Inc. Short Course. "Visualizing Data: The New Frontier of Data Analysis." Washington, DC Contact: ICON, (800) 403-4266, ext. 1.

March 25-29 - American Educational Research Association. Annual Convention. Chicago, IL Contact: AERA, (202) 223-9485,

March 26-28 - National Council on Measurement in Education. Annual Convention. Chicago, IL Contact: NCME, (202) 223-9318.

Twenty-First Annual IPMAAC Conference
Newport Beach, California --
June 22-26, 1997

Requests for proposals have been issued for the conference. Proposal submissions are due by December 13, 1996. If you are interested in submitting a proposal, and have not received the submission form, contact Mike Willihnganz, Program Chair, at (916) 732-6051.

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