

Assessment Council News (ACN)

Presidential Message

By Mike Willihnganz, President

Greetings IPAC members! I am pleased to present to you the first issue of our now quarterly *ACN*. Under the leadership and guidance of our new *ACN* editor, **Jayanthi (Jay) Polaki**, and “editor emeritus” **Anthony Bayless**, the official IPAC newsletter is indeed changing. The *ACN* has long been the primary tool by which the organizational leadership has communicated with the members. With the implementation of the IPAC Communiqué, we now have a more timely means of sharing information with you. Consequently, the focus of the *ACN* is undergoing a transformation. In addition to becoming a quarterly publication, greater emphasis will be placed on more substantive content such as assessment-related research, legal updates, a summary of IPAC listserv discussions, etc. Contributions to the *ACN* are welcomed and encouraged. Do you have research findings of interest, an opinion to share, or a best practice to tout? Your fellow IPAC members would love to hear from you. Please contact Jay Polaki regarding newsletter submission format and deadlines.

In addition to changing the *ACN* publication schedule and expanding its content, access to the *ACN* is also changing. For many years, the *ACN* has been available to IPAC (and its predecessor IPMAAC) members and non-members alike. Beginning with this March issue, access to the current issue of the *ACN* will be limited to IPAC members. Non-members will continue to have access to back issues via the IPAC webpage. Why are we doing this? The *ACN* and several other products and services (e.g., IPAC Communiqué, membership directory, monographs, webinars, discounted conference registration fees) are being offered exclusively to IPAC members to create greater membership value. An independent, self-supporting, professional association such as IPAC can only remain financially sustainable if it has a strong membership base. When membership benefits can be enjoyed by non-members free of charge, there is little incentive to join the organization. Our goal is to significantly enhance the value of IPAC membership and thus increase the size and financial health of the organization. This, in turn, should lead to the delivery of expanded products, services, and program offerings.

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If you are not currently an IPAC member, I urge you to join today. Membership information can be found on the IPAC webpage (IPACweb.org).

One of the truly great benefits of IPAC membership is the heavily discounted registration rate for the annual conference. This year's conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Newport Beach in Newport Beach, California. The conference dates are July 18th through the 21st. The early bird IPAC member registration rate is only \$250! This rate certainly makes the 2010 IPAC conference one of the best conference values in recent years. Think of this as IPAC's own economic stimulus package. Conference program planning is well underway. General session speakers confirmed thus far include **Michael McDaniel, David Campbell, Scott Highhouse, and Jeff Feuquay**. With a full day of pre-conference workshops, 2 and ½ days of concurrent and general sessions, and several social events, this is one conference you will not want to miss. Conference registration materials

will be delivered to your e-mail box soon.

Finally, I would like to provide you with some advanced notice of two webinars that IPAC will be offering in the near future. **Bryan Baldwin** will be presenting "**They Posted WHAT? Searching for Applicant Information on the Web.**" **Julia Bayless** will offer a webinar on the tried and true topic, "**Job analysis.**" These webinars will be **FREE** to IPAC members. Non-members will be able to participate in the webinars for the nominal fee of \$75. Additional information regarding these free training opportunities will be provided shortly.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter. Thanks so much for your support of IPAC!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS — 1ST ANNUAL IPAC CONFERENCE



**JULY 18-21, 2010
HYATT REGENCY, NEWPORT
BEACH, CA**

The background of this section is a photograph of a golf course. In the foreground, a yellow flag on a black and white pole stands on a green. The middle ground shows a line of green bushes and trees. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a clear blue sky.

For more information about the conference, please contact **Shelley Langan** at slangan@cps.ca.gov or 916.471.3367.

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COMING SOON — 2010 IPAC Membership Directory!

The 2010 IPAC Membership Directory is slated to be published on
April 1st, 2010

For more information or to update your contact information, please contact
Julia Bayless, IPAC Membership Chair and President-Elect,
at julia.bayless@sodexo.com or 301-987-4343.

IPAC Membership Update

By Julia Bayless, Membership Chair and President Elect

In December of 2009 IPAC conducted a membership survey to learn more about what our members value, expect, and need as IPAC continues to evolve as an independent organization. As the leading professional organization dedicated to pragmatic, solutions-oriented assessment best practices, it is critical for us to be proactive in anticipating and meeting the needs of our membership in order to best serve the organization and assessment community.

What we asked...

The survey was administered online to 210 current IPAC members; of those 210 potential participants 79 completed responses were returned, for a response rate of 38%. The survey included the following topics: importance of and satisfaction with IPAC membership, benefits and services of IPAC membership, learning opportunities and communication, volunteerism and leadership, and areas of focus/priority for the future.

What you told us...

Importance and Satisfaction with IPAC Membership

The majority of respondents indicated that being a member of IPAC is important to them, that they would recommend IPAC membership to a colleague, and that they have already or intend to renew membership for 2010. Respondents also indicated the greatest level of satisfaction with content of communications, the value of membership, and the annual conference. Our greatest area for improvement is in offering educational opportunities other than the conference.

Benefits and Services of IPAC Membership

Respondents indicated that the most important benefits and services IPAC offers are sharing best practices, networking opportunities, and the annual conference. Areas for improvement

include educational and training opportunities, the newsletter, and the website.

Learning Opportunities and Communication

Survey results showed that the annual conference, webinars, and traditional classroom training (without travel) are the three most preferred formats for learning opportunities. The most desirable topic areas for learning opportunities include testing and assessment, legal issues, job analysis and competency modeling, and measurement and statistics. Survey responses also indicated an overall satisfaction with and usability of the listserv, newsletter, and website, but that all three media could be improved upon to greater serve the needs of the membership.

Volunteerism and Leadership

The majority of respondents indicated that they have not previously served on the IPAC Board or on committees, mostly due to either being new to the organization, committed to other responsibilities, or never having been asked to serve. This is a key area of opportunity for us to encourage involvement, solicit specific assistance, and offer key developmental activities for our membership to grow in their careers and in the field. Most respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the responsiveness and performance of the IPAC leadership, but that we have an opportunity to improve in being more proactive to membership needs.

Areas of Focus/Priority for the Future

We asked respondents what three things they would do if they were IPAC President for a day to grow membership and improve satisfaction. The responses provided an enormous array of potential activities, but here are some of the highlights and most frequently mentioned items:

- Focus on the conference as a must-attend event

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- Provide current, rich information in a variety of formats
- Offer a variety of education and training opportunities, tools, and resources
- Greater transparency of IPAC's mission, strategy, and leadership activities
- Growth in membership and participation through exemplary marketing
- Focus on defined and well-articulated value proposition
- Provide more and varied opportunities for involvement in the organization's direction and activities

We heard you!

The survey responses provided a wealth of information for IPAC to use in building a course for the future. In response to your feedback, the IPAC Board and Committees have taken the following actions:

- Benefits and Services of IPAC Membership:
A group of current and former board members is working with an outside vendor, the Center for Association Resources, to develop a strategic plan for IPAC, including branding and membership value proposition, development of education and training offerings, and broader outreach to the assessment community
- Learning Opportunities and Communication:
 - ◇ An outstanding annual conference offering stellar learning and networking opportunities
 - ◇ Two webinars on web-based recruiting and job analysis
 - ◇ Improvements to the ACN to place greater emphasis on content and members-only access for the current issue.
 - ◇ Website improvements including online membership renewal, more current information, and (coming soon) webinar and conference registration

- Volunteerism and Leadership:
 - ◇ We are forming subcommittees to help with the annual conference and will be soliciting volunteers to assist in a variety of capacities. Stay tuned for more – we would love to have your involvement!
 - ◇ The IPAC Board and Conference Planning Committees meet regularly (every 3-4 weeks) to ensure progress toward and accountability for organizational goals
- Areas of Focus/Priority for the Future:
 - ◇ A greater variety of resources and tools made available to members in a range of venues/media
 - ◇ More consistent messaging and marketing of IPAC's mission, values, and priorities
 - ◇ Growth in membership and participation in the organization – provide the forum for more frequent opportunities for members to learn and share best practices in the assessment field.

Thank you for your participation in the membership survey and in IPAC! Please contact the membership chair (membership@ipacweb.org) or any of the board members (information at www.ipacweb.org) with any questions, suggestions, or ideas! Stay tuned for progress updates on membership activities!



Join IPAC today!

Learn more at
www.ipacweb.org

Note from the Editor

By Jayanthi Polaki

"It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade."

Charles Dickens

IPAC Folks!

Spring is almost here in Washington D.C! As we bid adieu to the mountains of snow I have some great news to share. The ACN is turning a new leaf!

The ACN Committee comprising **Anthony Bayless, Bryan Baldwin, Bill Waldron, Carol Meyers, Hope Ripkin**, and I had put forth several suggestions to take the ACN to the next level. Beginning with this March issue, most of these suggestions have been implemented. As mentioned in the March Communiqué, access to the ACN will be limited to IPAC members. Back issues will still be available to all via the IPAC webpage (www.ipacweb.org).

In this revamped first quarterly issue of the ACN, we have included a lot of good information. We are excited to introduce a regular column, *Legal Update*, by **Richard (Rich) Tonowski**, Chief Psychologist at the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Rich has graciously offered to provide us with a timely and lively legal update on assessment and selection related topics. Please join me in welcoming Rich! Also, **Laura Shugrue**, Deputy Director at the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, discusses the use of job simulations in assessment.

The IPAC Conference Program Committee is hard at work putting together a slew of stellar offerings to kick off IPAC's first annual conference in July! This issue has lots of information regarding the conference. Please contact **Shelley Langan**, Conference Chairperson and current IPAC Board Member at slangan@cps.ca.gov if you would like to help out with conference activities.

As always, we encourage members to send in contributions related to technical content and practical experience in assessment and selection. If you would be interested in serving on the editorial team, writing an occasional article, or sharing good tidings, please drop me a line at jpolaki@mdta.state.md.us.

Please note, the submission deadline for the ACN June issue is May 1st. Thank you and I look forward to your submissions! Happy Spring!



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Using Job Simulations to Improve the Assessment Process

By Laura Shugrue, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB)

The television show *House* is about a brilliant but somewhat unbalanced doctor who works with a team of diagnosticians to diagnose some of the most rare and difficult medical cases. At one point in the show, Dr. House's team disbanded, and the hospital administrator ordered him to hire two new fellows. She provided House with 40 resumes of qualified physicians from which to choose. House hired all 40. He then spent the majority of episodes that season observing and evaluating the new doctors' performance, firing those who did not perform to his standards.

Wouldn't it be nice to have this kind of flexibility in the hiring process? After all, it seems that hiring all qualified applicants and then evaluating their actual performance over time would be the most beneficial way to determine who is the best qualified. However, House is a fictional character in a fictional hospital that doesn't have the same kind of resource limitations real organizations have.

There are other options, though. The next best thing to hiring every qualified applicant and evaluating their on-the-job performance may be to evaluate applicants' performance on exercises that closely replicate different responsibilities of the job. The U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board's (MSPB) recently published report, *Job Simulations: Trying Out for a Federal Job*, demonstrates how job simulations may help organizations distinguish between the good candidates and the superstars. MSPB defines job simulation as an assessment that presents applicants with realistic, job-related situations and documents their behaviors or responses to help determine the applicants' qualifications for the job. Job simulations include, but are not limited to, work samples, situational judgment tests,

assessment centers, and job tryout procedures.

As cited in MSPB's report, studies have shown that making selections based on the applicant's ability to do the work can lead to higher organizational performance and increased financial benefits. In addition, research indicates that increasing the predictive ability of an assessment will increase the percent of new hires who will perform satisfactorily on the job. Conversely, research suggests that selecting the wrong applicants can increase costs and decrease productivity by up to three times the employee's salary. Therefore, to reduce the costs associated with bad selections and improve the organization's ability to carry out its mission, it is important to employ good assessment strategies that help identify the best candidates for the job. Job simulations may help many organizations meet this goal.

Overall, job simulation assessments have many advantages. They tend to have higher predictive validity than other typical assessments, meaning they should be better at predicting future job performance. They provide a realistic job preview that helps applicants determine if the job is well suited to their knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests. Because job simulations replicate the types of tasks performed in the actual job, studies have found that applicants are more likely to view them as being fair and job-related. Finally, research has generally demonstrated that job simulation assessments have lower rates of adverse impact, as well as a lower degree of exposure to discrimination law suits based on the selection procedure.

MSPB's report examined four specific simulation exercises to determine their strengths and

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weaknesses. They are:

Work Sample Tests. A work sample evaluates applicants' job-related skills by having them perform actual activities or tasks that are physically or mentally similar to the duties they would perform on the job. Work samples are generally high fidelity assessments in that they use hands-on simulations with realistic materials and equipment administered under controlled circumstances. Because applicants are asked to perform a task that is similar to what is performed on the job, work samples assume that applicants already possess some of the skills necessary for the job. Therefore, they are more appropriate when hiring for experienced or skilled workers. Because they are limited in scope, work samples are best when used in conjunction with a multiple hurdle approach to assessment—successively using good assessment procedures that measure a variety of competencies.

Situational Judgment Tests. A situational judgment test (SJT) presents applicants with a description of a work-related problem scenario and asks them to exercise their judgment by choosing or evaluating alternative courses of action to the situation. The tests are almost always multi-dimensional and test different skills and abilities. Historically, SJTs have been paper and pencil tests, making them a low fidelity simulation. However, there is a growing trend in video-based testing which uses video technology to present the scenarios and even to record applicants' responses. The technology provides applicants with a more realistic feel and greater job preview. SJTs have been found to be effective measures of social functioning dimensions such as conflict management, interpersonal skills, problem solving, negotiating, and teamwork. They have also been found to be particularly useful for assessing managerial and leadership competencies.

Assessment Centers. Assessment centers (ACs) evaluate applicants on their job-related knowledge, skills, and abilities, using multiple, standardized exercises. Each exercise is developed to measure clearly defined dimensions of behavior that are observable, are specific, and consist of tasks related to the job. Trained assessors use predetermined criteria to systematically score the applicants' performance on each exercise. The scores on each of the assessments are statistically integrated so that each exercise contributes to the applicant's overall score. At least one of the assessments must be a simulation, during which participants respond behaviorally to situational stimuli related to the dimensions of performance on the job. Research has found that assessment centers can be effectively used for both employee selection and career development and that they are particularly helpful in selecting or developing supervisors, managers, and executives for promotional opportunities or development programs.

Job Tryouts. In a job tryout, applicants are hired with minimal screening of their qualifications and are given an evaluation period, much like Dr. House did in the opening example of this article. During the evaluation period, applicants receive the training they need to perform the duties of the job, and their performance is evaluated to determine if they meet the established levels of satisfactory performance. At the end of the evaluation period, they are either retained or terminated based on their performance. There is not a significant amount of professional literature pertaining to job tryout procedures—probably because true job tryouts are impractical for many organizations because of the high cost of terminating lightly screened, low performers.

The job tryout procedure can be used with almost any kind of position. However, there will be a lower the return on investment for positions that require extensive training because more

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resources will be put into an employee who was minimally screened and could easily fail. Also, job tryouts may be more useful for high-volume occupations with high turnover that need applicants continuously in the pipeline.

While job simulations can be an effective tool to evaluate applicant qualifications, they do have their drawbacks. In particular, they can be rather costly because they require more expertise to develop than other, simpler assessments. They also may require more staff and training to administer and assess the results. In addition, while job simulations can be used to assess multiple competencies, a single simulation exercise will often focus on a limited number of tasks or duties performed on the job. Finally, many job simulations are not suited to all jobs because they require the applicant to already have a certain level of knowledge, skills, or abilities to complete the assessment.

Job simulations, therefore, may not work in

every situation. That is why it is important for organizations to have a good grasp of the job for which they are hiring, the competencies needed for that job, and knowledge about what assessments would best fit their specific needs. MSPB's report provides a strategy organizations can adapt that will help them determine what assessments would best fit their hiring situation.

Laura Shugrue is the Deputy Director of the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board's Office of Policy and Evaluation. As a research analyst with the Board, she published several reports on the Federal recruitment and assessment process. The MSPB is an independent, quasi-judicial agency in the Executive branch that serves as the guardian of federal merit systems. Further information about MSPB and the full text of the reports is available at www.mspb.gov.

This article first appeared in the December 2009 issue of the International Public Management Association for Human Resources' HR News (IPMA-HR, www.ipma-hr.org). It is being re-printed with the permission of Laura Shugrue.



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For further information, please contact IPAC President **Mike Willihnganz** at Michael.Willihnganz@countyofnapa.org or (707) 259-8720.

Heard Any “Good” Lawsuits Lately? *

By Richard Tonowski, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

Let’s define “good” as providing substantive guidance on employment test development and use.

There have been plenty of interesting EEO-related cases of late. The U.S. Supreme Court has allowed adverse impact theory (*Meacham v. Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory*, 2008) but denied mixed-motive theory for age discrimination cases (*Gross v. FBL Financial Services Inc.*, 2009). Retaliation protection has been extended to those who have not been directly involved in EEO charges (*Crawford v. Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County*, 2009) and may be extended again to people who are associated with the charging parties (*Thompson v. North American Stainless, LP*, 2009). Collective bargaining agreements to grieve and arbitrate EEO complaints in lieu of the formal legal process have been upheld (*14 Penn Plaza v. Pyett*, 2009). The U.S. Congress revised the law regarding the time period for filing EEO complaints in response to the *Ledbetter* decision (*Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire*, 2007). In one of several post-*Ledbetter* cases that have similarly dealt with deadlines, a pending Chicago police hiring case will decide time limits on challenging a test found to have unlawful adverse impact (*Lewis v. City of Chicago*, 2009). Lower federal courts and state courts have also taken on some vital EEO legal issues.

But testing issues? Where are the groundbreaking legal cases and developments reshaping the field of employment testing? *Ricci* stirred up hopes and fears that the judicial view on sufficiently job-related tests had shifted (*Ricci v. DeSestafano*, 2009). Not likely. Then there’s the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) case (*U.S. v. City of New York*, 2010), where the judge granted the plaintiffs summary judgment because the city apparently had not learned the basics of content-oriented validation, despite

being tutored at length by the Second Circuit in 1980. If appealed, the case may define when ignoring adverse impact becomes purposeful discrimination. *Ricci* and FDNY may become the navigation markers between the Scylla of disparate treatment and Charybdis of disparate impact. But none of these cases addresses how to test.

EEOC’s litigation may provide a glimpse of recent and upcoming trends affecting the field of testing. However, its big-ticket resolutions (e.g., the recent \$19M Outback Steakhouse settlement; *EEOC v. Outback Steakhouse of Florida, Inc.*, 2009) only typify its dealings – with selection procedures that are perceived as overly-subjective, usually because of the absence of formal testing. Now, EEOC has concern with situations where there is persistent large adverse impact, even if there is a test in use that was validated long ago. One could wonder if the job or the applicant pool had changed over the years, but the test may be freezing the demographic situation while having lost its relevance. However, there are no current cases.

OFCCP is apparently having another banner year with entry-level hiring cases, but it generally does not disclose information on its cases (Cohen & Dunleavy, 2010). On those cases where it has, no new ground has been broken on testing issues.

So what’s out there that could change the status quo? Three recently published items explore concepts that have the potential to alter the litigation landscape:

- *Synthetic validity*. This concept has been poised for takeoff for years as a major validation strategy. Has its year finally arrived? The focal article in *Industrial and Organiza-*

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*Author’s Note. The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the EEOC.

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tional Psychology renews expectations (Johnson et al., 2010); this article and the accompanying commentaries could point the applicability of tests beyond the constraints of transportability and add a more reassuring content base to meta-analytic validity generalization.

- *Adverse impact.* *Ricci* provided a situation where the nature of adverse impact and how it is statistically computed seemed confused. A recent book on the topic, not to mention numerous journal articles, should stimulate deeper thinking on this issue (Outtz, 2010). The ideal would be a bright-line rule that if the testing procedure did thus-and-such, it was good; if it didn't, it wasn't. The underlying complexity of adverse impact probably does not allow this degree of certainty. However, strengthening the professional consensus on what works to reduce it would certainly help.
- *Quality control.* This one owes its origin to a recent article by Gutman and Dunleavy (2009). Enforcement agencies such as EEOC have been loathe to become entangled in approving tests. Use of the test is not under agency control. Moreover, the business of using a test or policing test validation is not the agency's business. However, if a "blue ribbon panel" of testing professionals were to agree on the quality of the test before it was used then that would indicate that the test met professional standards. Conversely, if the panel raised substantive issues with the test it would provide the "strong basis in evidence" to kill it. Now if only we, as a field, had a mechanism to do this. Employers might shoulder the expense for a pre-use audit of the test, believing that the cost would be offset by decreased risk of litigation. If such efforts were organized under the auspices of a professional association(s), then the cumulative experience ac-

quired from these audits could advance sound testing practice. Of course, a professional association could have the same reservations as a government agency in getting mixed up in this.

Significant professional developments in any of these three areas could influence employment testing litigation, more so than any pending or future test-related cases. Further, these developments will not necessarily result from the lack of interesting testing cases. In fact, the drought may intensify as the grounds for arguing over employment tests narrows. Testing litigation could eventually dry up.

Imagine that.

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IPAC 2010 Conference on Personnel Assessment July 18-21, 2010, Newport Beach, CA

We are pleased to announce the **1st Annual IPAC Conference!** Conference planning activities are currently underway. As we are working diligently to assemble a program that rivals years past we'll be focusing on demonstrating the value of assessment across the HR continuum. As has been our tradition, we'll find a balance of training, networking, and exploration of the best practices in assessment and HR, and we'll do it with a mix of fun in the sun in beautiful **Newport Beach at the Hyatt Regency**. So, plan on joining us **July 18-21, 2010**, for our not-to-be-missed premier event!

We are thrilled to announce our slate of renowned keynote speakers: **David Campbell, Scott Highhouse, Mike McDaniel, and Past IPMAAC President Jeff Feuquay**. Additionally, we are assembling an array of pre-conference workshops to be offered on Sunday, July 18th, which will include a mix of full-day and half-day sessions on foundational and applied topics. We are also in the process of creating the program of concurrent conference sessions that will include panel discussions, tutorials, paper presentations, and symposia all aimed at offering attendees a first-rate, cutting-edge program of assessment and testing topics. This IPAC conference will continue to explore ways to strategically align the role of testing and assessment functions across all aspects of HR, a journey we began with last year's joint conference with IPMA-HR.

As we continue with conference planning activities, we will have more details to share soon. As always, IPAC is committed to sharing state-of-the-art, innovative best practices, research, and trends in the areas of assessment, selection, recruitment, and measurement.

We look forward to seeing you in Newport Beach! Questions about the 2010 conference can be addressed to the Conference Chairperson and current IPAC Board Member, Shelley Langan, Manager, Talent Acquisition, CPS Human Resource Services at slangan@cps.ca.gov. If you are interested in working on conference planning activities, please let Shelley know – we have a number of folks who are lined up to help, and we are always interested in adding to our cadre! Additional information about the conference can be found on the IPAC website, www.ipacweb.org, or by sending an e-mail to conference@ipacweb.org.



2010 IPAC Conference—Newport Beach, CA July 18-21

Featured Speakers



Mike McDaniel

Our conference planners have been hard at work lining up a series of talented and knowledgeable speakers, including career development expert **David Campbell**. Dr. Campbell is perhaps best known for his popular books: *“If You Don’t Know Where You’re Going, You’ll Probably End Up Somewhere Else,”* and *“If I’m in Charge Here, Why Is Everybody Laughing?”*. Dr. **Michael McDaniel** will be a keynote speaker at the conference as well, drawing on his extensive experience in the areas of employee selection and litigation as an expert witness to share his insights and latest research.



David Campbell



Scott Highhouse

And we’re not stopping there! Dr. **Scott Highhouse** will be an invited speaker at the conference, sharing his expertise in employee attraction and selection, corporate reputation, and judgment and decision making. We are also pleased to announce that we have leading legal expert **Jeffrey Feuquay**, Psychologist & Attorney, CPS Project Consultant, and a frequent presenter at national and international conferences on legal issues, as a featured speaker for IPAC’s inaugural annual conference.



Jeffrey Feuquay

Pre-Conference Workshops

In addition to our featured speakers and concurrent sessions, we will also offer several pre-conference half-day and full-day workshops. These workshops are great opportunities to learn about assessment-related topics such as job analysis, exam planning, and interview development in-depth from experts in the field.

Who Should Attend?

Anyone who has an interest and responsibility for ensuring sound assessment practices in public or private sector organizations across a broad range of functions, including recruitment, selection, performance management, career development, employee engagement, and more! There are lots of ways to participate in the conference! Submit a session proposal (see other side), register for the conference, plan to attend the social events, and/or become an exhibitor, sponsor, or vendor partner for the conference!

Conference Location

Hyatt Regency Newport Beach, 1107 Jamboree Road, Newport Beach, CA 92660, USA
 Phone 949-729-1234 www.newportbeach.hyatt.com, Conference Rate: \$149/night!

Conference Fees and More Information

Registration fees for the 2010 IPAC Conference are in the table at the right. Our conference registration fees are lower than ever! Plus, membership rewards! Join IPAC today to take advantage of the membership rates for the conference! Membership for 2010 is just \$75 for regular members, \$25 for student members. Conference registration for student members is just \$100! Visit the IPAC website (www.ipacweb.org) to learn more about the organization, to join, or to find out more about the annual conference in Newport Beach, CA. Contact information for all of the IPAC Board Members and Committee chairs can be found on the website too—please contact any of these individuals for assistance or more information. We hope to have you as an IPAC member and to see you at the 2010 IPAC Conference!

Conference Registration Fees		
	Member	Non-
Early Bird	\$250	\$350
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On-Site	\$325	\$425

E-mail conference@ipacweb.org with any questions or comments



Obituary

Frank J. Landy, died peacefully with his family at his side on Tuesday, January 12, 2010. Frank was a consummate professional and indisputably one of the preeminent experts in industrial psychology. He was Professor Emeritus of Industrial Psychology at Penn State University where he taught for 26 years. He was the author of countless research articles and wrote several leading text books in psychology and industrial psychology, still being used to teach and inspire students around the world today. He co-founded two consulting organizations and testified in over 50 cases related to employment discrimination. He lectured around the world on many subjects related to employment practices. Frank was an avid runner, completing over 60 marathons. He played and collected guitars and was a great lover of music, often playing and singing publicly. He traveled widely and lived in a number of countries where he taught students about psychology in the US. He is survived by his wife Kylie Harper, his two daughters Erin and Elizabeth, his son-in-law George, and his four grandchildren. He will be greatly missed by many but most of all by his wife and loving family. A funeral service was held at St. Ignatius Loyola, 980 Park Avenue on Tuesday, January 19 at 9:30am. In lieu of flowers, the family asked to send donations to Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in his name.

Source: *New York Times* ————— *ACN*

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Summary of Recent Listserv Discussion Thread

By Bryan Baldwin, IPAC Board Member and Jayanthi Polaki, ACN Editor

Recently a spirited discussion took place on the [IPAC-List](#) regarding the interpretation of internal consistency reliability coefficients. It began with a great question from Rene Shekerjian from the NYS Department of Civil Service about how to interpret this coefficient, particularly in cases where an assessment (e.g., situational judgment test) measured multiple competencies.

Here are some excerpts of the thoughtful replies she received:

“Shoving content that addresses several different constructs into what gets *called* a single test can easily generate unacceptable alphas simply because it’s not ONE test but rather several under one banner. In other words, the alphas are low for all the right reasons.”

— Mark Hammer, Public Service Commission of Canada

“If you believe you are dealing with a homogeneous construct, but have low internal consistency, you may not be dealing with a homogeneous construct after all. SJTs are multi-dimensional assessments and internal consistency is not an appropriate indicator of the test’s reliability.”

— Paul Plata, Los Angeles County Department of Human Resources

“Bottom line, it is impossible to say that a .3, .6, or .9 would be preferable without knowing your exact purpose and the likely correlations between those domains. A .3 could be very good in some situations...The general theory of situational judgment tests (see especially Mike McDaniels’s work) is not compatible with classic notions of internal consistency. In other words, internal consistency is not an appropriate index for situational judgment tests.”

— Dennis Doverspike, University of Akron

“What the low alpha tells us is that changing a few items in the test could substantially change the inferences made on the basis of the total score (i.e., pass/fail decisions or candidate ordering on top-down selection). If you can establish test/retest reliability or parallel forms reliability, (in addition to demonstrating representative content) you may be on solid ground. Otherwise, I have suggested to René that she investigate a stratified approach to attempt to identify meaningful subscales...I would add Jones, Johnson, Butler & Main (1983; 26:3, p. 507-519) *Academy of Management Journal*. The article is on indices of interrater agreement, but the logic extends to reliability in general.”

— Lorin Mueller, American Institutes for Research

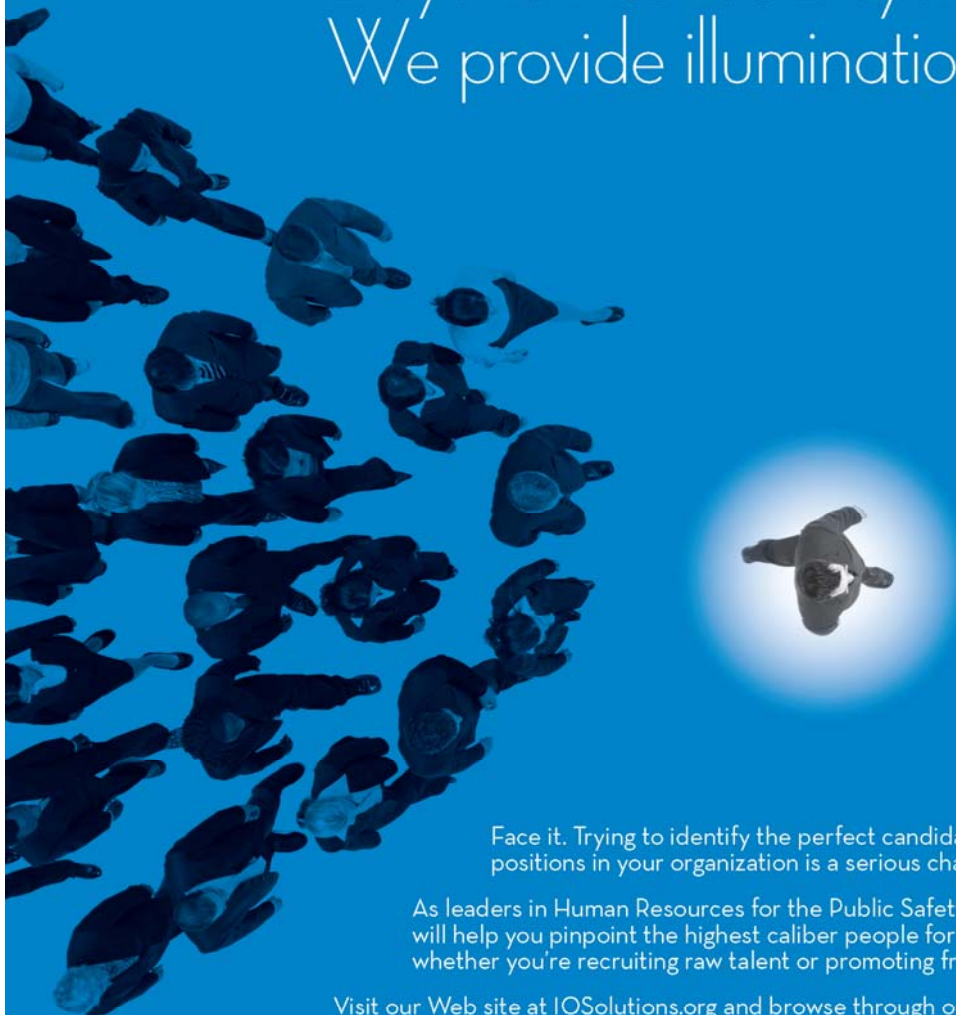
“A couple of fairly good articles that speak directly to the two issues you queried about: 1. Cortina (1993), what is coefficient alpha about? an examination of theory and applications, *JAP*, 78, 98-104...2. Lance, Butts, and Michels (2006), the sources of four commonly reported cutoff criteria: what did they really say? *ORM*, 9, 202-220 [see the section on reliability cutoffs].”

— Winfred Arthur, Texas A&M University

Join IPAC's Listserv!

The IPAC member listserv e-mail address is: ipac-list@ipacweb.org.

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News of the Councils

American Psychological Association (APA) — The 2010 conference will be held August 12-15 in San Diego, CA. For more information, visit their website at www.apa.org.

Chicago Industrial/Organizational Psychologists (CI/OP) — CI/OP is a society of human resources professionals from the Greater Chicago area who meet to discuss current issues in I/O psychology. CI/OP generally has Friday afternoon sessions from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. featuring several speakers addressing a topic. For more information and to confirm meeting dates and topics, visit their website at www.ciop.net.

Gateway Industrial-Organizational Psychologists (GIOP) — GIOP is a group of psychologists and human resources professionals in the metropolitan St. Louis area. The group offers programs and conferences on a wide range of topics. For more information, visit the GIOP website at www.giop.org.

International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA-HR) — For more information, visit the IPMA-HR website at www.ipma-hr.org.

Metropolitan New York Association for Applied Psychology (METRO) — For more information, call the MetroLine at (212) 539-7593 or visit METRO's website at www.metroapppsych.com.

Mid-Atlantic Personnel Assessment Consortium (MAPAC) — MAPAC is a non-profit organization of public sector personnel agencies involved and concerned with testing and personnel selection issues. For details on MAPAC, visit the MAPAC webpage at www.ipacweb.org.

Minnesota Professionals for Psychology Applied to Work (MPPAW) — MPPAW is an organization consisting of a broad range of practitioners, consultants, and professors who meet to encourage an open exchange of information relevant to psychology as applied to work and human resources management. For more information, visit the MPPAW website at www.mppaw.org.

Personnel Testing Council of Arizona (PTC/AZ) — PTC-AZ serves as a forum for the discussion of current issues on personnel selection and testing. It encourages education and professional development in the field of personnel selection and testing and advocates the understanding and use of fair and professionally sound testing practices. For more information about PTC-AZ, contact Vicki Packman, Salt River Project at 602-236-4595 or vspackma@srpnet.com or visit the PTC/AZ website accessible through the IPAC website at www.ipacweb.org.

Personnel Testing Council of Metropolitan Washington (PTC/MW) — PTC/MW offers monthly luncheon programs and publishes an informative newsletter. See the 2010 calendar for scheduled luncheon speakers or visit the PTC/MW website accessible through the IPAC website at www.ipacweb.org.

(Continued from page 17)

Personnel Testing Council of Northern California (PTC/NC) — PTC/NC offers monthly training programs addressing topics and issues that are useful and relevant to personnel practitioners of all levels of expertise. The monthly programs are typically scheduled for the second Friday of each month and alternate between Sacramento and the Bay area. The monthly programs feature speakers who are active contributors to the personnel assessment field. For more information regarding PTC/NC programs, visit the PTC/NC website accessible through the IPAC website at www.ipacweb.org.

Personnel Testing Council of Southern California (PTC/SC) — PTC/SC serves as a forum for the discussion of current issues in personnel selection and testing; encourages education and professional development in the field of personnel selection and testing; advocates the understanding and use of fair and non-discriminatory employment practices; and encourages the use of professionally sound selection and testing practices. For more information regarding luncheon meetings, workshops, upcoming conferences, or membership, visit the PTC/SC website accessible through the IPAC website at www.ipacweb.org.

Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) — Contact www.shrm.org/education for a current listing of seminars and conferences.

Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychology (SIOP) — The 2010 conference is scheduled for April 8-10 in Atlanta, GA. For more information, visit the SIOP website at www.siop.org.

Western Region Intergovernmental Personnel Assessment Council (WRIPAC) — WRIPAC comprises public agencies from the western region of the United States who have joined together to promote excellence in personnel selection practices. WRIPAC has three meetings each year that are typically preceded by a training offering. Additionally, WRIPAC has published a monograph series and job analysis manual. Additional information may be obtained by visiting WRIPAC's website at www.wripac.org.

Western Region Item Bank (WRIB) — WRIB is a cooperative organization of public agencies using a computerized test item bank. Services include draft test questions with complete item history, preparation of "printer ready" exams, and exam scoring and item analysis. Membership includes more than 160 agencies nationwide. For more information, call (909) 387-5575. For more information, visit the website at www.co.san-bernardino.ca.us.



Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

APRIL

- 7-10 Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Annual Conference & Workshops. Atlanta, GA. Contact: www.siop.org.
- 12-13 University of Maryland. Short Course. "Introduction to Multilevel Analysis Methods: Hierarchical Models." College Park, MD.
Contact: www.education.umd.edu/EDMS/ShortCourses/HLMworkshoppage.html.
- 14 PTC/MW. Luncheon Meeting. Speaker to be announced. GMU, Arlington, VA. Contact: www.ptcmw.org.
- 26-28 Society for Human Resource Management. Conference. "Leading Diversity." Atlanta, GA. Contact: www.shrm.org.
-

MAY

- 12 PTC/MW. Luncheon Meeting. Speaker to be announced. GMU, Arlington, VA. Contact: www.ptcmw.org.
- 14 HR Leadership Forum. Breakfast Meeting. Michael Schell & Charlene Solomon. "Criteria for Global Leadership: Identifying, Recognizing & Developing a Global Mindset." Arlington, VA. Contact: www.hrleadershipforum.org. Reservations required.
- 16-19 American Society for Training & Development. Annual Conference. Chicago, IL. Contact: www.astd.org.
- 27-30 Association for Psychological Science. Annual Convention. Boston, MA. Contact: www.psychologicalscience.org.
-

JUNE

- 3-5 Canadian Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Annual Conference. Winnipeg, Canada. Contact: www.psychology.uwo.ca/csiop.
- 7-9 International Association for Computerized Adaptive Testing. Annual Conference. Arnhem, Netherlands. Contact: www.iacat.org.
- 9 PTC/MW. Luncheon Meeting. Speaker to be announced. GMU, Arlington, VA. Contact: www.ptcmw.org.
- 10 Metropolitan New York Association of Applied Psychology. Dinner Meeting. Dr. Kristie Wright, Cisco Systems. Topic to be announced. New York, NY. Contact: www.metroappspsych.com.
- 27-30 Society for Human Resource Management. Annual Meeting. San Diego, CA. Contact: www.shrm.org.

If you have regional organization news or an item to add to the calendar, please contact the Editor by e-mail at jpo-laki@mdta.state.md.us or by telephone at (410) 537-7557.

(Some of the information in this calendar was reprinted with permission from the PTC/MW Newsletter which was compiled by Lance W. Seberhagen, Seberhagen & Associates.)

2010 IPAC Officers

President

Mike Willihnganz, IPMA-CP

Asst HR Director
County of Napa
1195 Third Street, Suite 110
Napa, CA 94559
Tel (707) 259-8720
Fax (707) 259-8720

Michael.Willihnganz@countyofnapa.org

President-Elect

Julia Bayless

Director, Talent Development
Sodexo
9801 Washingtonian Blvd, Suite 106
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
(301) 987-4343
(301) 987-4177 (fax)

Julia.Bayless@sodexo.com

Financial Officer

Reid Klion

Chief Science Officer
pan—A TALX Company
11590 North Meridian St., Suite 200
Carmel, IN 46032
(317) 814-8808
(317) 814-8888 (fax)

financial@ipacweb.org

Secretary

Ann Gonter

HR Strategies Manager
Georgia Department of Revenue
1800 Century Blvd, Suite 2225
Atlanta, GA 30345
(404) 417-2150
(404) 417-2141 (fax)

ann.gonter@dor.ga.gov

2010 IPAC Board Members

Bryan Baldwin

Staff Services Manager
California Dept of Justice
1300 I Street, Suite 720
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel (916) 322-5446

bryan.baldwin@doj.ca.gov

Warren Bobrow

All About Performance, LLC
5812 W. 76th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90045-1616
Tel (310) 670-4175
Fax (501) 635-9850

warren@allaboutperformance.biz

Christine Parker

PDRI, a PreVisor Company
3565 Ellicott Mills Drive
Suite 200
Ellicott City, MD 21043
(202) 243-9314
(443) 445-6911 (fax)

chris.parker@pdri.com

Shelley Langan

Manager, Assessment Services
CPS HR Services
241 Lathrop Way
Sacramento, CA 94815
Tel (916) 654-8538
Fax (916) 653-1353

slangan@cps.ca.gov



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2010 IPAC Committee Chairs

Assessment Council News Editor

Jayanthi Polaki

Recruitment and Examinations Unit
Office of Human Resources and Workforce
Development
Maryland Transportation Authority
305 Authority Drive
Baltimore, MD 21222
(410) 537-7557
(410) 537-7555 (fax)
jpolaki@mdta.state.md.us

Electronic Communications Network

Bill Waldron

President
Waldron Consulting Group, LLC
4111 Canoga Park Drive
Brandon, FL 33511
(813) 413-1682
elcomnet@ipacweb.org

Professional and Scientific Affairs Committee

Dennis Doverspike

Professor of Psychology
Psychology Department
University of Akron
Akron, OH 44325
(330) 972-8372
(330) 972-5174 (fax)
dd1@uakron.edu

Bemis Memorial Award Nomination

Mike Willihnganz

Asst HR Director
County of Napa
1195 Third Street, Suite 110
Napa, CA 94559
(707) 259-8720
(707) 259-8720 (fax)
Michael.Willihnganz@countyofnapa.org

Innovations in Assessment Award

Warren Bobrow

Principal
All About Performance, LLC
5812 W. 76th St.
Los Angeles, CA 90045
(310) 670-4175
warren@allaboutperformance.biz

Training/Workshops Committee

Shelley Langan

Manager, Assessment Services
CPS Human Resource Services
241 Lathrop Way
Sacramento, CA 95815
(916) 654-8538
(916) 653-1353 (fax)
slangan@cps.ca.gov

Conference Host Committee

Marianne Tonjes

Executive Director
CODESP
20422 Beach Blvd. Suite 310
Huntington Beach, CA 92648-4377
(714) 374-8644
marcodesp@aol.com

Membership & Committee Services

Julia M. Bayless

Director, Talent Development
Sodexo
9801 Washingtonian Blvd, Suite 106
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
(301) 987-4343
(301) 987-4177 (fax)
membership@ipacweb.org

University Liaison/Student Paper Committee

Lee Friedman

Principal Consultant
SpecTal
13481 Falcon View Court
Bristow, VA 20136
(571) 331-1388
leefriedman1406@yahoo.com

Conference Program Committee

Shelley Langan

Manager, Assessment Services
CPS Human Resource Services
241 Lathrop Way
Sacramento, CA 95815
(916) 654-8538
(916) 653-1353 (fax)
conference@ipacweb.org

Nominations/Bylaws Committee

Mike Willihnganz

Asst HR Director
County of Napa
1195 Third Street, Suite 110
Napa, CA 94559
(707) 259-8720
(707) 259-8720 (fax)
Michael.Willihnganz@countyofnapa.org

Continuity Committee

Julia M. Bayless

Director, Talent Development
Sodexo
9801 Washingtonian Blvd, Suite 106
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
(301) 987-4343
(301) 987-4177 (fax)
Julia.Bayless@sodexo.com

Policy and Procedures Committee

Lynne Jantz

Director, Selection & Classification
Las Vegas Metro Police Dept
101 Convention Center Dr.
Suite P 200
Las Vegas, NV 89109
(702) 828-3981
(702) 828-3980 (fax)
L2899J@lvmpd.com

About the ACN

The *ACN* is the official newsletter of the International Personnel Assessment Council, an association of individuals actively engaged in or contributing to the professional, academic, and practical field of personnel research and assessment. It serves as a source of information about significant activities of the Council, a medium of dialogue and information exchange among members, a method for dissemination of research findings and a forum for the publication of letters and articles of general interest. The Council has approximately 300 members.

The *ACN* is published on a quarterly basis: March, June, September, and December. Respective closing dates for submissions are February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1.

Submissions for Publication: Prospective authors are invited to send in their articles, research reports, reviews, reactions, discussion papers, conference reports, etc., pertaining to the field of personnel research and assessment. Topics for submission include, but are not limited to:

- Technical
- Practical – lessons learned, best practices
- Legal
- Technology/Tools
- Statistics/Measurement
- Book reviews
- HR-related cartoons (with permission to copy)

Articles and information for inclusion should be submitted directly to the Editor via e-mail, at jpolaki@mdta.state.md.us. Articles will be accepted only by electronic submission (Word compatible). Submissions should be written according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 5th edition. The editor has the prerogative to make minor changes (typographical/grammatical errors, format, etc.); substantial changes will be discussed with the author. Submissions more than 1500 words should include an abstract of maximum 100 words, preferably with three keywords.

If you have questions or need further information, please contact the Editor.

Editor

Jayanthi Polaki

Recruitment and Examinations Unit
Office of Human Resources and
Workforce Development
Maryland Transportation Authority
305 Authority Drive
Baltimore, Maryland 21222
Tel 410-537-7557
Fax 410-537-7555
jpolaki@mdta.state.md.us

Associate Editor

Legal Update

Richard F. Tonowski

Chief Psychologist
Office of General Counsel/Research
and Analytic Services
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity
Commission
131 M Street NE Room 5NW16H
Washington DC 20507-0003
Tel 202-663-4752
Fax 202-663-4196
richard.tonowski@eeoc.gov



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