



Newsletter

A monthly publication of the Personnel Testing Council of Metropolitan Washington
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May PTC/MW Breakfast Workshop

- Date:** Wednesday, May 9, 2001
- Time:** 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- Place:** Pier 7 Restaurant. 650 Water Street, SW, Washington, DC (approximately one block south of the intersection of Maine Avenue and 7th Street SW).
- Price:** Students: \$25, Members: \$40, Non-members: \$50. Free parking up to 3 hours.
- Menu:** Fresh fruit plate, an omelet of your choice, hash brown potatoes, breakfast pastries, petite breakfast rolls, coffee/tea/decaf, and juice. Choices for the omelet include: Eggbeaters (no cholesterol) plain, Eggbeaters with vegetables, Eggbeaters with ham and cheese, regular egg plain, regular egg with vegetables, or regular egg with ham and cheese.
- Reservations:** Please sign up via our website, www.ptcmw.org, or contact Sara Mallory at Caliber Associates, Tel: (703) 385-3200, Fax: (703) 385-3206. If you leave a message, please include the following information in your message: name, membership status, whether you are a student, your choice of omelet, e-mail address, and telephone number. **The deadline for workshop reservations is 2:00 p.m., Monday, May 7th.** Cancel by 2:00 p.m. Tuesday to avoid having to pay the registration fee.
- Topic:** **Emotional Intelligence in Organizations: Do We Need It and Can We Really Measure It?**
- Speakers:** **Marilyn Gowing, ASI Solutions, Inc.**
Brian S. O'Leary, U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Emotional Intelligence (EI) continues to be a hot topic on many organizational and management agendas. Yet, despite its prevalence, we hear little from an I/O perspective on the subject. Beginning with the background of EI, the session will develop foundational issues such as definitions and different models of EI, and tackles the question of "do we need emotional intelligence in organizations?" The session then reviews the state of the art in the measurement of EI, covering various measurement strategies and instruments. The workshop will pose such questions as: What is Emotional Intelligence? What are the major models of EI? How is EI the same or different from Emotional Competence? Can we and should we measure a person's "E-IQ"? What are the best instruments to measure EI? Are there any demonstrated benefits to EI-based assessment and training interventions in organizations? What might EI training look like in an organization? This workshop will provide participants with background, models, research, and experiences to develop answers to these questions about EI. The issues are approached from both a practical and professional viewpoint. The workshop will combine presentation, EI assessment, demonstration, and group discussion to create a rich multi-method learning experience.

Marilyn K. Gowing, Ph.D. is vice president for ASI Solutions, Inc. in Washington, DC. Dr. Gowing's publications include chapters in the Scientific Frontiers and Practitioner Book Series of SIOP and books on job analysis and downsizing. Dr. Gowing has been a national officer of SIOP. Recent awards she has received include the Presidential Meritorious Rank Award in 1999 and being named Distinguished Psychologist in Management for the Year 2000 by the Society of Psychologists in Management.

Brian S. O'Leary, Ph.D. is currently director of the Competency Assessment Division of the Personnel Resources and Development Center in the Office of Personnel Management. This division develops and evaluates personnel assessment instruments for selection and promotion programs throughout the federal government and for state and local governments. Dr. O'Leary has served on committees for SIOP and the Personnel Testing Council/Metropolitan Washington.

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President's Message

Ann Quigley
United States Postal Service

When I was being trained in I/O, a real emphasis was put on being an educated consumer of assessments, and being able to critically evaluate assessments. The refrain "where's the manual?" was nothing short of a mantra, and if there wasn't one, the odds were slim to none that the assessment would pass muster. In fact, the absence of a manual was usually sufficient on its face to cast serious aspersions on a measure – certainly those used for selection or other employment decisions, and really for any use short of perhaps making entertaining conversation at cocktail parties.¹

And of course as a matter of good practice we learned about other resources for evaluating an instrument – the *Principles*, the *Standards*, *Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbook Tests in Print*, etc. These and similar resources afforded a presumably objective view of and ways to assess many instruments we might encounter.

On the other hand, we were also taught the importance of documenting our work. It was typical to prepare a validation study report consistent with the *Uniform Guidelines* (remember those?), specifically Section 15, "Documentation of Impact and Validity Evidence." If you haven't looked at this section lately, it may be beneficial to review. This section includes statements such as "[t]his evidence should be compiled in a reasonably complete and organized manner to permit direct evaluation of the validity of the selection procedure...a full description of all criteria on which data were collected and the means by which they were observed, recorded, evaluated, and quantified should be provided..." etc.

In the considerable time that has passed since I so often heard "where's the manual?", I have asked that question myself more times than I can count. The difference today is that this is far from a purely academic exercise. Now the context is that an instrument may be under consideration for use in a way that may have significant financial and other consequences for the organization.

Obviously the purveyors of many assessments (some with *lots of sales*) did not get the same drill I did, or at least

they are counting on potential consumers of their products not knowing how to tell a good test from bad. I had occasion to review a "test manual" recently that prompted this column. To the naïve observer it likely looks very "official" – lots of technical and legal terms, text written in very authoritative tones, testimonial letters from clients, praiseful letters from attorneys, and important and impressive sounding "data."

On further examination, however, all is not what it may seem to those who have spent perhaps thousands of dollars to identify job applicants likely to be successful.

The document is strewn with the phrases "content," "criterion related" and "construct validity," including "significant criterion validity" and "powerful construct validity." Curiously, though, there is no data to support these pronouncements. The only coefficients in the document are reliability estimates (the longest test-retest period reported is six months). Most of the references are 15 years old, there is not a single refereed publication about the instrument cited, and not a bona fide technical report in sight. No subgroup analyses of any kind are reported, and this omission was purposeful at the direction of the test developers' legal counsel since "the four-fifths rule does not apply to behavior or values ...[and]...there are many scientists who claim these types of issues are inherited."

Then there are the statements about how adverse impact is illegal and "the protected group is usually a minority person...but can be anyone." At least when there isn't a manual, there is a certain genuineness about it – a *faux* manual such as this one is more pernicious than none at all.

Many of us are not able to advance the use of assessments in our organizations because we struggle to ensure that those assessments pass muster in terms of professional, legal and technical standards. It is ironic that at the same time many are happily testing away and making employment decisions based on "instruments" no more legitimate or defensible than a horoscope or tarot cards. Unfortunately, the considerable faith of "true believers" in these instruments does not enable them to distinguish a "real" test manual from sales gimmickry or to really evaluate the appropriateness and benefits of a test for a given purpose.

These days, "where's the manual?" isn't enough to overcome "show me the money"....

PTC

PTC Executive Board Meeting

The Executive Board holds regular meetings throughout the calendar year. Contact PTC/MW President Ann Quigley via telephone at (202) 268-3952 or e-mail at aquigley@email.usps.gov for the date and location of the next meeting.

¹ For a useful reference, see Sparks, C.P. (1990) **How to read a test manual**. In J. Hogan and R. Hogan (Eds.), *Business and industry testing: Current practices and test reviews* (pp. 36-47). Austin: Pro-Ed.

MARCH LUNCHEON SUMMARY

Building a Selection Test Battery: Validity, Fairness, and Other Tradeoffs

Chris Sager

Human Resources Research Organization

The March luncheon speaker was Dr. Laress L. Wise. He is the President of the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO).

Multiple-aptitude test batteries are commonly used in employment testing. Dr. Wise presented an approach for combining scores from multiple tests that seeks to minimize mean score differences on the composite score for minorities and other applicant groups without significantly reducing validity.

A central question in this context is: why do we use multi-aptitude test batteries? Broadening the range of aptitudes assessed can improve the selection process. Multiple tests can more completely assess the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other attributes (KSAOs) required to perform a job, thereby enhancing the content validity of the test. It is beneficial to applicants when minor deficits in some skills can be compensated for by strengths in other skills or attributes. Additionally, multi-aptitude test batteries often result in improved prediction of job performance (i.e., criterion-related validity) relative to using a single test.

The APA/AERA/NCME (1999) *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* offer advice in this area. Standard 7.10 indicates that when mean subgroup differences in scores are discovered, the possibility that differences are due to construct underrepresentation or construct-irrelevant variance should be considered. Multiple-aptitude batteries may help avoid construct underrepresentation. Standard 7.11 asserts that when tests show approximately equal content validity, mean subgroup differences should be considered when deciding which to use. This implies that we should seek composites that minimize subgroup differences while maintaining overall validity. Finally, Standard 7.6 talks about ways to study differential prediction among relevant subgroups. This is consistent with the desire to develop test battery composite scores that minimize prediction differences among groups (i.e., regression slope differences indicating differential sensitivity and subgroup mean level differences indicating under- or over-prediction).

The problem is that there are tradeoffs to consider when deciding how much weight to give to each test in the creation of a composite score. One goal is to assign weights to each test that maximize criterion-related validity (i.e., the correlation between the test composite

and a measure of job performance). However, those weights might not be the ones that (a) minimize mean subgroup differences on the composite (potentially leading to adverse impact), (b) minimize differences in the slopes of the prediction equations across groups indicating differential validity, or (c) minimize differences in the levels of the prediction equations indicating potential under- or over-prediction. In fact the test weights that lead to minimizing the mean subgroup differences on the composite between two groups (e.g., Whites vs. Blacks) might not be the same weights that minimize the differences for a different pair of groups (e.g., males vs. females).

To address this problem, Dr. Wise described a computer program that he developed to assess tradeoffs among validity, mean subgroup differences, differential validity, and differences in level of prediction. He demonstrated the program using data collected as part of a study conducted by HumRRO, Caliber, PDRI, and RGI to validate a new selection battery for use with air traffic controllers called ATSAT. This selection battery had two desirable characteristics for this situation: (1) it included 12 tests measuring a variety of aptitudes identified as relevant to the prediction of air traffic controller job performance and (2) the tests varied in terms of mean differences across subgroups and degree of relationship to the criterion.

The program, called PREDWTS, requires the user to input (a) the weights to be given each of two criterion variables to create a single criterion composite, (b) the weights indicating the relative importance of optimizing validity, mean predictor composite differences, regression slope differences, and/or difference in level of prediction, and (c) an indication of which tests to exclude or include. For example, the user might indicate that (a) the job performance rating score and job simulation score should be equally weighted to generate a composite criterion, (b) validity should get a weight of 0.5 and minimizing White-Black differences should get a weight of 0.5 indicating that each is equally important to optimize, and (c) all tests should be included. The program generates optimal test weights for this policy and related indices describing the performance of the resulting weights including the validity coefficient, standardized mean subgroup differences for the predictor composite and statistics relevant to regression slope differences and level of prediction differences.

----- **CONTINUED AT THE BOTTOM OF PAGE 5**

Get Involved!

Yes, there are opportunities to get involved in PTC/MW!

If you are interested in getting actively involved in this organization, contact PTC/MW President Ann Quigley via telephone (202) 268-3952 or e-mail aquigley@email.usps.gov.

Survey Says: Top 10 I/O Psychology Departments

Lance Seberhagen

Seberhagen & Associates

According to the latest rankings of graduate schools by the *U.S. News and World Report*, the Washington, DC, area now has two of the Top 10 I/O psychology programs in the United States. The University of Maryland moved up from 5th to 4th place since the last survey was published in 1998, while George Mason University entered the list for the first time this year in the 8th position.

The rankings were based on a survey of psychology department chairs and directors of graduate studies for programs that awarded at least five doctorates during 1991-1995, plus programs that appeared in the 1998 Survey of Earned Doctorates. The survey questionnaire asked respondents to rate the quality of the I/O program at each school on a five-point scale as Distinguished (5), Strong (4), Good (3), Adequate (2), Marginal (1), or Don't Know. The response rate for psychology departments, many of which publicly objected to the survey, was only 20 percent for the 2001 survey, down from 33 percent in 1998.

The survey results may not have a high degree of reliability and validity, and are probably little more than "codified rumor," but they do spark interest and debate. Here are the rankings from the 1998 and 2001 surveys:

I/O Psychology Department	1998*	2001
Michigan State University	1	1
University of Minnesota	2	2
Pennsylvania State University	5	3
Bowling Green State University	3	4 (tie)
University of Maryland	5	4 (tie)
University of Illinois	4	6
University of South Florida	7	7
George Mason University	-	8 (tie)
University of Akron	7	8 (tie)
Georgia Institute of Technology	-	10

* Also listed in 1998: Ohio State (7th), Colorado State (10th).

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Visit us at <http://www.ptcmw.org>. Find out about recent legal and other developments in our field – Check the calendar for upcoming professional events – Learn about PTC – Find out how to become a PTC member.

Dr. Irv Goldstein is PTC Nominee for the Stephen E. Bemis Memorial Award

Suzanne Tsacoumis

Human Resources Research Organization

It's the time of year to nominate someone for the Stephen E. Bemis Memorial Award. This award is intended to reflect on both the tangible contributions that Steve Bemis provided to our profession and on the open, caring attitude that characterized his personality. His primary concerns centered around the need to develop tests that were truly job related and did not unfairly discriminate against any group. PTC/MW is pleased to nominate Dr. Irv Goldstein for this award. Dr. Goldstein has a long-standing reputation for effectively helping organizations develop and implement valid and unbiased personnel programs. His commitment to working toward practical solutions given numerous logistical and political constraints and his efforts to coach and mentor others make him an ideal candidate for this award.

All nominations will be reviewed during the next few months and the award will be presented at the IPMAAC conference in June 2001.

PTC

MEMBER NEWS

In February, Deborah Whetzel, a past president and member of PTC for over 15 years, joined Caliber Associates. In her new position, Deb will be conducting research and developing tools for various human resources applications. Her updated contact information is: Caliber Associates, 10530 Rosehaven Street, Suite 400, Fairfax VA 22030, Tel: (703) 219-4402, E-mail: whetzeld@calib.com.

Congratulations to Dr. Marilyn Gowing, Vice President of Public Sector for Assessment Solutions Inc., Washington, DC, who was inducted as a Fellow of the Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology at the 2001 SIOP conference in San Diego, CA. Marilyn is a past President of PTC/MW and will be presenting a PTC/MW workshop with Dr. Brian O'Leary on "Emotional Intelligence" in May 2001.



Welcome New Members!

Regular Members

Kim Brimhall, *Prometric - Thomson Learning*

James Connolly, *Aon Consulting*

Jamie Donsbach, *U.S. Office of Personnel Management*

Marianne Higgins, *GEICO Direct*

Jennifer Hurd, *Aon Consulting*

Jillian Petro, *Development Dimensions International*

Student Members

Jeffrey Cucina, *George Washington University*

PROFESSIONAL CALENDAR

by Lance W. Seberhagen, Seberhagen & Associates, sebe@erols.com

- Apr 30- May 3 Linkage Inc. Conference. "Coaching & Mentoring: Proven Skills, Tools and Techniques for Accelerating Individual and Organizational Development." Arlington, VA. Contact: LI, (781) 862-3157.
- Apr 30- May 3 Linkage Inc. Conference. "Change 2001: Maximizing Organizational Effectiveness, Innovation & Sustainability." San Francisco, CA. Contact: LI, (781) 862-3157.
- May 2 Washington Statistical Society. Seminar. Kenneth Cogger, University of Kansas. "Modern Regression Methods: Differences and Similarities." Washington, DC. Contact: Karen Jackson, Tel (202) 691-7524.
- MAY 9 PTC/MW. SPECIAL EVENT! LUNCHEON/WORKSHOP. Dr. Marilyn Gowing, ASI, Washington, DC, & Dr. Brian O'Leary, U.S. Office of Personnel Management. "Emotional Intelligence." Pier 7 Restaurant, Washington, DC. Contact: Ms. Sara Mallory, Caliber Associates, Tel. (703) 385-3200, or ptcmw.org.**
- May 10 Metro NY Association for Applied Psychology. Dinner Meeting. Dr. Tony O'Driscoll, IBM. "Knowledge Management and Organizational Leadership." New York, NY. Contact: METRO, (212) 539-7593.
- May 14 James Madison University. Leadership Seminar. Stephen Covey, author of *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. "Leadership is a Choice: The Four Roles of a Leader." Washington, DC. Contact: JMU, (800) 873-3451 or lessonsleadership.com.
- May 14-16 Institute for Professional Education. Seminar. "Linear and Nonlinear Regression with Applications." Washington, DC. Contact: IPE, (703) 527-8700 or info@ipeseminars.org.
- May 16-18 Mid-Atlantic Personnel Assessment Consortium. Spring Meeting. New York, NY. Contact: Robyn Talesnik, (410) 545-5630.
- May 17 James Madison University. Leadership Seminar. Stephen Covey, author of *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. "Leadership is a Choice: The Four Roles of a Leader." Washington, DC. Contact: JMU, (800) 873-3451 or lessonsleadership.com.
- May 21-24 Linkage Inc. Leadership Development Conference. "Developing Yourself and Your Organization's Leaders for the Future." Anaheim, CA. Contact: LI, (781) 862-3157.
- May 22-25 Organization Development Institute. Conference. "What Is New in OD?" Chicago, IL. Contact: ODI, (440) 729-7419.
- May 23-25 Center for the Study of Work Teams. Annual Symposium. "Collaborative Work Systems." Denton, TX. Contact: CSWT, (940) 565-3096.
- May 30 Washington Statistical Society. Seminar. David Banks, U.S. Department of Transportation. "Data Mining in Classification and Cluster Analysis." Washington, DC. Contact: Karen Jackson, Tel (202) 691-7524.
- Jun 9-14 IPMA Assessment Council. Annual Conference. Newport Beach, CA. Contact: IPMA, (703) 549-7100.
- JUN 13 PTC/MW. LUNCHEON MEETING. Dr. Seymour Adler, Assessment Solutions Inc, Washington, DC. "Measuring Customer Service Skills." Pier 7 Restaurant, Washington, DC. Contact: Ms. Sara Mallory, Caliber Associates, Tel. (703) 385-3200, or ptcmw.org.**

Future SIOP: Toronto, 2002; Orlando, 2003; Chicago, 2004; Los Angeles, 2005.

LUNCHEON SUMMARY, FROM PAGE 3

Dr. Wise shared some of the results from the ATSAT project analyses. These results demonstrated that the PREDWTS program can clearly show the tradeoffs associated with adjusting test weights. One example of the strength of PREDWTS as a decision making tool is that it can show what the consequences for validity are as the test weights are incrementally adjusted toward the goal of minimizing subgroup mean differences on the composite. That is, "If I value minimizing White - Black mean differences a little more, what will the consequences be in terms of changes in the criterion-related validity of the composite?" This program and these

kinds of analyses can provide decision makers strong empirical information for determining the weights to give tests when they are trying to develop selection systems that maximize validity and optimize fairness.

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S THANK YOU TO

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FOR SPONSORING THE UPCOMING MAY WORKSHOP

PERSONNEL TESTING COUNCIL OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON

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PTC/MW Elected Officers, 2001

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Vice President	Chris Sager, Ph.D.	HumRRO	(703) 706-5671	csager@humrro.org
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PTC/MW Committee Chairs, 2001

Committee	Name	Affiliation	Work Phone	E-Mail
Nom/Elections	Shane Pittman, Ph.D.	Pittman McLenagan Group	(301) 320-9500	shanep@pittmanlc.com
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Calendar	Lance Seberhagen, Ph.D.	Seberhagen & Associates	(703) 790-0796	sebe@erols.com

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