

# Minnesota Professionals for Psychology Applied to Work

## Upcoming Speaker

By Joyce Bono, VP Programs

**Thursday, September 18, 2003:** Extracting trait information from judgments about behavioral effectiveness  
**Steve Motowidlo, Ph.D.**, University of Minnesota

The University of Minnesota plays an important part in Steve Motowidlo's professional life. He earned his Ph.D. at Minnesota, and after several years as a professor at other institutions (in both business schools and psychology departments), and a stint as a research associate (Personnel Decisions Research Institute), he returned to the Psychology Department at Minnesota in 2000.

Steve has published both theoretical and empirical papers in areas such as contextual performance, interview validity, performance ratings, and stress. His work has been published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes*, *Personnel Psychology*, *Human Performance*, and the *Polish Psychological Bulletin*. Prior to earning his Ph.D. at Minnesota, Steve completed an undergraduate degree in Psychology at Yale University. In addition to being a well-published researcher, Steve is an avid fisherman. He and his wife, Theresa Van Noy, spend their summers at their cabin in Canada with their dog and cockatiel.

Steve's current research is in the area of situational judgment tests (SJT). He has been exploring the relationship between judgments about effective responses to situational judgment items and individual personality traits. His basic argument is that people form judgments about how to deal with challenges described in situational judgment items according to their underlying traits. For instance, agreeable people should think that agreeable responses are especially effective, and extroverted people should think that extroverted responses are especially effective. The overall objective of this work is to see whether SJT formats might let us predict work behavior (e.g., the contextual side of job performance) in a way that is more resistant to faking than traditional personality tests seem to be.

Steve will describe a series of studies in which he and his colleagues have: a) developed SJT measures that are especially saturated with trait information; b) tested relations between SJT scores for personality traits and traits as measured by the NEO; c) compared the "fake-ability" of SJT formats that score personality in this way with traditional personality test formats; and d) examined the relationship between these SJT personality scores and behavioral measures of personality.

One implication of this research is that when people give open-ended responses to situational judgment item stems, and describe what they think should be done to deal with a challenging work situation (as in the situational interview), their responses partly reflect their traits and their responses may be able to be scored as traits. Another implication of Steve's research on trait-linked responses to situational items is that when people judge the effectiveness of multiple choice responses to

situational items, their effectiveness judgments should also carry trait information. When a response reflects a high level of a trait such as agreeableness, for instance, agreeable people should think it is more effective than disagreeable people do. Following this logic, Steve and colleagues' recent research efforts include building situational judgment tests specifically to tap traits of agreeableness, extroversion, and conscientiousness.

To learn more about Steve Motowidlo's recent work on personality and responses to situational judgment tests, join us on September 18!

## MPPAW Update

by Carol Lynn Courtney, President

Welcome back existing members, and welcome new members! We are approaching fall and MPPAW is beginning its new season. We have a wonderful cadre of speakers thanks to Joyce Bono, with assistance from Marcia Sytsma. Steve Motowidlo will be kicking off the year on Thursday, September 18, focusing on personality and situational judgment tests. Another highlight is Filip Leivens, a European scholar from the University of Ghent who will be at the University of Minnesota as a visiting Fulbright Scholar. He will be discussing competency models and European perspectives on I/O in November. We will be continuing the invited speaker series with Frank Landy, CEO of SHL Litigation Support Services, in February.

As in the past, please invite your colleagues to join MPPAW by passing on a registration form. Besides the outstanding programs, you can entice people to join for the food!! We are adding variety to the social hour menu this year by having a mix of the usual catering service, pizza and/or subs. Beginning this year, individuals can join and pay their membership dues online at [www.mppaw.org](http://www.mppaw.org). We hope that this new payment option will be convenient for members, although the previous method (sending in the membership application form along with payment) will continue to be available.

This year, we would like to introduce the idea of SIGs (Special Interest Groups) to MPPAW. The MPPAW board would like to pilot a group that examines the place of pro bono work in our various fields and professions. There are a number of MPPAW members who engage in some form of pro bono work. This could be a forum to gather ideas for others to participate and/or learn more from the experiences of their colleagues. It could serve as a medium for those presently doing pro bono work to bounce ideas, approaches, etc., off others. It can also be a great mechanism for student involvement and further understanding of the various fields of study represented by MPPAW members and how they give back. [We are also interested in other ideas for SIGs.]

As a reminder, members requested that we continue to begin the meeting at 5:30pm but start the announcements at 6:20pm. This allows the presentation to begin promptly at 6:30 and finish before 8pm. This provides for social time, information sharing, a full program and leaving a bit earlier. We're looking forward to a great MPPAW year!

## May Presentation

Summary prepared by Adam Soderlind, Co-Secretary

### Mid-Career Changes: Becoming a Psychologist

**Janice Mileo**, J.D., Psy.D., MDA Consulting Group

**Tina Decker**, Psy.D., Best Buy Company

**Janice Mileo** spent 20 years as a lawyer and senior corporate executive. When she decided to change careers, the people around her were completely shocked. In the early 70s, Janice had wanted to enter business but ended up in law school. After completing law school, she worked with corporate issues. Wanting broader responsibility, she went to a company called Travelers Express, where she was a lawyer within the company. She was successful and began reporting directly to the president. Janice outlined her career transformation in 4 "Defining Moments."

Defining moment number 1 came after she began to translate legal concepts for her boss. Since she was involved in a variety of areas including patents and Human Resources, she also received more responsibility, e.g., budgeting, scheduling, and hiring. The success of her department resulted in growth from two lawyers to five. Her defining moment was when she became VP and sat in on meetings, where she became intrigued by the business perspectives.

Defining moment number 2 came when she began to see the world as a business person. She worked on maximizing profit by growing revenue and reducing expenses. As she used her legal knowledge to benefit the company, she began to notice communication troubles, good people in bad-fit situations, and people who could not work together. The internal issues were more problematic than the outside competition, and nothing was getting done. Janice also saw a high number of changes in management, as the company went through three different CEOs in a very short period of time. The final CEO made a positive impression on her, and she realized just how critical it was to have a good leader to be successful.

Defining moment number 3 occurred as she reviewed the critical impact of the leader on the company. She also noticed that a psychological assessment, MBTI, could identify and potentially help improve internal communications.

Defining moment number 4 took four years as she networked, received career counseling, and researched graduate schools. She decided that Psychology was definitely going to be her focus as she believed that the individual is where to start. She then had to review her practical issues – could she afford it? What about medical insurance? Would she enjoy it? The career counseling that she received helped her identify a vision and establish excitement about a new position. Finally, she started graduate school. Janice overcame some challenges such as slow reading, the comparison of psychology and law, and getting used to psychological theories and no supreme court. She was taught as a lawyer to guard against attack and to not trust anyone. As a psychologist she has been trained to build trust. She truly enjoyed her school experience.

Since she started working as a psychologist, she has learned six lessons. # 1: The work psychologists do is important in organizations. # 2: To be successful, I need to be a generalist as well as a specialist. # 3: Leaders are always making choices. # 4: Leaders want results, not knowledge or process. # 5: I need to understand what results are important to the organization. # 6: I need to make the connection between what I do and the result that the organization wants.

**Tina Decker** decided to become a psychologist in 1985 but did not begin her doctoral pursuit until 1990, when she was part of a group of five women who were told that they would never get into graduate school due to their age! Although she and her husband were living in

Texas at the time, Tina applied and was accepted into the graduate program in Florida. Her youngest child had just left for college when she began her studies.

With the support of her husband, Tina moved to Florida to pursue her doctorate, and took 20 hours of courses the first semester. She needed to earn her masters degree to be qualified for the clinical psychology doctorate program, into which she was accepted after a lot of hard work. She earned her degree as she completed her internship.

Her first position after graduate school was with a Pain Management Clinic, where she discovered there simply was no money to be earned. Her second position was with a consulting firm where she received more money and the opportunity to travel. She worked on projects at a nuclear plant before starting a project with Best Buy. That project lasted 6 months and she had a great experience. She began to spend more and more time at Best Buy until one day she was asked to meet with some executives. The weather was cold when she arrived for the meeting, thinking to herself, "Who would ever live here?" Best Buy was so impressed with her work that they offered her a position with Human Resources. She is now Senior Vice President of Human Capital and Leadership for Best Buy.

Tina was 43 when she started graduate school and she never had any regrets about the decision. Although she loved the camaraderie at the consulting firm, she does not miss the travel. It was challenging for Tina to learn her new role at Best Buy, since she was no longer an external consultant and needed to fit in with the other workers. She worked hard to fulfill their expectations.

## Member Profile

by Adam Soderlind, Co-Secretary

### Marty Weiland, Operations Analyst, Delta Dental

Marty grew up in Brainerd, Minnesota. He received his BA in Psychology from the University of Minnesota, Morris and his M.A. in I/O Psychology from MN State University. He has always been geared toward analytics. Marty has been a member of MPPAW for the past five years.

Marty is in charge of Delta Dental's Customer Satisfaction and Performance Measurement Department. Although Delta Dental is the primary dental insurance product that he works with, he also handles several other brands of dental insurance. His main job responsibilities can be broken down into two basic areas: 1) survey development and administration, and 2) measuring and monitoring internal performance metrics.

The majority of his time is spent working with internal metrics within Operations and Customer Service. Delta has a continuous customer monitoring program, i.e., surveys are sent out on a monthly basis.

His primary goal is to provide Delta with accurate and actionable information that can be used to make wise business decisions, which would hopefully lead to higher customer satisfaction, an increase in market share, and ultimately company growth. Marty is continuously looking for ways to obtain better information, e.g., revising how a department is measuring productivity, or identifying primary drivers of satisfaction from various stakeholder groups. These stakeholder groups include subscribers, providers, and group administrators who represent the companies that ultimately make the decision to buy or not to buy Delta products.

To keep some life/work balance, Marty and his wife spend a lot of weekends up north on the lakes during the summer. He definitely considers himself an outdoors person. Cycling is another favorite activity; this past summer, 25-mile rides along the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers have become an after-work ritual. He believes it is a great way to unwind.

## 2003-2004 Calendar

By Joyce Bono, VP Programs

Get out your calendars and fill in MPPAW dates for 2003 – 2004!! We have scheduled what promises to be another interesting, entertaining, and informative line-up of presenters. See you there!

### September 18:

**Steve Motowidlo**, Professor, University of Minnesota  
*Personality and situational judgment tests: Extracting trait information from judgments about behavioral effectiveness*

### October 16:

**Rob Schneider**, Research Scientist, PDRI  
*Social Competence: Current research, history, and links to Emotional Intelligence*

### November 20:

**Filip Leivens**, Professor, Univ. Of Ghent, Visiting Fulbright Scholar  
*Competency modeling and European perspectives on I/O*

### January 15:

**Gordy Curphy**, President, Curphy Consulting Services  
*Leaders, transitions, and teams: Implications for assessment and development*

### February 19:

**Frank Landy**, CEO, SHL Litigation Support Services  
*Can we protect psychology from the law? Can we protect the law from psychology? What's new in employment litigation?*

### March 18:

**Scott Brooks**, Executive Consultant, Director of Research and Development, Gantz Wiley Research  
*Employee attitudes: Ethics, the economy, and links to customer and business results.*

### May 20:

**Panel Discussion:** What have you done for us lately?  
*An open discussion between MPPAW members and executives regarding the role of psychology in business. What do we do well? What should we do more of? How can we better communicate with business executives?*

## Membership Information

If you are not yet a member or have not renewed your membership, this newsletter has been sent to you as a courtesy. Please send in your membership fee if you wish to continue receiving the newsletter.

**Pay your dues on-line:** Beginning this year, individuals have more options for renewing their membership.

- ♦ You can join and pay their membership dues **online** at [www.mppaw.org](http://www.mppaw.org).
- ♦ Fill out the enclosed Membership Application Form and mail it to MPPAW along with your check or money order.
- ♦ Bring your completed Membership Application Form and payment to the first MPPAW meeting on September 18.

**For more information** about MPPAW membership, contact Sid Teske at 612.348.4443 or [sid.teske@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:sid.teske@co.hennepin.mn.us). For information about PayPal and/or on-line payment options, contact Nikki Moore at [webmaster@mppaw.org](mailto:webmaster@mppaw.org).

## Format of Meetings

Meetings begin at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour, followed by the presentation. The presentation begins at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting will conclude at 8:00 p.m.

A door fee of \$10.00 per MPPAW member and \$20.00 per non-member (\$5.00 and \$15.00 for students) will cover hors d'oeuvres, food, and soda at the social hour. This fee will also cover the costs associated with the presentation that evening.

The meetings are held at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota (West Bank of the Twin Cities campus), 301 – 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Minneapolis. The room reserved for the presentation is 180A and B. Parking is available at the ramp across the street, at the corner of 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street South.

**Directions from the west:** take I-94 east to the Riverside Avenue exit. Turn left onto 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. Cross over I-94 and then turn left onto Riverside. Follow Riverside to ¼ block past 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and enter the parking ramp on your right.

**Directions from the east:** take I-94 to the Riverside Avenue exit. Turn right onto Riverside. Follow Riverside to ¼ block past 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue and enter the parking ramp on your right.

**Directions from the south:** take I-35W north to the University of Minnesota – West Bank exit. Turn right onto Washington Avenue (which will curve to the right in 2 blocks and become Cedar Avenue). Turn left at the third stoplight onto 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (one-way). Enter the parking ramp on your right.

**Directions from the north:** take I-35W south. Take the Washington Avenue exit (to West Bank). Turn left at the top of the exit ramp onto Washington Avenue (which will curve to the right in 3 blocks and become Cedar Avenue). Turn left at the fourth stoplight onto 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (one-way). Enter the parking ramp on your right. The Humphrey Institute is across the street from the parking ramp, next to the Carlson Center.

## Continuing Education Credits

For Licensed Psychologists needing to meet the CEU requirements of the Minnesota Board of Psychology, remember that attendance at each MPPAW event counts as 1.5 hours of CEU credit. What a great bonus and easy way to help meet those requirements. And only \$10 added to your membership dues covers all the expenses for the MPPAW year, up to 10.5 CEU credits!

**MPPAW Officers and Key Committee Members**

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Address Correction Requested