



Minnesota Professionals for Psychology Applied to Work

Upcoming Speaker

By Bob Lewis, VP Programs

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20: COACHING LEADERS ON CRITICAL CHOICES IN A COMPLEX WORLD

David Peterson, Ph.D. and **Marc Sokol, Ph.D.**,
SVP and VP, Personnel Decisions International

Leaders today face a number of critical choices with significant implications for profitability, ethics, employee well-being, and even long-term organizational success. This session outlines distinctive ways that executive coaches can apply psychological theory and research to help leaders make better decisions as they face increasingly complex and ambiguous situations.



David B. Peterson earned his PhD in counseling and industrial-organizational psychology from the University of Minnesota. He joined Personnel Decisions in 1985, became leader of PDI's world-wide coaching practice in 1990, and was promoted to Senior Vice President in 1996. The models that David developed, such as the Development Pipeline and GAPS Grid, form the foundation of PDI's coaching and leadership development

services and products. With co-author Mary Dee Hicks, David has written two best-selling books – *Leader As Coach* and *Development FIRST*. A pioneer in the field of executive coaching, David has been researching, writing, and training others on the topic for almost 20 years. He has been quoted in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune*, *Time*, *Business Week*, and *USA Today*.

Marc B. Sokol is a Vice-President at Personnel Decisions International (PDI) and leads the Development Solutions Practice Area on global basis. He received his masters and doctoral degrees in Industrial & Organizational Psychology from the University of Maryland. Marc's research and consulting on various topics such as technological change, stress management for teams, career transitions, and organizational dynamics have been presented at national conferences and published in professional journals. He was guest editor for *Consulting Psychology Journal's* special issue on change management.

MPPAW Update

by Kraig King, President

The MPPAW year is off to an excellent start. Paul Sackett's presentation on the validity and fairness of testing in higher education and the workplace was well attended and well received. If you missed it, as I did due to work commitments in the middle east, be sure to read the summary on page 2. We've also made Paul's slides available on the MPPAW website at www.mppaw.org/slides.html

The October meeting will feature David Peterson and Marc Sokol, who will share practical insights for coaching leaders in making critical choices. Marc leads PDI's leadership development practice area and David is recognized as one of the world's top coaches. David's books, *Development First* and *Leader As Coach* are essential readings for those interested in sustainable behavioral change. If you attended David's primer on coaching at MPPAW a few years ago, you know this advanced session will be entertaining and valuable.

Please note that this month, we are moving to our new location, the McNamara Alumni Center on the east bank of the University of Minnesota's Minneapolis campus. Hopefully, this should prove to be more convenient for most members, but do give us your feedback.

We are fortunate to have highly talented members who do important and interesting work. I'd like to use part of this monthly column to highlight what people are doing. So please e-mail me at Kraig.King@personneldecisions.com with any newsworthy tidbits such as new articles or books you have written, presentations, exciting projects, etc. See you on October 20.

New Location!!

The October meeting is at a new location – the **McNamara Alumni Center** on the East Bank of the University. Room information is on page 3; driving directions are on the back page of the newsletter.



September Presentation Recap

Summary prepared by Bob Lewis, VP Programs

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15: HIGH STAKES TESTING IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT: APPRAISING THE EVIDENCE FOR VALIDITY AND FAIRNESS

Paul Sackett, Ph.D., Professor, U of M

Paul Sackett summarized criticisms of tests used in education and employment and presented evidence from meta-analytic and large, national sample to refute those criticisms. He demonstrated how, in many cases, criticisms are based on a lack of understanding of psychometrics, misreading studies published in the literature or posted on the web, and selective presentation of evidence.

Criticism 1: Tests predict badly. Criticisms that tests predict educational or job outcomes with validities of .25 to .35 and thereby explain only 5 to 6 percent of the variance are typically plagued by issues of sample restriction and unreliable criteria, according to Paul. These are not the relationships of interest. Instead, a better question is "What is the correlation in the population of interest, using sound performance measures?" When the proper psychometric questions are made tests commonly correlate with educational and job outcomes in the range of .47 to .75.

Criticism 2: If they predict, they predict short term only. Paul presented several large sample studies that indicate educational tests such as the SAT, GRE, and LSAT predict long term performance (such as 4th year grades and bar exam passage). He cited the results of McDaniel et al. who demonstrate that tests predict outcomes with constant validity for 20 years.

Criticism 3: Above a threshold, higher scores don't matter.

Several studies contradict this criticism in both the educational and employment settings by demonstrating strong evidence for linearity throughout the score range.

Criticism 4: Predictive power is a function of socioeconomic status (SES). Although this is a common criticism it has little empirical support. Paul presented results from a meta-analysis demonstrating that SES decreases the test-grade correlation from .35 to .34. Researchers claiming tests have no incremental validity over SES cite an unpublished paper and fail to report the full set of variables in the analysis.

Criticism 5: Tests are readily coached. Evidence shows that improvements in test scores are much more modest than those claimed by test preparation vendors and that these increases are confounded with simple retest effects.

Criticism 6: Tests have large adverse impact against minority groups, and thus are biased. Paul notes the consistent finding of a .6 to 1 standard deviation difference between majority and minority group test performance. He also notes that while APA Standards are clear regarding aspects of fairness there is no single meaning attached to the term.

Criticism 7: While minority group members perform worse on tests (on average), they perform just as well as majority group members once admitted/hired. The Cleary model defines "underprediction" as minority group member performance on the criterion better than the test would predict. This indicates bias. Yet, evidence from employment and educational settings demonstrates no bias for ethnic minorities. Educational tests do underpredict female educational performance and further research is needed to fully explain this result.

Criticism 8: Motivational mechanisms, such as stereotype threat explain majority-minority differences. Paul, drawing from his recent American Psychologist article, demonstrated the misinterpretation of the Steele and Aronson results that have generated this criticism. When scores on Steele and Aronson's task are not adjusted by SAT, the typical majority/minority differences result.

Criticism 9: Tests don't measure all important attributes. This is a straw man argument, according to Paul, as tests aren't intended to measure all attributes. Work study skills, self-efficacy and other factors relate to educational outcomes and the challenge is to build strong measures of these, not decrease the use of well-developed tests. In employment settings the use of interviews, simulations, work sample tests and so on are designed to supplement the attributes measured by tests.

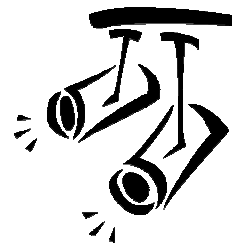
Paul summarized by noting the value of well-developed tests and how many criticisms of tests are unfounded. Although "bad" tests exist, and good tests may occasionally be used badly, the proper use of good tests yields much benefit to society.

Member Profiles

By Julie Moran, Co-Secretary

The Spotlight is on...

Andy Dybvig, M.A., Senior Analyst and Product Manager, Modern Survey



With aspirations to study Biology and Chemistry, Andy began his studies at Luther College only to discover, after a couple of years, that he found Psychology to be much more interesting. Based on this subsequent major and interest in the area, he decided to pursue a Master's Degree in Industrial/ Organizational Psychology at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Among many other things, the program in Mankato included a yearlong internship with Modern Survey, an Internet survey company located in Minneapolis. Having a great year with them, Andy appreciated the opportunity to be getting practical experience as a part of his education.

Andy enjoys the field of I/O psychology and the breadth of jobs the field has to offer. Since graduating from Mankato, he has worked at ACNielsen, MarketTools, and recently spent a year as a volunteer lecturer at a small university in Tanzania, East Africa. While there, he taught 57 Tanzanian Business students how to do statistics and use a computer. In order to take the opportunity to volunteer, Andy had to quit his job. Luckily, staying in close contact with Modern Survey paid off, as they were able to offer him a job as a Senior Analyst and Product Manager before even setting foot back on American soil.

The Swahili-speaking employee of Modern Survey has kept busy at work primarily working on their advanced analyses for clients adding insights to their data. He is also the manager for their 360-degree feedback tool, and helps the company pursue new clients and business opportunities. When not at work Andy enjoys spending time with his wife, Ann and their dog. Many of his weekly hobbies include skiing, running, fishing, hunting, and home brewing.

Andy has had many wonderful mentors throughout his career, but he credits Dan Sachau, who helped teach him the importance of clear communication and understanding the business issue at hand. In his professional career, Don MacPherson of Modern Survey has shown him the importance of networking, being confident in your abilities, and focusing on details. Peter Shapiro at ACNielsen taught Andy the value of finding the key takeaways from a mountain of data and bringing them to the forefront for the client. Finally, Kevin Lattery at MarketTools showed him how to do many of the analyses that Andy now has saved in his "toolkit."

Announcements



Continuing Education Credits.

For Licensed Psychologists needing to meet the CEU requirements of the Minnesota Board of Psychology, attendance at each MPPAW event counts as 1.5 hours of CEU credit. And only \$10 added to your membership dues covers all the expenses for

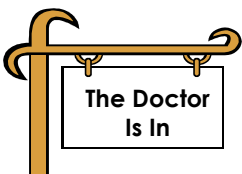
the MPPAW year, up to 10.5 CEU credits!

Playing a contact sport can be rough!

Every monthly MPPAW meeting starts with a social hour. During the social hour one can see many groups eating and talking. Albeit some boundary-crossing happens, I usually see professionals talking to other professionals and students talking to other students.

My personal motivation for attending MPPAW is to continue to build professional relationships and connect with area employers for internship opportunities or for future employment options. However, as a student, simply walking up to a lone professional (add to this that they are usually *not* alone) and creating a conversation with real substance is intimidating and awkward, even though my classmates tell me that I am a good schmoozer. A professor told me that the awkwardness is not only on the student side.

Maybe as I-O Psychologists and HR team members we don't tolerate ambiguity well because we are always looking for answers and solutions. On the flip side of the coin, "we" are also always seeking to network and make new contacts.



So I took it on as a personal challenge to find a solution to get students and professionals to interact more. In the past, MPPAW has held a Peanuts theme of "The Doctor Is In" where a professional is available to answer questions for those who wish to gain some insight on their

profession. I, personally, like this idea but am still searching for more ideas. If you have any suggestions, recommendations, or experiences, please share them with the MPPAW committee or contact me (Joshua.Kuehler@hotmail.com or 320-309-0285). Also, if you like "The Doctor Is In" idea and would like to volunteer your time to sit in as "Dr." for a session during the social hour, please contact me and we could set something up. Your participation will be much appreciated.

Josh Kuehler, Co-Secretary of MPPAW
I-O Graduate Student, St. Cloud State University



HELP! Ph.D. student in I/O Psychology needs expert judges to help validate an instrument to measure Generation X employee retention. I would like 10 individuals with graduate degrees in I/O Psychology, and working in the field, to place questions into the appropriate constructs as the first step of validity. The process should

take only 15-20 minutes.

I am also looking for companies that will allow me to beta test the instrument and give me access to their retention rates. Companies will get valuable information in regards to Generation X employee retention and free consulting services!

If you can assist in either of these two areas, or have any questions, please contact me, Angela Ranta, by email (angieranta@hotmail.com) or cell phone (612-481-9009). Any help would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Want to make a Difference?

MPPAW still needs a few individuals to fill some key positions.

We're looking for people who want to provide leadership, make a difference in our organization, and help keep MPPAW a success.



The positions we need to fill are the VP-elect of Membership and Treasurer-elect. For both positions, you would be in "learning mode" for the 2005-2006 year, assisting the current VP and attending Board meetings. You would then take over the position next year.

If you are interested in serving or know of someone who might be a great candidate, please contact any Board member (names are listed on the back page of the newsletter).

Format of Meetings

Meetings begin at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour, followed by the presentation at 6:20 p.m. The meeting will conclude at 8:00 p.m.

A fee of \$10.00 per MPPAW member and \$20.00 per non-member (\$5.00 and \$15.00 for students) covers food at the social hour, as well as the costs associated with the presentation that evening.

Our location is the McNamara Alumni Center on the east bank of the University of Minnesota. To find the meeting, check the small signs outside of each room, or ask at the registration desk.

Our room for the October meeting is the Johnson Great Room.

See map and driving directions on the next page.



DIRECTIONS to McNAMARA ALUMNI CENTER

Directions below are to the University Avenue Ramp. Once inside the ramp, take elevator to tunnel or street level. Follow signs to the alumni center – the copper building adjacent to the ramp.

From the north, heading south on 35W

Take Exit #18, 4th St-University Ave exit. Cross Fourth Street SE; turn left on University Ave SE. Drive 9 blocks to the University Avenue Parking Ramp on right side of street.

From the south, heading north on 35W

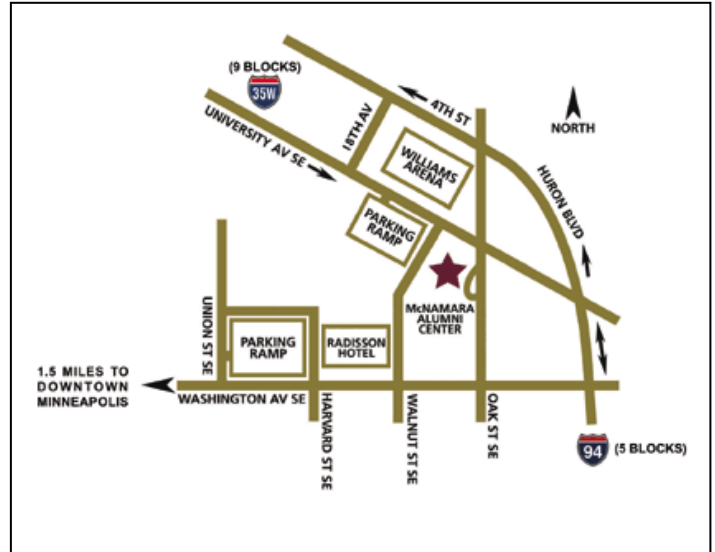
Take Exit #18, 4th St-University Ave exit. Keep right at fork in ramp and merge onto University Ave SE. Drive 9 blocks to the University Avenue Parking Ramp on right side of street.

From the east or west on I94

Take U of M/Huron Boulevard Exit #235B. Follow Huron Boulevard two blocks to Washington Avenue and turn left. Turn right at Oak Street (second light). Turn left on 4th Street (one-way). Turn left on 18th Avenue. Turn left on University (one-way). Drive 1-1/2 blocks to University Avenue Parking Ramp on right.

From downtown Minneapolis

Take 4th Street east – 4th Street becomes Washington Avenue. Follow directions from Washington Avenue above.



PARKING

- An underground tunnel connects the Center to the adjacent University Avenue Parking Ramp. The ramp is located northwest of the Center. The ramp charges \$2.50 per hour.
- A second tunnel connects the Center to the Radisson Hotel that is adjacent to the Washington Avenue Parking Ramp. The ramp charges \$2.50 per hour.
- Metered street parking is available along Oak and Walnut Streets.
- Two handicapped parking spaces are available at the Center's entrance on Oak Street.

MPPAW Officers and Key Committee Members

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MPPAW Website: www.mppaw.org