

March 2016



Minnesota Professionals for Psychology Applied to Work

Upcoming Speaker Tuesday 3/15

By Paul Thoresen, VP Programs

Topic: HR Analytics (R)eVolution Panel: Challenges and Opportunities for I-O Practitioners

Speakers:

- **John Steele, Ph.D. Senior Manager of Human Capital Analytics at Best Buy**
- **Joe Colihan, Analyst at IBM Advanced People Analytics**
- **Valerie Brophy, Senior Consultant at IBM Smarter Workforce**

What is all of this hype around HR Analytics? HR Analytics, Workforce Analytics, People Analytics (or whatever it is called this year): is it the same thing as data analysis or is it a different animal? While “big” data and powerful software have opened up new possibilities, many of the common principles of research and analysis remain intact. Or do they?

We have a panel to represent both internal and external consultants as well as different stages in current I-O Psychology careers. We will have very short presentations (e.g., workforce forecasting, employee retention, linkage analysis and program evaluation) as well as panel discussion and questions from the audience. The panel will concentrate on the art and the science of doing practical work in the Human Resource Management field.

If you have questions on how to transition into this field, how to get there straight from grad school, or just want to know if you really need a data scientist on your team, attend this program!

Dr. Steele is the Senior Manager of Human Capital Analytics for Best Buy, responsible for leading a team of data scientists to drive data-driven talent decisions. Specifically, Dr. Steele’s team has enterprise responsibility (140k+ employees; 400k+ applicants) for everyday employee engagement including the annual Employee Engagement survey, pre-employment selection assessments, performance management tables, 360-degree feedback, exit surveys, HR reporting and analytics, and adhoc surveys. Dr. Steele has been with Best Buy for four years. Previously he was the Director of Research for a consulting firm, and prior to that, worked for the Army for five years, ending with the position of Senior Research Psychologist in the Center for Army



Leadership. Dr. Steele’s applied research has been presented at many national conferences and has been published in the Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied and numerous newspapers including the Washington Post. Dr. Steele received his Ph.D. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from Kansas State University, as well as his graduate certificate in conflict resolution. He and his wife Emily have two sons: Landon, age 4 and Jackson, age 8.

Joe Colihan began his career as an intern in 1991 in IBM’s Selection and Testing group. Joe then spent 13 years on surveys and linkage research as part of the Workforce Research team. He managed the Pulse Survey program and served on the Information Technology Survey Group and Mayflower, two consortiums of companies cooperating on employee survey research. In 2007, he joined the Selection and Assessment team at IBM, working on computer adaptive testing, interviewing, and competencies. In 2014, he joined the Advanced People Analytics team. Joe taught the course Psychology and Work at the University of St. Thomas in 2015. He received his doctorate in Psychology from the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 1993. He is a member of the Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychology, the American Psychological Association, and Minnesota Professionals for Psychology Applied to Work.



Valerie is a Senior Smarter Workforce Consultant at IBM Kenexa. She helps her clients reach business objectives, solve problems, and maintain competitive advantage through attracting and hiring the right talent, measuring sentiment and culture through employee surveys, and enabling and driving organizational change at all levels. Her passion is giving organizations insights that allow them to look past the numbers on the page to the real drivers that ignite the passion and motivation in their employees to positively impact key business metrics.



Social Hour: 5:30 – 6:15 pm

Speaker: 6:15 – 7:45 pm

Location: [Marriott Courtyard Downtown at 7 Corners \(35W and Washington Avenue\)](#) - 1500 Washington Avenue South, Minneapolis 55454 (Note: \$5 parking is available in ramp attached to hotel)

This month's meeting is proudly sponsored by:



2015-2016 Program Schedule

April 2015: No meeting due to SIOP

May 17, 2016

Topic: Validation: We Are Doing It Wrong

Speaker: Dr. Nathan Kuncel

President's Corner

By Karen Grabow, President

Dr. Eichinger gave us quite a gift with his lecture on Neuroleadership. . . sharing his thoughtful perspective about this new area of research and thinking -- and what it might mean for leadership development -- an area where he has deep, deep expertise (50 years of experience at the top of his field). Dr. Eichinger generously provided such a comprehensive review of the key concepts, studies and players that if you'd never heard of this work, you'd have left his session with a pretty good overview of what this is all about -- plus a reading list to help you deepen your understanding.

If you missed it, see Logan Michels' recap in this newsletter and [Dr. Eichinger's slides](#) (all 104 of them!) on the MPPAW website.

Dr. Eichinger is a great model of enduring intellectual curiosity and openness to learning. No wonder he's one of the creators of the learning agility concept!

That's one of the virtues so many of our MPPAW-ers tend to share: we like to know what people in our field are thinking and doing.

And that's one of the reasons I've been asking our members to share what they're reading so we have a glimpse of what they're thinking about and how they stay up on things.

Marc Sokol, one of our MPPAW Sustaining Members, liked the idea but thought we had the opportunity to provide a more informative and motivating "reading list" -- which he submitted. I give the rest of this column over to Marc's great, annotated list (plus just a little commercial)! Thanks, Marc!

What am I reading -- by Marc Sokol

Lead the work: Navigating a world beyond employment. by John Boudreau, Ravin Jesuthasan and David Creelman. Stories from the frontlines of business that foretell how the employment landscape is



dramatically evolving. The role of I/O psychologists in this changing set of dynamics has yet to be written.

Succession: Mastering the make-or-break process of leadership transition. by Noel Tichy. Here you will find case studies, frameworks and advice from arguably the world's leading practitioner of succession management.

Sweetness of Forgetting by Kristin Hamel. At a time when religious tensions even surface in Presidential debates, this welcome novel inspires hope that we have more that joins us than separates us.

The latest issue of SIOP Perspectives includes a focal article on Mindfulness along with more than one dozen commentaries. It's a great way to separate fad from fashion as mindfulness gets more attention on the organizational front.

Similarly, **Consulting Psychology Journal, December 2015 issue**, included a focal article on the Trusted Leadership Advisor; worth reading for any professional who aspires to go beyond formulaic coaching or consulting services.

Finally as the new executive editor of **People + Strategy, the professional journal of HR People + Strategy Association**, I'd be remiss not to recommend this one! Appearing quarterly in print and digital form, we cover topics relevant to HR leaders, advisors, and academics. The most recent issue, **Ensuring Enterprise Security: A Pivotal Role for HR, includes Critical Success Factors for the Chief Information Security Officer** by Rich Klimoski, **The Accident Prone Personality** by Robert Hogan, and case studies of changing safety culture in different types of business (NY Transit, a large hospital, a college environment). Contact me at marc.sokol@sagehrd.com if you would like a digital link to this latest issue.

February Presentation Recap

By Logan Michels, Co-Secretary

This month, Dr. Robert Eichinger delivered an incredible presentation focused on NeuroLeadership and its role in leadership and talent development. Throughout the history of talent and leadership development, there has been debate over whether great leaders are mostly born or mostly made. Throughout his 50 years of experience, the debate has been resolved and knowledge and tools have accumulated including: competencies, derailers, and a variety of ways to identify, assess, develop and coach leaders. But, says Eichinger, all our insight and tools have not made much difference. The problem is that we have a chronic shortage of great leaders -- and there are two reasons for this. First, high potentials do not realize their needs or accept necessary feedback. Second, candidates do not follow through with developmental advice from their coaches.

Dr. Eichinger claims that two things need to change before the leadership supply crisis can be solved. First, people need more accurate insights into their own behaviors. Second, we need to help people change in ways consistent with their developmental needs.

NeuroLeadership, an emerging area of research over the last decade, takes insights from neuroscience research and applies them to the realm of leadership development. This area represents a new frontier with enormous potential for enabling greater progress. Dr. Eichinger cautions that researchers only know five percent of what there is to know about how the brain

works, but that five percent has yielded six findings with important implications for helping people change and become more effective: brain design, neuroplasticity, automaticity, working memory, motivated reasoning and memory, and mindfulness.

Dr. Eichinger explained how we operate through two primary brain systems that work in opposition of each other. The limbic system identifies threats and efficiently reacts to them, whereas the pre-frontal cortex controls thinking and problem solving. He refers to the interaction of this system as a “see-saw” in which the two processes cannot work together simultaneously. As limbic activity increases, it limits the use of the pre-frontal cortex, which is where reasoning, planning, and focus occur. On the other hand, decreased limbic activity results in more intentional behaviors via increased pre-frontal cortex functioning.

Neuroplasticity is important because we can reprogram our brains, either by ourselves or with the help of others. Techniques such as situational reframing, increased optimism, and having a growth mindset contribute to this process. Automaticity means that most of what we do is automatic, and generally occurs outside of our conscious awareness. We use techniques such as routines and heuristics, and are constantly habituating to the environment. These techniques are essential to quickly process information and make decisions on a daily basis.

Research on working memory indicates we have four to seven open channels through which we can process information at any given moment. Dr. Eichinger postulates that this could be a design flaw in humans, as these channels are an inadequate means to absorb the infinite stimuli from the environment and feed it to our supercomputer of a brain. Aside from having limited information-processing capabilities, our information processing channels can become clogged. Novel information, a hyperactive limbic system, multitasking, and stress can reduce processing efficiency. Similarly, motivated reasoning shows there is a well-defined gap between how we perceive ourselves and how others perceive us. We tend to see ourselves in an idealized and partial manner, which is the brain’s way to protect the self. However, others perceive us more accurately since they observe all the flaws that we tend to overlook.

So what should we do with this knowledge? Dr. Eichinger suggests the practice of mindfulness as an important tool to address many of the challenges previously listed by strengthening the “control muscle”. Mindfulness is directing your attention to the present moment and letting go of judgment. Mindfulness has many benefits especially when combined with coaching techniques. Specifically, it can help managers experience psychological flow, increase their receptiveness to coaching, lead to greater self-control, tolerance, and concentration. As Eichinger puts it, “the goals of the genes, the goals of the ‘lower’ brain and the goals of the mind are not always tightly aligned.” Gaining control of your behaviors starts with gaining control of your brain.

In summary, incorporating neuroscience principles into leadership development is an effective method for developing current and future leaders. During the Q & A session, Dr. Eichinger suggested that in the future we could see “leaderceuticals,” which will be a more direct way to enhance leadership through chemical means. Be sure to check out the MPPAW webpage to see the entire presentation and lists of additional readings Bob shared during his presentation.

The Spotlight is On...Brenton Wiernik

By Kristi Noble, Co-Secretary

This month’s member spotlight features Brenton Wiernik, a doctoral student from the University of Minnesota. He has been driven to pursue the field of Industrial-Organizational (IO) Psychology since the second week of his freshman year as an undergraduate student at the university and quickly sought out a research lab led by Dr. Deniz Ones. Brenton proves that early effort, passion, and ambition of career interests yield fruitful benefits. Accordingly, Brenton is currently finishing his dissertation on the structure, manifestation, and interrelation between vocational interests and other individual characteristics. Specifically, he is extracting and synthesizing data from multiple fields to create a comprehensive and systematic perspective on vocational preferences. He hopes to ground preferences towards differential psychology and determine the most useful level for consideration of interests—whether that be narrow or encompass the six RIASEC factors.



Upon completion of his dissertation, Brenton will be completing a year-long post-doctoral at the University of Ghent in Belgium conducting longitudinal research on career interests and development. He enjoys traveling and interacting with researchers around the world because it presents a different perspective, culture, and historical precedents. International research provides Brenton with the opportunity to solve unique problems with an additional cultural context to consider. In South Africa, for example, there are more stringent legal requirements regarding number of people within each organizational level and their corresponding racial identity. As a result, the IO standard and practices for reducing adverse impact need to be practiced and translated differently based on the context in which they are applied. Brenton notes the hardest part of international research is maintaining communication about projects across time zones as it is easy to lose touch.

Brenton has been attending MPPAW since 2012 and sees tremendous value in organizational mission. He likes the diverse background of MPPAW speakers that demonstrate the scientist-practitioner duality of the field. He advocates for organizations to update their measurement toolkit and revisit practices because science and knowledge is always being generated, advancing, and improving. His advice for MPPAW members is to increase awareness and openness on resultant benefits of incorporating multiple perspectives and research into your practice.

Announcements

Minnesota Organization Development Network (MNODN)

MPPAW benefits include getting the membership rates at our “partner” network, MNODN (Minnesota Organizational Development Network). Events are held at the Carlson School of Management Executive Center in Minneapolis. Look for upcoming events on their web site at www.mnodn.org.

Job Postings

If you are looking for employment opportunities, see mppaw.org/jobs. To post a job opening, please contact Co-VP Communications at Debra.Holzgraefe@genmills.com.

Stay connected with MPPAW on social media!

MPPAW uses social media to share industry related information, important announcements, training or employment opportunities, and meeting reminders.



LinkedIn Group: Our LinkedIn Group has over 500 members so far and we invite you to join for discussion, news, and networking. Search for “MPPAW” in the Groups section.

Twitter: Follow us @MPPAW. Join our 850+ followers, and be sure to use #iopsych in your tweets.

Facebook: Friend us on Facebook as another way to receive timely information, news, networking and more.

Continuing Education Credits

For Licensed Psychologists needing to meet the CEU requirements of the Minnesota Board of Psychology, attendance at each MPPAW event has been accredited at 1.5 hours of continuing education credit. Your membership dues cover all the expenses for the MPPAW year (fall to spring), up to 10.5 CEU credits. Documentation is provided upon attendance at the monthly meeting.

Share your announcements!

MPPAW is your resource for distributing information of interest to the applied psychology community in the Twin Cities. If you would like to include an announcement in future MPPAW newsletters, or post a job opening, event, or other information on the MPPAW website, please contact Co-VP Communications at Debra.Holzgraefe@genmills.com.

Next year’s MPPAW Board and call for Board Elect nominees

MPPAW continues to thrive in the Twin Cities due to the commitment of our elected Board of Directors. Several community members have dedicated their time in years past to ensure that MPPAW stays alive and well – *and now it’s your turn!*

Join the 2016-2017 Board of Directors in a Board Elect role: Elect members shadow the role for one year and then actively serve in the role the second year - playing a crucial role in bringing high quality, industry leading content and unbeatable networking opportunities to our community.

Contact a current Board member or email this year’s MPPAW President, Karen Grabow (Karen.Grabow@gmail.com), if you are interested in any of the Elect positions below.

2016-2017 Board Members

Board Members Elect

President

Doug Molitor

Open

Co-VP, Programs

Ashley McGregor

Open

Kevin Nilan

Open

Co-VP, Communications

Ben Larson

Open

Ray Klahr

Open

VP, Membership

Stephen Lagle

Open

Co-Secretaries

Open

Open

Open

Open

Treasurer

Joe Colihan

Open

Mentoring Coordinators

Bri Wright

Nikki Miller

Valerie Brophy

Open

CEU Credits Coordinator

Bill Handschin

Open

Meeting Details

Meeting location

All meetings for the 2015-2016 program year will be held at the [Courtyard Marriott Downtown](#) at 7 Corners near the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus. **Parking is available next to the hotel for \$5!**

Format of meetings

Meetings begin at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour, followed by the monthly presentation at 6:15 p.m. The meeting will conclude at 7:45 p.m.

2015 – 2016 Meeting Fees

MPPAW member fees cover food at the social hour prior to the speaker along with costs associated with the presentation (e.g., venue fees). To join or renew your MPPAW membership, visit <http://www.mppaw.org/membership-info/>. You may also join and pay membership dues at the meeting.

MPPAW Website: www.mppaw.org

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