

## Message from the National COP Chair



**Denis J Flores**

Many of you attended the IO Conference this year and enjoyed an outstanding scientific and social program. I am now able to report that the Conference again achieved a strong surplus. Congratulations to Professor Brett Myors and his committee and the staff at National office on an excellent result performed under trying circumstances. The extreme weather conditions prevented a number of conference registrants from attending Workshops and Conference sessions, but I am pleased to advise that all cases for reimbursement or credit have been dealt with to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The National Committee will hold a strategic planning session in December. At this meeting we will take a broad perspective of the future of the College. You will shortly receive a survey asking for your views on the College and how we may better serve our members. I urge you to take the time to complete the survey and give us feedback. We will consider all views as we plan our strategy for 2006 and beyond.

In November, all Colleges we were advised of members who had not renewed. Gina McCredie quickly devised a very efficient response process to deal with this and it was implemented at State Level. The other Colleges have taken up the process.

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Planning is well under way for the 2007 Conference in Adelaide and the Conference team led by Kath McEwen (SA Chair) and Prof Maureen Dollard and Prof Tony Winefield are examining venues and Conference organisers.

### DPPAG

As National Chair, I sit on the Director of Professional Practice Advisory Group (DPPAG). At this forum matters of concern across Colleges are discussed.

### Supervision

M Psych applicants for COP membership now only need to complete 50 hours of supervision and attend 30 hours of accredited PD over a period of between one year and three years to gain membership of the College. This is a major change from the two years of supervision which previously applied. Supervisors must be a College Member of at least two years standing. New College applications forms are available on the APS website.

### Competencies

COP had previously developed a set of core competencies and a competency based membership application process. Core and specific competencies have now been standardised for all Colleges and these will be the basis for university accreditation over the coming years.

### Marketing Letters to D Psych Graduates

Upon completion of an APS accredited Professional Doctorate in Psychology,

graduates immediately become eligible to be both a full Member of the APS and a full Member of the College relevant to the specialty of their Doctorate. The Colleges have agreed on a form of words for a letter from the Director of Professional Practice that will be sent to eligible graduates who are APS members, inviting them to become full College Members. Benefits of being a College Member are provided.

### Standing Committee on Tests and Testing

This committee has now been established at Board level reporting to Iain Montgomery, Director of Training and Standards.

### APS Conference

APS Conferences will now incorporate a major theme day, and in the case of COP, this will be in alternate years when we do not have a specialist IO Conference. I am working with my counterparts in New Zealand and Mary Katsikidis at National office to ensure that we have a successful and stimulating theme day next year in Auckland.

### Award of Distinction

Colleges are now able to recognise members who have made a significant contribution to their College over a long period of time by presenting them with an Award of Distinction. Details will be available on the APS website in due course.

## Submission Guidelines

The Chief Editor and Editor welcome all constructive input, articles, letters and ideas from Organisational Psychology College Members. We would just like you to help us out by abiding by some simple house keeping rules:

- Please ensure that any articles are formatted properly, spell checked and proofed prior to being submitted for publication. (while we reserve the right to fix your copy or modify the formatting, we may not do so!)
- Obtain the Chief Editor's (Denis Flores) approval prior to any articles being written on commercial sponsors.
- Please do not submit material that is defamatory, libellous, racist or discriminatory in nature. We will not publish it.
- All images, artwork and fonts to be submitted as separate files, Artwork or photos submitted as a part of a Word file will no longer be used. Preference for photos are TIFF or high quality JPG formats.
- Please submit all TOP content to Martha Knox-Haly at marthaknox@bigpond.com

The deadline for material to be submitted for the March Edition of TOP is 28th February 2006.

### Message from NSW College Chair

2005 has been a year of changes for COP NSW. We started the year in a new meeting location having been beaten by the increased venue hire costs of our 'home' for the previous couple of years. The move from Angel Place to the Wesley Centre has been a success and allowed COP NSW to keep event costs manageable. The other major change early in the year was the departure of our Chair, Gina McCredie. Gina's tireless efforts were well recognised by the committee and COP NSW members and we're pleased to see her involvement now with the National Committee. In Gina's absence, Maree Riley assumed the position of Acting Chair.

The year to date has seen a varied PD program with monthly meetings featuring speakers including Tony Grant (Coaching and Organisational Psychology), Maria Luksich (Organisational Psychologists and the Media), Sylvia Vorhauser and Alison Brady (Succession Management: The New Priority), Rob Hall (The Role of Personality in Segmenting the Leisure market), Jasmine Slinger (Organisational Reviews - Enhancing Performance through Team-building) and David Stevens (Collaborative Decision Making in Major Projects: Confessions of an "unreal" Psychologist). The support of our presenters has been greatly appreciated recognising their willingness to give of their time 'pro-bono', and share their experience and knowledge with meeting participants.

In addition to the monthly PD program, COP NSW was extremely fortunate this year to secure two renowned international speakers – PROF Geert Hofstede and Dr Robert Hogan - to present at Special Event Activities in May and June 2005. Attendance at both activities suggests that the topics (and speakers) had wide appeal.

Following the success of the Careers Fair in 2004, COP NSW hosted a similar event this year. Again hugely successful, the event attracted an increasing number of recent graduates and psychology students keen to explore career opportunities, and was well supported by prospective employers. Vignette presentations by Organisational Psychologists provided attendees with some insight into the varied and vast employment opportunities available to recent graduates.

The September AGM saw the election of a Chair and a new Secretary, joining the current Treasurer to form the Committee for 2005/06. The Executive are joined by a

hard working and dedicated committee who have worked tirelessly across the year to provide PD and social opportunities for COP NSW members. As the year draws to a close we look forward to a successful Christmas Function and the presentation of the COP NSW Inaugural Awards.

To all members of COP NSW and interstate colleagues, our best wishes for a safe and happy Christmas and success in 2006.

Maree Reilly

Former NSW Chair 2005



**PROF Geert Hofstede  
and Denise Jepsen**

### COP Qld – The Year That Was

COP Qld's team have had another busy year. I have now been involved with the committee for three years, the past two as A/Chair. I am always impressed and thankful for the effort and time committee members contribute to increase the value proposition of COP membership and to promote the discipline of organisational psychology to other professions and the business community.

Over the past year we have started to move from a largely internal focus (event management, processes and procedures) to an external focus, investigating what members and the business community want and adapting our offerings to suit. We have also formed a close alliance with the Queensland unit of the Interest Group of Coaching Psychologists to enhance our professional development offerings.

#### Professional Development

Professional Development events over the past year have had a practical focus, presented by practitioners who specialise in their field:

- **October 2004 - International Perspectives for Organisational**

**Psychologists** presented by an expert panel of psychologists with a range of overseas experience. Panel members were Jennifer Loh (Canada and Singapore), Charles Knoke (USA and UK), Caroline Bailey (UK) and Leonie Elphinstone (South America and South Africa).

- **February 2005 – Organisational Culture, Culture Change and Employee Wellbeing** by Cameron Newton, consultant with Queensland University of Technology (QUT). This interactive session explored what organisational culture is and how it can be measured. Cameron shared his consulting experience by highlighting benefits and challenges to measuring organisational culture through case studies.
- **April 2005 – Virtual Teams – Are You Ready?** presented by Tracy Martin, HR Manager, Rio Tinto. Tracy shared seven critical success factors required to increase the probability of success in teams that are not collocated. These principles could be extrapolated to add value to any team working to produce a common outcome.
- **July 2005 – National I/O Conference on the Gold Coast.** The Queensland College sponsored a regional student member from Townsville to the conference.
- **August 2005 – Dinner for Senior Organisational Psychologists and Practitioners.** The history of organisational psychology and the College in Queensland was discussed, and then significant issues that we should be considering for the future were explored. This event was introduced to address the needs of mature career psychologists.
- **September 2005 – Joint COP/IGCP/APS event held in Townsville** for regional members. The topic was **Developing a Competency Framework for Coaching Psychologists**, presented by Wade Jacklin, Convenor IGCP and Director, Coaching Skills Australia. Aaron McEwan co-ordinated this event on behalf of COP Qld with Wade Jacklin, Convenor, IGCP and Joann Lukins, Nth Qld Chair, APS.
- **October 2005 - Second Dinner for Senior Organisational Psychologists**, discussing the theme of how organisational psychologists can better share

resources.

- **October 2005 - COP Qld AGM then Art, Science and Drama of Leadership** by Dr Ken Parry, who looked at alternatives to scientific research's view of leadership.
- **November 2005: Joint COP/IGCP Christmas Party** at the Summit Restaurant, Mt Cootha. "Shrink rap" networking activity and wine tasting.

### Marketing and Media

Thank you to Scott Smout, Aaron McEwan and Helen Sherrell for their contributions to promoting the College and organisational psychology. COP Qld Committee's marketing members have contributed to:

- The APS Queensland Newsletter, COP's national magazine "TOP" and COP Qld website.
- Secured sponsorship of our "loyalty card" initiative and are seeking further sponsorship for events.
- Developed our presentation for students on choosing a career in organisational psychology.

### Students

- COP Qld continues to have strong representation by student members on the committee.
- As chair, I have presented at the annual Careers Fair held at the Carlton Crest by the APS, sharing with students the opportunities provided by a career in organisational psychology.
- Committee members have presented to students at UQ, QUT and Griffith. A presentation at Bond University is pending.
- A Student Career flyer is available to be downloaded from our website.

### Internal

- COP Qld Committee has finalised an internal Induction and Guidelines manual to ensure all committee members have a ready reference to ensure consistent processes and procedures are followed, without having to reinvent the wheel each time. A huge thank you to Josephine Webb and Ann Bonney for driving this initiative. I am sure the new committee will reap the benefits!

### Value proposition to Members

The challenge for the committee continues to be attraction of full members. Our efforts in this regard have included:

- Trialling the APS Alternative Pathway to Membership
- Emailing members with a list of COP Qld events that attract PD points to assist them with their PD logs
- Updating and regularly adding to the website resources
- Liaising with national COP re a media register where members can register if they would like to be contacted by the media to comment on issues in their area of expertise
- Offering a range of events to meet the different needs of members
- Holding at least one regional event per annum

### Future Direction of COP Qld

The proposed future direction for COP Qld is outlined in the COP Qld Strategic Plan 2005-2007 available on COP Qld website. Ongoing challenges continue to be attracting new membership and promoting the value of organisational psychology to the business community. As we move to a more external focus the committee will be exploring broader issues, such as the value of COP and the role of organisational psychology in the community.

A new national COP committee has been appointed and are tackling these issues with dynamism and energy. COP Qld Committee looks forward to partnering with them in reaching COP's strategic objectives.

The committee will continue to work with national COP to improve the positioning of organisational psychology within the APS, to corporations, business forums and the public, i.e. tip sheets for organisational psychologists, electronic membership forms, media register.

COP Qld Committee plan to continue to promote organisational psychology as a career to students and will work to enhance the communication process to members and interested parties, i.e. email, APS/COP publications and website.

As I am standing down from the Chair role, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the whole COP Qld committee for their dedication and contribution of time in a voluntary capacity. Many of these initiatives take a lot of work behind



the scenes and the contribution by each and every committee member is essential to the success of the College. I wish the new Chair, Ann Bonney, and the Queensland Committee every success for the future.

Vicki Webster (A/Chair, COP Qld)  
Principal Consultant,

## South Australian Chair

COP in South Australia is expanding slowly but surely and now has 42 members. The enthusiastic local committee has forged close links with the Universities of Adelaide and South Australia – both of which offer Masters in Organisational Psychology Courses.

A mentoring/networking evening is now an annual feature. Hosted jointly by COP and the Universities, the event is held at the beginning of each academic year allowing Masters students to meet practitioners. This has been a major success in terms of facilitating both placements and enrolments in APS as well as establishing mentoring relationships. The energy of the event creates an enthusiasm and inertia for our profession in South Australia.

As part of the evening COP SA also provide a prize for the best masters thesis from each university. Winners are then invited to present their research as part of local PD functions.

Most of the focus this year has been on expanding membership and professional development activities. A common member base with the Interest Group in Coaching Psychology has resulted in some combined functions in overlapping areas such as applying psychometric tools to workplace coaching. A mix of members, students and other interested parties regularly attend.

The most exciting news this year was the announcement of Adelaide's hosting of the 2007 I/O conference in Adelaide. Planning is already underway and an active organising committee has been formed. This is chaired by Associate Professor Maureen Dollard from the University of South Australia.

As the first Asia Pacific I/O Conference we are establishing networks throughout the region to maximise international registrations and speakers.

The theme is "Expanding the Footprint of Organisational Psychology: International Collaboration in Practice and Research". As such the conference will cover the usual topics of interest but will start to expand dialogue into how organisational psychology can contribute outside of the traditional business arena. Topics will include applying our discipline to rural and indigenous work issues as well as lofty challenges such as poverty.

As one of the moves away from the 'talking head' approach facilitated sessions will encourage researcher and practitioner networks. The aim is to forge collaborations both on a local and international level.

Many ideas were taken from this year's conference discussions on how to meet both practitioner and academic needs. There are plans to meet with practitioners to identify the 'lofty' challenges they face in workplaces. Sessions focussed on these topics will combine academically based presentations on what we do and do not know, (via research), followed by discussion on how this impacts on practice.

Add to this a family friendly conference with an exciting social calendar including the 'must taste' offerings of our wine regions and it's enticing. If you come you



may even find yourself forging research links on a bus to the Barossa Valley!

We welcome your ideas and contributions to the planning and hope to see you there.

Kathryn McEwen  
Chair  
S.A. Section COP

## West Australian Chair

COP WA has presented a wide range of topics and numerous speakers this year for specialist PD points we well as providing an opportunity to catch up with colleagues and friends at our usual venue 174 Hampden Rd, Nedlands over a glass of wine. Topics covering during 2005 have included:

"Occupational Stress – a workplace Perspective" - Worksafe WA;

"Working with teams who have experienced loss" - Dr Neil Preston;

"Leadershift" - Don Clayton;

"Management Rehabilitation" - Donna Neill;

"Recognising the Psychopath in a Suit" – Bob Evans

SHL Psychometric Tools" – SHL Products

"FIFO Impact on Well Being & Lifestyle" – M Freeman & V Gent

Our 2005 season finally closed 2 November with an extremely knowledgeable industrial lawyer from Corrs Chamber Westgarth on "Employment Issues Arising Out of Business Restructures or Acquisitions". More of these IR/ER presentations will be planned for 2006 if further interest is received. Talking of which – What topics would interest you? Or perhaps provide to be beneficial for you? We are keen to hear your views and opinions with an aim of expanding our college – let us work together, provide some feedback and ideas. As a small college of only 27 members each member is highly valuable.

Next year on Wednesday 18 January we will kick off with a welcome gathering and strategic planning meeting for our "2006 Year for Growth" program. If it has been a while since you last attended, why not turn a new leaf, come along and join in – become proactive, present ideas, guidance, suggestions – you offer a wealth of knowledge and experience which could be shared with other Organisational



professionals. Together, let us build on our strengths with the universities and highlight to industry the specialist skills we have here in WA.

We really are looking forward to seeing you next year and sincerely wish you all a very Merry Christmas and all the best for a safe and happy New Year.

Caroline Rodgers  
Chair, COP WA  
racey@iinet.net.au



## Membership Matters

By Gina McCredie

### What does it take to be a Full Member?

Full membership of the College of Organisational Psychologists (COP) typically requires the following, in addition to APS membership:

- an approved 6th year accredited organisational psychology program (typically a Masters)
- 50 hours of supervision (based on roughly 1 hour a week)
- 30 hours of College approved professional development
- nomination by two Full Members of the College.

However, there is an alternate entry pathway for those who do not meet the 'standard' requirements listed above.

### What is the alternate entry pathway?

The alternate entry pathway is a process that enables those with organisational psychology experiences and other qualifications different to the standard requirements to apply for Full Membership of the College. The process is competency based.

### Who typically applies under the alternate entry pathway?

The alternate entry pathway suits those who are:

- Experienced organisational psychologists, typically with 5, 10 or more years of experience in the field, covering a range of organisational psychology areas, often holding senior roles in their organisations and/or acknowledged for their particular organisational psychology expertise.
- Organisational psychologists who completed their 6th year of organisational psychology studies some time ago, but have not had official supervision since then and are unlikely to do so. At least three (3) years of practical experience will need to be demonstrated, covering a breadth of organisational psychology, in order for Full Membership to be granted.
- Psychologists who began their careers in other areas of psychology, e.g. clinical, who have since moved into organisational psychology practice and would like to be recognised as a Full COP Member.

### How do I apply under the alternate pathway?

Contact Joan Moore at the APS National Office in Melbourne APS (j.moore@psychology.org.au, 03 8662 3300) to request the standard COP application pack. Among the documents that will be sent to you is the list of organisational psychology competencies that you will need to address.

Document your competence and experience against the COP competency list and send your application in to the APS office. The COP Membership Committee will then review your application at their next committee meeting.

If the Membership Committee has any questions about your experiences or application they will contact you to clarify your suitability for Full Membership. You will be advised in writing of the Committee's decision.

## Membership Matters ... Continued

### What if I have recently become an Associate Member and have no supervision organised as yet?

The College would like to help you get underway with your supervision as soon as possible. There are a number of Full Members of the College who have indicated that they would be happy to supervise new organisational psychologists. Contact the APS National Office for details.

For more information about the alternate entry pathway to becoming a Full Member, or to request a membership application pack, please contact Joan Moore at the APS ([j.moore@psychology.org.au](mailto:j.moore@psychology.org.au), 03 8662 3300) or Gina McCredie ([gmccredie@myrealbox.com](mailto:gmccredie@myrealbox.com), 0404 024 840).

Next edition: Membership for academics



## EDUCATING FOR TODAY'S JOBS

Are today's universities educating for yesterday's jobs rather than for today's jobs? The APS educates graduates in the areas covered by the specialised Colleges. But how relevant is this?

The College of Psychological Practice has been mailing out a list of jobs in Sydney metro area suitable for 4 year psychology graduates for over one year. Out of this has emerged some trends which should affect the postgraduate education of psychology graduates.

In addition, the author is an Associate of the American Psychological Association and views job trends in the US through the APA publications. What few psychologists realise is that to be a registered psychologist in the US requires a doctorate, either PhD or DPsych. Since such a degree costs USD 75,000 or AUD 100,000, people called behavioural scientist with 4 year degrees or masters degrees in behavioural science (often psychology by another name) are taking those jobs previously carried out by over-qualified psychologists.

However, the DPsych is a professional degree, and likely (under various names) to become the world wide standard for clinical psychologists, as the Europeans are moving towards a similar academic standard (perhaps called a masters).

One of the major trends in psychologist employment, in line with other occupations, is as case workers. Social workers have been trained in this topic for years, but psychologists seem to miss out.

The knowledge of counselling techniques has become more widespread in other occupations such as customer relations. Staff in many different fields learn micro counselling skills. Nurses, police and similar public contact jobs now use such skills.

### SHORT TERM CHANGES

There is no doubt there are fads in organisations. For example, 360 degree evaluation came into fashion in the 1990s, having been abandoned by IBM which used this technique widely in the 1970s. Fashions in counselling come and go, with empirical evidence showing little differentiation between the schools, and most counsellors ending up as eclectic.

In the public sector, there are shifts in government spending which leads to jobs for psychologists. For example, gambling addiction became an issue for State governments with the expansion of casinos in the 1990s. Currently, the Federal Government is attempting to get people on disability pensions back to work through rehabilitation and job finding services. The armed services outsource recruitment services.

### LONG TERM TRENDS

Beneath, these short term job shifts are longer term trends. These will be dealt with by occupational field.

**Counselling.** The number of jobs advertised for counsellors has dropped markedly. The numbers for the College of Counselling Psychology in the APS have levelled or are dropping. Psychologists no longer are alone in this field, with degrees and postgraduate degrees in counselling. Some jobs even require a mature approach@ or even a Certificate IV (the equivalent to Year 12). Overall, the demand for counsellors has peaked. A strong influence comes from insurance companies to influence counselling session to 4 or 6 sessions.

There is still demand in specialised fields, for example, drug and other addictions (A&OD), youth and family. Family counselling is the most skilled level of counselling, and requires advanced specialised skills.



**Organisational psychology.** Online assessment has meant a resurgence of jobs in the occupational assessment field. The related field of human resources is in demand in the current times of economic expansion. However, human resources managers are often some of the first to be retrenched in recessions, as Australian managers often do not believe that the contribution is commercially relevant. Furthermore, many human resources staff are not as well qualified as psychologists and block appointment of psychologists to human resources positions. The future for organisational psychologists is to become less involved in specialised techniques and have a broader management approach such as an MBA or other commercial masters degree or company director qualification.

**Clinical psychology.** The era of one-on-one in-depth counselling in the public sector is either in decline or the requirements is in low demand. In the 2000 decade, there will be increased pressure on health professionals to become more efficient with broader health related skills. For example, nurse practitioners will up-skill to challenge general practitioners, whose job has been down-skilled in the past decade. Around 25 percent of patients are now referred to medical specialists, including some to psychologists. Clinical psychologists suffer from competition from a number of sources - psychiatrists, and from the perception that psychologist/social worker/occupational therapist are basically the same job in the health profession.

**Clinical neuropsychology.** A highly specialised field with few openings, combining clinical psychology with wider knowledge in neurology and other related disciplines.

**Educational.** The NSW Education Department, with strong teachers union influence, limits the number of psychologists who can become school counsellors by insisting that they must also be teachers. However, private sector schools have an increasing number of jobs for psychologists as school counsellors.

**Rehabilitation.** Psychologists share this field with people with rehabilitation degrees. The rehabilitation degrees have increased with the realisation in insurance and other employers, that recruitment of non-professionally qualified staff did not produce sufficiently expert staff. Likewise, companies are willing to employ psychologists in the occupational health and safety (OH&S) field who have had Rehabilitation experience.

**Forensic.** There are jobs in the justice administration area, eg, prisons and parole. However, court reports and expert evidence are a high level skill requiring a second degree such as law, or wide experience in justice administration.

**Community.** The skill requirements are similar to organisational psychologists, but the field of application is that of the social entrepreneur working with non-commercial organisations. This is also a high level skill.

**Health.** A new field which is still establishing a track record. In the 2000 decade, there will be increased pressure on health professionals to become more efficient with broader health related skills.

**Sport psychology.** While this field got a boost from the Sydney 2000 Olympics, there is little demand currently.

**Research psychology.** Pressures are from funding sources such as the Federal Government for significant research to be cross-disciplinary, with multiple disciplines contributing to a topic. The research on the brain by the Brain Research Centre is an example. This research is concurrently international. Where does this leave specialised academic researchers?

If you would like further information about these trends, please phone 02 9437 4018 or email [copp@spin.net.au](mailto:copp@spin.net.au).

Doctor Phillip Webb  
National Professional Development Coordinator



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## FEATURE ARTICLE by Alison Brady

# Succession Management

### *the new priority*

The widespread implications of the ageing population have featured heavily in the media, with politicians and economists converging in opinion that this demographic trend signals a pending talent shortage.

This was the backdrop for COP NSW's September PD Event, presented by Sylvia Vorhauser and Alison Brady of Assessment Edge. A compelling case was put forward to highlight the need to proactively retain and manage organisational talent. The increasing importance of Organisational Psychologists in this context was also explored.

This article presents the case for proactively managing organisational talent. It identifies the retention and management of employee performance as a priority in light of a pending skills shortage.

#### Adding up to a Business Case

In 1998, McKinsey recognised human capital as a critical corporate asset and challenged organisations to prioritise talent management in their seminal 'War for Talent' paper. In the seven years since a pending talent shortage has been widely recognised in the media, and industry articles are becoming increasingly alarmist in calling corporates to action. An exploration of demographic and workforce trends gives credence to this sense of urgency.

In March 2004 an Australian Treasury report forecast an increase in the proportion of the population aged over 65 years, from 13% (at time of reporting) to 25% in 2042. Data from the US Census Bureau suggests that this trend is global and indicates an incrementally increasing ratio of 55+ year olds to younger age brackets. Combined with an increasing demand for

knowledge workers and sophisticated skills, this trend is expected to create a significant talent shortage (Beames, 2005). Rolland (2005) has estimated that the number of new entrants to the workforce will fall over 60% in the next 5 years, from a current 140,000 down to 50,000.

And we are not only getting older. We are retiring younger, with the percentage of workers aged 55 – 64+ down 30% over the last 30 years (albeit this trend does not appear sustainable). We are spending less time in the 'top jobs' and, in a buyer's market, competition for talent is intensifying. To add to this equation, widespread downsizing in the 1990s saw 15-20% of middle management positions eliminated, reducing today's internal talent pool and potential Executive successors (American Management Association).

The invariable result of a talent shortage is employee turnover. With estimates of the cost of turnover in the range of 0.5 – 2.5 times the salary of the role in question (Cascio, 1991; 1998), this pending shortage is predicted to interrupt business continuity and pose a significant financial risk to organisations (Beames, 2005). Moreover, external sourcing – recruiting and selecting employees from the open market – is increasingly more costly (and risky) than retaining and promoting employees internally. Companies pay a premium for external talent, which is set to increase as it becomes more scarce.

#### Traditional Organisational Response

In research conducted by Sullivan (2004), Managers ranked retention as 3rd most important in

comparison to other Human Resources issues, and it was argued that retention initiatives represent the greatest ROI compared to other HR programmes. In practice, HR budgets are out of alignment, with retention initiatives ranking 44th in terms of average spend (Sullivan, 2004). This study is indicative of the typical organisational response. We have seen Company Directors and CEOs recognise talent attraction and retention as a key challenge for Australian business, and give lip service to the development and retention of key talent. Few organisations successfully translate these traditionally 'soft' issues into tangible business plans and results.

Sylvia Vorhauser, Director of talent management consultancy Assessment Edge, argues that business sustainability, let alone future growth, requires a proactive succession management strategy.

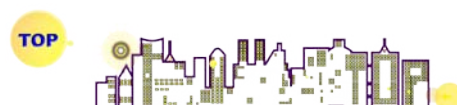
"Organisational apathy is no longer an option," says Vorhauser. "While stop-gap measures to retain staff have had limited success in the past, organisations that continue to react to resourcing demands are setting themselves up for failure."

#### Proactive Succession Management

Rothwell (2001) defines succession management as

"A deliberate and systematic effort to ensure business continuity, retain and develop intellectual & knowledge capital for the future, and encourage individual advancement in a dynamic business environment"

Building on this definition, Assessment Edge advocates a 4-step approach to proactive succession management:





**1** Stop the 'bleeding'  
Quantify & manage  
retention risk

**2** Define Future Capability  
Requirements. Organisa-  
tional needs analysis

**3** Identify & Assess Pool  
of Successors. Assess  
capabilities required in  
future

**4** Bridge the Gap  
Develop organisational  
capability

Managing retention risk is presented as an initial priority. Research findings have gone a long way in de-mystifying the employee-employer relationship and issues relating to retention. We know that employee engagement with the organisation and job satisfaction are the primary predictors of intention to stay, which in turn predicts turnover (Beames, 2005). In other words, if an individual is satisfied in their role and has a strong relationship with their organisation they are more likely to stay. Recent innovations in HR metrics enable us to reliably measure employee engagement, job satisfaction, and intention to stay. Utilising this diagnostic approach organisations can isolate specific issues contributing to turnover, such as employee expectations, workplace trust and fairness, which provide the basis for targeted interventions to manage retention risk.

Defining future capability requirements is aligned to traditional job analysis at an organisational level. With companies re-structuring every 18-months – 3 years on average, a sustainable talent pipeline must align to the current and future needs of the organisation, rather than those of a specific job. Continuity in key positions is based on

the identification of pools of talent ('succession pools') with strong performance and the potential to learn and grow. Assessment Edge utilises Acceleration Centres to assess and develop pools of successors. Aligned to the traditional Assessment Centre model, Acceleration Centres provide a real and challenging experience for members of 'succession pools', in a highly supported environment.

"This approach works because it feels very real and to a large extent it is", says Vorhauser, "our Centres are custom built to reflect the industry and unique organisational issues our clients face. The names and faces may be different, but the issues and challenges participants confront are true to life".

The output of Acceleration Centres are individual focused development plans designed to bridge the gap between current capabilities and the capabilities required to meet organisational needs. This four-step approach becomes circular, as talent recognition and development support retention amongst career loyal employees.

### Conclusion

This article has highlighted the case for proactive succession management, as demographic trends place employers at significant risk. With core competence in the assessment and development of individuals at work, Organisational Psychologists are well-placed to assist organisations in managing this risk. As business' foresee a pending labour shortage, the four-step approach that has been outlined exemplifies the value-add that our profession can provide, through a combination of creativity, sound methodologies and a valid and reliable assessment approach.

## Membership Contributions

*Forward by Editor:*

*Martha Knox-Haly*

This is your chance to have your say. In this edition we have a case study of an interesting organisational conundrum. We have two different perspectives on our highly successful I/O conference.

## Employee Performance Management – When does it challenge even the most competent Managers?

### A Case Study

#### Background

A Senior Manager contacted his Employee Assistance Provider regarding a 35 year old female employee of 15 years whose work performance had significantly deteriorated over a 6 month period. He described her as a previous high achiever, reliable, a quick learner and an asset to the company. His request was for assistance to manage her performance and return her to high levels of achievement. Earlier in the year the employee had taken some 2 months sick leave to undergo major surgery, from which she had medically recovered. He described her performance post sick leave, as spasmodic.

Further enquiry and discussion with the Senior Manager revealed significant increased absenteeism, including full day absenteeism, late starts and early departures, lethargy at work, with the employee often reporting headaches and feeling unwell. She had exhausted her sick leave entitlement. The Manager had referred her to a General Practitioner and the organisation's confidential employee counselling for assistance, but was not convinced she had attended either. A later discussion between the Manager and the employee revealed self harm behaviour and evidence of lacerations

to the inside forearms. During that discussion, the employee confirmed that she had not consulted with either her General Practitioner or her Employee Assistance confidential counselling regarding her mental health, but rather had involved several colleagues in discussion of her negative feelings and intentions to further self harm.

### Issues to Consider

What is the most appropriate strategy for management?

Is performance management even a consideration?

Who is responsible for management of mental illness in the workplace?

What are the implications for colleagues exposed to an employee with intention to self harm?

Who determines the working arrangements of an employee who is not able to manage full time duties?

### Presentation and Assessment

The employee presented with flat affect, she articulated an understanding of her significant decrease in performance and described change as being beyond her capacity. Interactions with her employer appeared comfortable. Both the employer and employee understood the issue as being one of increased absenteeism, and not being able to manage the workload, that had so easily been managed some 12 months earlier.

Although the employee articulated a desire to return to her previous capacity, she experienced several days a week where she was simply unable to get to work. On occasion, she actually caught the bus, got off, crossed the road and caught the bus back home. History revealed a 12 month experience of clinically significant depression that had been ineffectively managed and had become worse over time. The episode of self harm was her first incident. Her social support was minimal as she had disguised severity of depression and attempt to self harm from family and friends.

### Management Plan

The Manager engaged his Employee Assistance Provider as a Consultant in a Workplace Service Support capacity, rather than in an individual confidential counselling capacity to manage the circumstance. This enabled an open, transparent and collaborative management of the case to be undertaken. Performance Management was inappropriate and not pursued.

#### The Consultant Psychologist

Initiated all further assessment, treatment and appropriate health referrals for the employee and case managed the employee throughout the treatment and 'return to work' process.

Contracted with the employee to adhere to the established management and treatment plan.

Provided an information session to the Managers involved regarding the impact of depression and self harm, including aetiology, prevalence, treatment and prognosis.

Provided clear instructions to the employee regarding both the manner and to whom absences should be reported.

Led the discussion with the Manager and Employee, regarding the reduction of working hours, whereby hours were reduced to 4 hours each day, 9am – 1am for several weeks whilst first in treatment, with several weeks of full time leave being undertaken whilst extensive treatment was provided.

Assisted the employee's colleagues with skills for the appropriate,

empathic management of phone calls from employee, including referral numbers should any concern regarding self harm be raised.

The Manager provided the employee with additional leave. The Employee accessed the employee benefit income insurance to provide financial stability.

The Employee's previously unmanaged workload was managed by delegation to colleagues and temporary staffing arrangements.

Post treatment, the employee returned to work, firstly at 4 hours per day and later full-time. The Consultant Psychologist provided re-integration support to the employee, the Manager and her colleagues, which included a management plan to address any signs of relapse.

### Summary

The key role of the Consulting Psychologist in this case was to collaboratively work with the Manager, the Employee and the treating Health Professionals to provide information, facilitate appropriate management of the case, and assist with return to work arrangements and workload management. Further, the Psychologist was able to provide support for both the well being of colleagues exposed to the issues of self harm and strategies for self harm prevention for the employee herself, enabling a return to a productive work team.

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# Organisational Psychology's Greatest Hits and Biggest Misses

by Jessie Lyons

The 6th Industrial and Organisational Psychology Conference, "A Decade of Practice in Science & Practice" was held in July this year. Invited speakers, workshops, symposia, practice forums, poster presentations and 'how to' sessions comprised the conference program. The opening key note address by Kevin Murphy was somewhat controversial, and summarised the 'greatest hits and biggest misses' of academics and practitioners over the last decade. Describing emotional intelligence, 360 degree feedback and content validity as some of our greatest misses received some surprised responses from the audience. Detailed below are our hits and misses according to Murphy:

## Hits of Organisational Psychology:

- Use of the scientist-practitioner model
- Routine use of quantitative constructs
- Use of a broader, more realistic definition of job performance
- Structured employment interview which has increased fairness, reliability and validity
- Biodata
- Meta-analysis of cognitive ability tests which suggest that the relationships between cognitive ability and performance in most jobs are stronger and more consistent than once assumed.
- Psychological contract (implicit agreements between people and organisations) has turned out to be a powerful explanatory construct
- Goals Setting Theory. Challenges and achievable goals are best, dysfunctional outcomes to assigning unrealistic goals have been identified and factors that influence goals acceptance have been specified

- Gained a better understanding of why good people do bad things at work (incivility, harassment, bullying and violence).

## Misses of Organisational Psychology:

- We are still servants of power (with a focus on management and productivity not employee happiness or health)
- We know a lot about a little. We focus more on large organisations (it is hard to gain access to small organisations), on the private sector and on managers.
- Content Validity – there is little evidence that assessments of content validity are useful for determining whether test scores are related to important criteria. There are no real rules or standards for assessing content validity.
- Meta-analysis of non-ability constructs, usually involves aggregating findings and measures that are not in any sense interchangeable. Missing data is common and makes meta-analyses much harder to interpret than most people think.
- Organisational effectiveness, because effectiveness is defined largely in financial terms (e.g., Enron). We also need to look at shareholders, workers, and workers families etc.
- Emotional Intelligence. Goleman's model is too expansive and the Meyer-Salovey Model is too narrow. Both make unsupported claims.
- 360 degree feedback. Different sources almost always disagree. Increasing the number of sources, increases the likelihood of negative feedback. Negative and discrepant feedback is perceived as less useful, less accurate and leads to more negative reactions.
- Continued use of pay-for-performance. Pay rarely has strong motivating effects. Linking pay to performance is more likely to cause dissatisfaction than motivation (except in cases where performance is

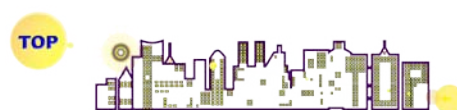
objectively well-defined).

- Maslow's Need Hierarchy has little empirical evidence to support it.
- Organisational Climate. Causes and consequences of climate are unclear. Unclear whether organisational climate is a property of the organisation or the perceivers.
- Sensitivity Training is vaguely aimed at making people 'better people'. Unclear what this is supposed to achieve and it has lead to some fairly unfocused interventions.

## What Next?

I have compiled 'take home messages' from a number of prominent speakers, including Michael O'driscoll and Jeanette Cleveland to determine what we should be giving more focus to:

- Firstly, identifying ourselves and differentiating ourselves from others (e.g., HRM, OB) and creating a more positive image in the 'marketplace'.
- Secondly, recognising that the human element matters, we have an affirmative obligation to care about the welfare of people we serve, employees and employers. We should care about the experience of work as much as we care about the products of work.
- Thirdly that the criterion for success should reflect more fully the multiple levels of analysis for success. These levels include employees, couples, family, teams and the organisation.
- We also need more interaction with stakeholders (e.g., employers, unions, employees, politicians and communities) and more input into public debate and policy (e.g., occupational health and wellbeing, work and family interface, unemployment issues, technology, retirement).
- Finally we must continue to ask "What can we contribute to organisational life, and quality of life?"





# A Performance Scorecard for IO Psychology

By Scott Smout

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The 2005 Australian Industrial and Organisational Psychology Conference provided delegates with an opportunity to reflect on the performance of the profession of IO Psychology over the previous 10 years. In a provocative opening keynote, Professor Kevin Murphy (Pennsylvania State University) challenged delegates to consider topics, areas and approaches where IO psychology has progressed and also where the returns to business, academia and society have been much less than the effort and investment expended. Although Professor Murphy qualified his scorecard of “greatest hits & misses” as representing only his views and opinion, his presentation was a valuable starting point for practitioners and academics to engage in a healthy dialogue on how to improve the profession of IO psychology. Judging by the discussions in the morning break he was successful in generating lively debate.

Professor Murphy identified a broad range of achievements for the profession which have been accompanied by a growing global demand for IO Psychologists and an increase in a robust research literature. Murphy also attributes the effective utilisation of the scientist/practitioner model and various measurement and statistical techniques as a strength of the profession. The rigour in maintaining an effective balance of science and practice continues to enhance the relevance and credibility of IO Psychology.

IO Psychology has made considerable progress in developing a broader and more realistic definition of job performance which has impacted on traditional human resource management techniques. Research aimed at understanding “who” is a good worker and “what” constitutes good/poor job performance has underpinned advances in employee selection techniques

including increased use of structured interviews, biodata and cognitive ability tests. In addition, a growing literature on the psychological contract, goal setting theory and counterproductive behaviour is serving to provide a better understanding of the contextual factors which affect the experience of work, work performance and high impact negative workplace behaviours.

Although IO Psychology has made practical advances in key issues affecting many organisations, Murphy suggests that the profession has invested considerable resources into areas that have not produced effective returns and still faces a number of significant challenges. The most notable challenge for IO Psychology is that the profession is primarily driven to satisfy the needs and concerns of management as opposed to addressing the welfare of employees. This is somewhat related to the fact that IO research tends to focus on larger organisations (with greater resources) while most people are employed by small business. It was further suggested that IO research methodology should address the overemphasis on content validity and the inappropriate use of meta-analysis and acknowledge the impact of missing data on research findings.

Topical areas of interest which have struggled to produce clear and reliable outcomes include Emotional Intelligence, 360 degree feedback, pay for performance, organisational climate, sensitivity training and T-groups. Furthermore, university textbooks still discuss the application of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs despite the lack of empirical support for this theory.

Professor Murphy concluded the keynote by identifying a few learned lessons for the profession which include affirming the responsibility of psychologists to focus on the welfare of people we serve (employers and employees), caring about the experience of work as much as the products of work and maintaining the effective balance of science and practice.



T.O.P. the official Quarterly Newsletter for the College of Organisational Psychologists has been illustrated and designed by:



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