

Assessment Council News

Newsletter of the
IPMA-HR
Assessment
Council

August 2006

Inside:

Presidential Message
Call for 2007 Program Committee Members
Technical Affairs: Mean versus Median: It Can Make a Difference
Legal Update: Who is an "Internet Applicant" and Why Do We Need to Know?10
Practice Exchange: Georgia's Talent Assessment Program for Succession Planning
IPMAAC Across the Nation – News of the Councils
Upcoming International, National, and Regional Conferences and Workshops
2006 IPMA Assessment Council Officers and Board Members 16
2006 IPMAAC Committee Chairs 17
About the ACN

IPMAAssessment Council

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Presidential Message

By Beverly Waldron

2006 Conference Recap

IPMAAC celebrated its 30th anniversary with a great conference in Las Vegas, June 25-28. Some of the numbers for the conference: 252 attendees, 7 pre-conference workshops, 52 presentations, 92 speakers, a reception, an anniversary party, and 114 degree weather (although it was a dry heat)!

Highlights from the conference included **Paul Sackett's** keynote presentation on Measuring and Predicting Counterproductive Work Behavior and presentations by our two invited speakers, Robert Guion (What I'm Learning — and What I Still Don't Know — About Assessment) and Ann Quigley (TSA — Current Human Capital Challenges in Defending the Homeland). A wide variety of presentations provided something for everyone. Information from many of the sessions is available online at IPMAAC Online! (ipmaac. org) and as others are received, they are being added to the site. Check back often to see what has been added. (If you presented at the conference and have not yet sent in your presentation, please do so. Thanks!) While there, you might want to check out the pictures.... Monday night's anniversary party proved once again that IPMAACers know how to have a good time — the dancing was enthusiastic.

Putting on a conference is hard work. Putting on a great conference is

even harder work. Many thanks and much appreciation go to this year's Conference Program Chairs, Martin Anderson and Roxanne Cochran. Their dedication and hard work along with that of the Program Committee (Warren Bobrow, Anita Ford, Jennifer French, David Hamill, Stephanie Hinson, Reid Klion, Julia McElreath, Mabel Miramon, Kristine Smith, Lynn Stimson, Donna Terrazas, James Valliere, Inés Vargas Frankel, and Mike Willihnganz) were evident in the outstanding conference program. Thanks also go to Lynne Jantz, our Host Committee Chair. She and her committee (Susana McCurdy, Aaron Morgan, Serita Simpson, and Steve Yuen) helped everyone enjoy Las Vegas! A very special thank you also goes to our vendors and sponsors. Thank you to Aon and Sigma for the bags and name tags, and to WRIPAC and MAPAC for speaker sponsorships. Without your contributions, a great conference would not have been possible. Thank you all!

Awards

The IPMAAC conference also provides us with the opportunity for recognition and presentation of a number of awards.

Presidential Message continued

Rustin Meyer, a graduate student at Purdue University, was the winner of this year's Student Paper Competition. His paper was entitled *Situational Moderators of the Conscientiousness-Performance Relationship: An Interactional Meta-Analysis*. Congratulations to Rustin on his winning paper and his recent marriage!

Our Innovations in Assessment Award is designed to encourage and recognize innovations in the field of personnel assessment. We received a number of worthy submissions which resulted in two honorable mentions in addition to this year's winner. Honorable mention recognition goes to **Mark Haucke** of the United States Postal Service for "Automation of Selection Procedures." Honorable mention also goes to **Daniel Russell, Miriam Nelson, Allison Hoffman** and **Clifford Jay** of Aon for "Adapting the REPeValuator for Public Sector Use." This year's Innovations Award was presented to **Charles K. Brooks, Jeff Maile** and **Steve Sutton**, Georgia Merit System, for "TAP: Georgia's Talent Assessment Program for Succession Planning." An article on their program appears in this issue of the *ACN*.

IPMAAC's Clyde J. Lindley Exemplary Service Award for outstanding contributions to IPMAAC was presented to **Ted Darany** and **Bruce Davey** in recognition of the outstanding contributions they have made to IPMAAC since its inception.

Call for 2007 Program Committee Members

he International Public Management Association Assessment Council (IPMAAC) is pleased to announce that the 2007 IPMAAC Conference will be held June 10-13 in St. Louis, MO. A call for conference proposals will be announced in the near future. In order to review the proposals that are submitted for the upcoming conference, we need to ensure that we have a sufficient number of reviewers. Doing so will help to ensure that we have multiple reviewers for each submission and meaningful comments for the authors. If you would like to volunteer to participate as a member of the Program Committee, please contact either Kurt Wilkening, WilkeningK@hillsboroughcounty.org, or Reid Klion, rklion@panpowered.com by September 15, 2006—AGN

The Stephen E. Bemis Award is traditionally presented at the annual IPMAAC conference. Criteria for nomination for this award include: accomplished personnel measurement practitioners who are recognized for their on-going commitment to the principles of merit and fairness; professionals who have made an impact in the field by their practical contribution(s) that have either resulted in an improved or a new procedure; and concerned individuals who are recognized for their commitment to assisting fellow practitioners, being available to them, and freely calling on them. This year's nominees certainly meet the criteria. They were, in alphabetical order: Wanda Campbell, James Frankhart, Stacie Meyer, and Kristine Smith. We offer our congratulations to all nominees and to this year's worthy award recipient, Mike Willihnganz.

Business

The Board of Directors met and worked toward making IPMAAC an even stronger organization. The results of this year's election were announced. President-Elect for 2007 is **Inés Vargas Fraenkel**, Office of the Oakland City Attorney. Our two new Board members for 2007 are **Warren Bobrow**, All About Performance, LLC, and **Julia McElreath**, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security (although moving to Sodexho as of August 28). I know you share my conviction that they will do an excellent job for all of us.

President-Elect **Déonda Scott** talked about her plans for 2007 and next year's conference in St. Louis (June 10-13, 2007). She has selected her Program Chairs for next year's conference. They are **Reid Klion** and **Kurt Wilkening**. The Call for Proposals will be out in the very near future. I know this year's conference just ended but it really isn't too early to start thinking and planning for next year. Think about submitting a proposal, helping out with the Program Committee, or just attending the conference. Your contributions are what make the IPMAAC conference valuable and a success!

I hope those of you who attended this year's conference enjoyed it as much as I did, that those of you who could not attend this year will take advantage of the presentations on the Web site, and that I see all of you in St. Louis next year! As always, I welcome any suggestions or assistance that you are willing to offer.—AGEN

Technical Affairs

By Mike Aamodt, Associate Editor

Mean versus Median: It Can Make a Difference

I know what you are thinking. How lame has the Technical Affairs column become when the topic is the mean versus the median? As boring as the topic sounds, it really does matter and it is not a topic that we spend much time thinking about, but probably should. After all, on a daily basis, how often do we make references to such things as "the average salary" or "the average tenure" of our employees? Probably fairly often. So, let's start the discussion with the basics that everyone knows and then move on to the good stuff.

hen we refer to the average/typical person, situation, or organization, we are basing our reference on a measure of central tendency. A measure of central tendency is a statistic that summarizes the most common values in a dataset. The three measures of central tendency are the mean, median, and mode. The mean is the arithmetic average of a set of scores, the median is the middle score in the dataset (the point at which an equal number of scores fall above and below), and the mode is the most frequently occurring score. Because there are three measures of central tendency, rather than using a term such as the average tenure of our employees, it is important to be specific and use such terms as the median tenure, the mean tenure, or the modal tenure.

The mode is the least useful and least commonly used measure of central tendency. The mode should be used when the data are categorical or the goal of the analysis is to determine the most likely event that will occur. In fact, for categorical/nominal/discrete data, the mode is the only appropriate measure of central tendency. Take, for example, the data shown in Table 1 in which you have coded race as 1=White, 2=Black, 3=Hispanic, 4=Asian American, and 5=Native American. The modal race code—most frequently occurring—is 1 (White). Taking the mean of race code would result in a value of 2.33, a statistic that is meaningless (e.g., is our typical employee 1/3 of the way between being Black and Hispanic?)!

Table 1: Example of Categorical Data		
Race Code	Race	Frequency
1	White	20
2	Black	10
3	Hispanic	15
4	Asian American	7
5	Native American	3
	Total	55
2.33	Mean	

The other use for the mode is when we want to infer from our data the event that is most likely to occur in the future. For example, if you like to solve the Cryptoquote in the daily paper, an analysis of letters used in English writing indicates that the most commonly used letter (the mode) is an "e." Thus, a typical strategy is to substitute an "e" for the most frequently occurring code (my wife tells me that there are many other strategies, but that will have to be the topic of another column). If you are not a Cryptoquote fan, here is another example. If a district attorney and a defense attorney were trying to reach a plea agreement, the defense attorney would probably be interested in the sentence most commonly administered by a particular judge (mode) rather than the mean or median sentence.

Theoretically Speaking: Mean versus Median

In deciding whether or not to use the mean or the median, consideration must be given to both statistical and theoretical issues. Let's start the discussion with the theoretical issues that are often ignored in selecting a measure of central tendency and end with the statistical issues.

The theoretical issues involve what you are going to do with the mean or the median. Typically, people use a measure of central tendency to do one of three things: Describe the average/typical person/situation, predict future behavior or make inferences about future needs, and/or compare two or more groups.

If our purpose is to describe the norm or the typical person/organization, then the median is the most appropriate measure of central tendency. If our purpose is to predict future behavior, to make an inference about necessary resources, or to compare two groups, the mean is the theoretically most appropriate measure of central tendency.

Describing Data

If the measure of central tendency is to be used for *descriptive purposes only*, the mean and median often tell very different stories, and the median is the most appropriate measure. Examples of descriptive questions might be:

What is the average/typical tenure of our employees?

- What is the average/typical amount of money spent per tourist?
- What is the average/typical salary for a billing clerk in Boise, Idaho?
- How long does it take the average/typical unemployed person to find a job in Roanoke, Virginia?

These questions are descriptive in nature, because the answer is not being compared to another measure of central tendency to see if the two measures are significantly different from one another. That is, we are asking, "What is the typical tenure of our employees?" rather than "Is the typical tenure of our employees significantly different from employees at a competing organization?"

The median is the more appropriate measure of central tendency when the goal is to understand the "typical" person or situation. For example, in a situation in which an employee has missed six days of work in the past year and his supervisor wants to make a judgment about whether these six days are "above average," the question is, "Compared to the typical employee, is six days atypical?" If we use the data from Table 2, using the median would result in the correct judgment that the six days is less than the seven days that the "typical" employee misses.

Table 2: Absenteeism Data		
Employee	Number Days Missed	
Carrie	11	
Во	9	
Vonzell	9	
Anthony	8	
Scott	8	
Constantine	7	
Anwar	2	
Nadia	1	
Nikko	0	
Jessica	0	
Mikalah	0	
Total	55	
Mean	5.0	
Median	7.0	



As another example, imagine that an organization is negotiating a settlement with the EEOC regarding back wages. A key statistic in such computations is the number of weeks that the average/typical/normal person is unemployed. In this case, the median is the proper measure of central tendency, because the goal is to describe the "typical unemployed person" rather than to project the total number of weeks that all unemployed people will be out of work. That is, there will be some people who will be employed for long periods of time, because they are not trying to find jobs, are not qualified for any jobs, or are in unusual occupations for which there are few openings. Likewise, there will be people who find a job in one day. Such people do not represent the "typical" applicant and greatly skew the data.

Why is the distinction important? Imagine a situation in which regional data indicate that the median number of weeks to find a job is 8 and the mean is 30 (the mode is 4). If back pay was based on the median and there were 10 employees entitled to back pay and the average weekly salary was \$300, the estimated back pay would be \$24,000 (\$300 x 10 people x 8 weeks). The back pay estimate based on the mean would be \$90,000—a substantial difference!

It is important to understand in the above example that neither the mean nor the median is more plaintiff-friendly or defendant-friendly than the other. When there are no outliers and the data are normally distributed, the mean and the median are identical (or very similar). As shown in Figures 1 and 2, when they are not similar, the median will be higher than the mean when the data are negatively skewed (more high scores); and the mean will be higher than the median when the data are positively skewed (more low scores). Thus, with normally distributed data, the choice of the mean or median should be based on how the measure of central tendency will be used.

Predicting and Making Inferences

As an example of making an inference about necessary resources, let's imagine that we are having a cookout and need to determine how many shrimp to purchase for our 20 guests. We just happen to have data from a previous cookout, and these data are conveniently located in Table 3. At our last cookout, the 11 guests ate a total of 66 shrimp—the mean number of shrimp eaten per guest was 6.0 and the median 5.0. Had we used the median to estimate the number of shrimp to buy for the "typical guest," we would have purchased 55 shrimp and would have been 11 short of what our guests actually ate.

Number of Shrimp Eaten
12
11
10
8
6
5
4
4
2
2
2
66
6.0
5.0

As another example, imagine that we want to anticipate staffing needs by looking at the number of days employees were absent last year. Assume that we have 50 employees and we want to base our estimate on the 11 employees we had last year. The number of days missed for each of the 11 employees is shown in Table 2 on Page 4. The mean number of days missed was 5.0 per employee and the median was 7.0. If we hired extra staff with the idea that our 50 employees would each miss the median number of days absent (50 x 7 = 350 days), we would overestimate our staffing needs compared to the estimate provided by the mean number of days absent (50 x 5 = 250 days).

Statistically Speaking: Mean versus Median

As mentioned previously, if the data are normally distributed, the mean and median will be identical or very similar. If the data are not normally distributed or the sample size is small, the median is the better choice because it is less susceptible to outliers than is the mean.

How do you know if your data are normally distributed or if there are outliers? The easiest approach is to simply look at the difference between the mean and the median. If they are far apart, the data are not normally distributed, and the median should be used. For example, as shown in Table 4, the mean and median weeks to find a job are very different, indicating that the data are not normally distributed and that the median is statistically the more appropriate measure of central tendency.

Table 4: Duration of	Unemployment
in Weeks (2002)	

(
State	Mean Duration	Median Duration
Alabama	17.8	9.2
Alaska	13.3	6.7
Arizona	13.7	7.1
Arkansas	15.8	8.3
California	17.3	9.2
Colorado	15.5	7.7
Connecticut	17.7	9.3
Delaware	16.1	7.8

A second, but rough, approach is to look at a plot of the data to see if there are extreme scores or if the plot looks very different from that of a normal curve. Examples of such plots are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Example of a negatively skewed distribution

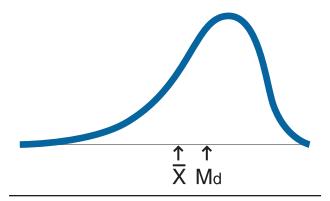
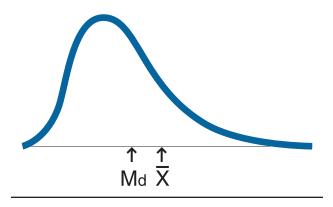


Figure 2: Example of a positively skewed distribution



A third approach, and the most accurate, is to look at measures of kurtosis and skewness (Excel, SAS, and SPSS provide these two measures as part of their descriptive statistics options). Kurtosis refers to the shape of the peak of a distribution (pointed or flat) and skewness refers to how symmetrical the left side of the curve is to the right side. If data are normally distributed, the skewness and kurtosis values will be close to zero. As shown in Figure 1, a negative skewness value indicates that the distribution has a negative skew (mostly high values and a few extreme low values). As shown in Figure 2, a positive skewness value indicates that the distribution has a positive skew (mostly low scores and a few extreme high scores). Kurtosis values that exceed zero indicate a sharper peak than normal, whereas values less than zero indicate a flatter peak than normal.

The million-dollar question becomes, how far from zero do skewness and kurtosis values need to be to suggest that the distribution is not normal? Though experts disagree about the answer to this question, a simple, yet accurate, approach is to compute the standard errors for skewness and for kurtosis. SPSS and SAS provide the standard error in their descriptive statistics output, but Excel does not. The formula for approximating the standard error for kurtosis is the square-root of (24÷N) and the formula for approximating the standard error of skewness is the square-root of (6÷N). For example, if you had 50 employees, the standard error for kurtosis would be the square root of (24÷50), which equals 0.48.

If either the observed skewness or kurtosis value exceeds two standard errors, one might conclude that the distribution is not normal. For example, suppose that our data indicated a kurtosis of 0.11 and a skewness of 1.21. Assume that the standard error for kurtosis is .25 and for skewness is .12. Given that two times the kurtosis standard error is .50, and our kurtosis value is .11, we would not see any significant problems involving kurtosis. Skewness, however, is a different story. The value of two standard errors for skewness is .24. Our observed value of 1.21 greatly exceeds two standard errors indicating that our data are significantly positively skewed (we have a lot more low scores than high scores). Thus, the arithmetic mean would not be the appropriate measure of central tendency in this case.

SPSS and SAS provide two additional statistics that help determine if a distribution is normal: Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov. The Shapiro-Wilk test is used for smaller samples (under 2,000) and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov for larger samples. Both tests consider skewness and kurtosis simultaneously. Other tests include the Stephens' test for normality, D'Agostino-Pearson test, D'Agostino's test for skewness, and the Anscombe-Glynn test for kurtosis.

If the values of these tests are not statistically significant, you can assume that your distribution is fairly normal. If, however, the value is significant, you may still need to look individually at the skewness and kurtosis values. The reason for this further investigation is because problems with kurtosis do not greatly affect t-test or ANOVA results, but problems with skewness do. So, if the problem involves kurtosis, you can still conduct a t-test or ANOVA. It is important to note that the above approaches tell you whether the amount of skewness or kurtosis is statistically significant; they don't, however, tell you if the amount of skew or kurtosis is practically significant. That is, is the departure from normality enough to actually affect the results of the t-tests, ANOVAs, or regression analyses?

An important caution is needed regarding the use of the tests discussed in the previous two paragraphs. Tests of normality are inaccurate with very small samples (<10) and can indicate statistically significant, yet practically insignificant, normality problems with large sample sizes. Due to these problems, some statisticians advise that these tests not be used. Furthermore, with large sample sizes, t-tests and ANOVAs are fairly immune to problems caused by non-normality.

Even with a Normal Distribution, It Matters

Statistically, if the choice between the mean and the median doesn't matter when the data are normally distributed, but the median is better when the data are not normally distributed, a logical question is, "Why not always use the median?" The answer depends on what you are going to do with the measure of central tendency—in this case, the mean or median.

If the purpose is to conduct further statistical analyses to answer such questions as, "Is the average/typical salary for women lower than the average/typical salary for men?" or "Do employees who complete a customer service training program perform better than employees without such training?" it is better to use the mean, because the common statistics used to test such questions (e.g., t-tests, ANOVAs) require the use of means rather than medians. There are many nonparametric statistics that can test differences between medians (e.g., Fishers exact test), but these statistics tend to be more complicated, less powerful, and more difficult to explain to a non-statistical audience.

Even if the data are not normally distributed, the mean can be used potentially for such analyses as t-tests and analyses of variance by forcing the data into a more normal

(continued on next page)

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August 2006 Assessment Council News

distribution using transformations or by using a mean other than the arithmetic mean. Common transformations include the square-root transformation, log-linear transformation, and inverse transformation. Square-root transformations are used for mildly skewed data, logarithmic transformations for moderately skewed data, and inverse transformations for more heavily skewed data. Though transformations usually make a distribution more normal, there is no guarantee that they will always result in a normal distribution.

The problem with using transformations is that, because they change the nature of the data, results are more difficult to explain. For example, if the mean salary for male accountants is \$45,000 and the mean for female accountants is \$43,000, it is easy to explain that there is a \$2,000 mean difference in salary. However, if we used a logarithmic transformation, our analysis would indicate that the average salary for men is 4.65 and for women 4.63. Such numbers would not make practical sense to many managers or employees.

Another approach to make a skewed distribution more normal is to use a mean other than the arithmetic mean. As mentioned at the beginning of the column, the arithmetic mean is simply the sum of the scores divided by the number of scores. A trimmed mean is one in which the scores are ranked and a certain percentage (usually 5%) of the scores at the bottom and the top are removed. A trimmed mean is a good approach when the distribution is fairly normal but there are a few extreme scores. It is not a good technique, however, when the sample size is small.

An interesting, but complicated, approach to normalizing a distribution is to use M-estimators, means that are computed by providing less weight to values that are further from the center of the distribution. SPSS provides four such M-estimators: Huber's M-Estimator, Tukey's biweight, Hampel's M-estimator, and Andrews' wave. The *geometric mean* and the *harmonic mean* also provide less weight to values that are further from the center of the distribution. Rather than arithmetic means, geometric means are commonly used to compute average rates of growth (e.g., interest earned on a retirement fund) and harmonic means are used to compute the average distance per time (e.g., miles walked per hour).

Table 5 provides an example of the various means for a distribution of salaries with significant kurtosis and positive skewness problems. As you can see from the table, the arithmetic mean is higher than the other means, and the median is much closer to the other means and estimated means.

Table 5: Com	parison of	Measures of Central
Tendency in a	Positively	Skewed Distribution

Measure of Central Tendency	Salary
Arithmetic mean	\$105,973
Trimmed mean	\$104,929
Geometric mean	\$104,727
Harmonic mean	\$103,559
Huber's M-estimator mean	\$103,375
Hampel's M-estimator mean	\$103,357
Median	\$103,195
Tukey's biweight estimated mean	\$102,268
Andrews' wave estimated mean	\$102,245

Conclusion

So, what does all this mean from a practical or statistical standpoint? The choice of the mean or median goes beyond the simple statistical question of whether data are normally distributed. Choice of the proper measure of central tendency results in better decision making. From a practical perspective, to summarize the discussion:

- If we are making projections about future needs, the mean is the best choice.
- If we are describing the typical person or situation, the median is the better choice.
- If we want to determine if two measures of central tendency are significantly different from one another, the mean is the better choice as long as our data are normally distributed. If they are not, we should transform the data to force a more normal distribution. If the transformations do not result in a normal distribution, we must use the median.

Final Comments

While researching this column, I was surprised to see the extent to which experts disagree on the issues discussed in the column. If any *ACN* reader has some thoughts on this topic, please e-mail them to me and I will include them in the October column. I would like to thank Bobbie Raynes of New River Community College, David Cohen of DCI Consulting, Dan Biddle of Biddle Consulting Group, Jeff Aspelmeier of Radford University, and Michael Surrette of Springfield College for providing very useful comments and suggestions on earlier drafts of the column. I don't know what possessed them to agree to read the drafts, but I am grateful that they did.——AGN

HR Humor

Differences Between Employee and Management Behavior

When you take a long time, you're slow. When your boss takes a long time, he's thorough.

When you don't get something done, you're lazy.

When your boss doesn't get something done, she's too busy.

When you make a mistake, you're an idiot

When your boss makes a mistake, he's only human.

When you do it your own way, you don't do what you are told.

When your boss does it, she's showing creativity.

When you do it on your own, you're overstepping your bounds.

When your boss does it, he is demonstrating initiative.

When you take a stand, you're being bull-headed.

When your boss takes a stand, she's being firm.

When you're out of the office, you're wandering around.

When your boss is out of the office, he's on business.

When you call in sick, you're goofing off. When your boss calls in sick, she must be very ill. When you apply for leave, you must be going on an interview.

When your boss applies for leave, it's because he is overworked.

When you're seen shopping during work hours, you're a slacker.

When your boss is doing the same, she's picking up office supplies.

When you get a raise, you're lucky.
When he gets one, he really earned it.

When you do a good job, you get a pat on the back.

When she does a good job, she gets a bonus.

When you violate a rule, you're selfcentered.

When your boss skips a few steps, he's being original.

When you please your boss, you're brown-nosing.

When your boss pleases his boss, she's being cooperative.

When you help a peer, you're not busy enough.

When your boss does it, he's a team player.

When someone else does your work, you're passing the buck.

When someone else does her work, she's assigning responsibility.— ${\tt AGN}$

Legal Update

By Inés Vargas Fraenkel, Esq., Oakland City Attorney's Office

The Legal Update is a section of the ACN that will appear from time to time as updates are warranted. For more information regarding this article, please contact Inés Vargas Fraenkel, Oakland City Attorney's Office, inesyf@aol.com.

Who is an "Internet Applicant" and Why Do We Need to Know?

Introduction

The 1979 definition of an "applicant" in the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (UGESP) is "... a person who has indicated an interest in being considered for hiring, promotion, or other employment opportunities. This interest may be expressed by completing an application form, or might be expressed orally, depending on the employer's practice." This definition is important because it is key to several recordkeeping and compliance provisions under the UGESP and other Federal regulations.

The definition of an applicant is important since: (1) only "applicants" may establish a prima facie case of unlawful discrimination regarding hiring decisions under state and Federal discrimination statutes; and (2) employers must determine who qualifies as an "applicant" in order to ascertain whether hiring practices, policies, or procedures have an "adverse impact" on minorities and/or women. Under the UGESP, employers need to maintain information that will disclose whether there is disparate impact in its tests and selection procedures (29 C.F.R. 1607.4A), and, if there is, it sets forth different methods for determining whether the procedures are valid and jobrelated. UGESP is at 29 C.F.R. Part 1607 (EEOC) and 41 C.F.R. Part 60-3 (OFCCP).

Changing Times

In the late 1990s, new technology such as e-mail, Web sites (third party job or résumé banks and employment Web pages), electronic scanning technology, applicant tracking systems and internal databases of job seekers, increased the ways in which applicants and employers viewed and used the labor market. The magnitude of Internet applications, in particular, increased exponentially during this period.

This created the need for supplemental information, resulting in an inter-agency task force created in 2000, made up of various agencies: EEOC, Department of Labor, Department of Justice – Civil Rights Division, and Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The EEOC came out with a proposed definition in March 4, 2004, that remains 'proposed' to date.

EEOC (Proposed) Definition of Internet Applicant

Under the EEOC definition, in order to be considered an applicant in the context of the Internet and related electronic data processing technologies, the following must have taken place:

- 1. the employer must have acted to *fill a particular position*,
- 2. the individual must have *followed the employer's stan-dard procedures* for submitting applications,
- 3. the individual must have *indicated an interest in the particular position*.

The effect of the EEOC definition is that only those who respond and follow the employer's announced process will be counted. Neither the employer's searching of applicant databases nor the applicant's posting of résumés in third-party résumé banks or personal Web pages are sufficient to be construed as criteria for defining Internet applicants.

The EEOC definition is believed by some to be of concern because it is too inclusive. The provisions *do not require someone to meet minimum qualifications* for a job in order to be counted as an Internet applicant—only applicant interest and the applicant's following of the employer's application process. The breadth of the EEOC definition of an Internet applicant will require extensive and expensive information tracking. Furthermore, the standard for job relatedness may be set too high. Note that any tests administered online (e.g., personality, aptitude) remain subject to the Uniform Guidelines and need to be properly validated.

OFCCP – A Different Definition of Internet Applicant

The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program (OFCCP) proposed a different definition of Internet applicant so that it could better meet its enforcement responsibilities when reviewing compliance and auditing Federal contractors. The OFCCP proposed its definition in March

Legal Update continued

2005, adopted a final definition on October 7, 2005, and made it effective on February 7, 2006.

The OFCCP administers and enforces Executive Order 11246, as amended, which prohibits Federal contractors who do more than \$10,000 in government business in one year from discriminating in employment decisions on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin. The Executive Order also requires those affected to take affirmative action to ensure that equal opportunity is provided in all aspects of employment. They must collect gender, race, and ethnicity data on employees and applicants.

Under the OFCCP definition, the following must take place in order to count an individual as an Internet applicant:

- 1. the individual must submit an *expression of interest* in employment through the *Internet or related electronic data technologies*,
- 2. the contractor must *consider the individual* for employment in a particular position,
- 3. the individual's expression of interest must indicate that the individual *possesses the basic qualifications* for the position,
- 4. the individual must, at no point in the contractor's selection process, prior to receiving an offer of employment from the contractor, remove himself or herself from further consideration or otherwise *indicate that he* or she is no longer interested in the position.

OFCCP - Key Terms

"Internet or Related Technologies" — a precise definition of this term is not available because the technology in this area is constantly evolving.

"Basic Qualifications" — must be a non-comparative, objective, and job-related feature (related to performance and enable the employer to accomplish business-related goals).

The rule applies when minimum qualifications are established in advance, and in cases in which the applicant submits a résumé or in which the employer searches applicant databases.

OFCCP Dual Rule Implications

If the contractor considers expressions of interest made electronically in the recruiting or selection process for the particular position, under the new rule, *all* expressions of interest count, regardless of the means in which they are made. If a contractor only accepts traditional paper applications for a position, the old definition still applies as to that position.

OFCCP – Why be different?

It has been speculated that the OFCCP was concerned that in order to avoid potential liabilities with the EEOC defin-

ition, contractors may eliminate all advertisements for specific job openings. Instead, they might allow candidates to apply only for a general group of jobs or for no particular jobs at all, thereby reducing the number of applicants per the EEOC definition. The OFCCP definition counts all applicants considered by the employer.

EEOC/OFCCP Comparison

The EEOC proposed definition places the trigger in the hands of the individual who expresses interest and follows the process set out by the employer for the particular job, regardless of whether the person meets the minimum qualifications. The OFCCP definition requires that the individual must express interest and have certain qualifications, but the trigger is the recruiter or the hiring manager who must have *considered the candidate* for employment in the particular position.

Use of OFCCP Data

OFCCP records are only to be used for recordkeeping and data collection in connection with Executive Order 11246, not for determining discrimination. Census and other market data will be used to determine whether discrimination has occurred. In like manner, the OFCCP data does not constitute the applicant pool as the application process does not accurately reflect the pool – the qualification requirements may themselves be discriminatory and discouraging. Many other factors need to be considered, such as the match between the workforce and the relevant labor market data, relevance of job requirements, etc.

OFCCP Rule – Implications and Suggestions

Given the fact that the current EEOC and OFCCP definitions differ, employers that are covered by both may need to keep two (2) sets of applicant records. Employers would be wise to reevaluate their own definitions of applicant and carefully review employment practices to ensure compliance with both. They should establish procedures for tracking data in light of the new rules, which may require developing and implementing applicant tracking systems under both definitions.

As always, employers should carefully monitor standardized Internet recruiting systems and be watchful for statistical disparities. They should continue to justify all selection criteria used to screen and select individuals and audit hiring systems for possible disparate impact. When necessary, they should make good faith and timely efforts to change their selection processes, as well as train line managers regarding basic concepts so that they will understand and support the changes. Finally, best practices dictate that selection requirements be job related and that the selection process be applied consistently.—AGN

Practice Exchange

By Kathryn Singh and Bridget Styers, Associate Editors

This month, the ACN features an article by the winner of IPMAAC's 2006 Innovations in Assessment Award. Congratulations to all the team members at the Georgia Merit System. For more information about Georgia's Talent Assessment Program for Succession Planning, contact Charles Brooks at bro@gms.state.ga.us.

If you are conducting a project or have implemented organizational, technical, or logistical improvements in your organization that you think would benefit others, or if you know someone who may have related information to share that would interest ACN readers, please contact one of us. Bridget can be reached by e-mail at bstyers@hr.sbcounty.gov, or by phone at (909) 387- 5575. Kathryn can be reached by e-mail at ksingh@occourts.org, or by phone at (714) 834-2080.

Georgia's Talent Assessment Program for Succession Planning

By Charles Kennedy Brooks, HR Strategy Manager, Workforce Planning - Georgia Merit System Jeff Maile, Section Manager, Workforce Planning Technical Services - Georgia Merit System Steve Sutton, HR Consultant III - Georgia Merit System

Georgia's Talent Assessment Program (TAP) is a companion tool to the model, guidelines, and training that comprise Georgia's approach to succession planning. It assesses a combination of competencies and results in order to select and situate high potential leadership talent into a succession development pool. TAP helps decision makers identify, list, differentially develop, and optimally deploy their "A, B, and C players."

TAP is a "spreadsheet application" built upon an integrated MS Excel and Access platform. Once installed on the customer's network, TAP is relatively easy to use — our best tool to date — and it has great effectiveness in identifying and developing high-potential leadership talent and promotable people. It was designed and developed internally by the workforce planning staff of the Georgia Merit System — a group of assessment professionals that taught themselves software application development. Charles Brooks was the application designer and project director, Jeff Maile was the project manager, and Steve Sutton was the application programmer.

TAP makes use of a full 360-degree rating on two dimensions: competency and results. The competency score is determined by assessing each person on one of three content valid competency models associated with a particular leadership level: front-line, middle, or senior manager. (These competency models were developed as part of an enterprise learning needs assessment involving interviews of over 300 managers and executives and twenty focus groups.) Competency scores are computed by combining a subject's ratings on two factors: 1) competency intensity, and 2) competency impact. Competency intensity refers to how much of the competency is observed when it is used. It is scored on a five-point behav-

iorally anchored rating scale. Competency impact refers to how broad or far-reaching the influence or effect is when the competency is used. It is scored on an index of competency impact scales that range from having an effect upon one individual to having an effect upon an entire organization or industry. Results scores are computed by combining a subject's ratings on team results, process results, customer results, and mission results — a so-called "balanced scorecard perspective." This allows a context-free comparison of individuals working in different functional areas. Using scores on the competency and results dimensions, each person is placed in a 3 x 3 "competency-results grid" in order to identify high potential leadership talent. Thus, it segments the workforce into performance categories (A, B, and C players).

Individuals highest on both dimensions are identified as "high potential talent" for the leadership level in question. Based on this multiple-hurdle assessment, the grid also identifies different developmental and reward strategies that are most appropriate for individuals in different cells in the grid. For instance, somebody high in desired results, but low in desired behaviors (i.e., competencies) requires different developmental strategies than somebody high in desired behaviors but low in results. Further, somebody high on both desired behavior and desired results, socalled "A Players," require still different developmental treatment. TAP focuses on how to deploy high potential people to give them practice and experiences to prepare them for leadership roles. It also gives recommendations for developmental deployment for people not in the highpotential category.

Practice Exchange continued

We began application development in Fall of 2003 and pilot testing the tool outside of our development group in Spring 2004. Of Georgia's agencies, 94% have been trained in the succession planning process, including 123 succession planning implementers. All have received the TAP demo. Sixty-three percent of Georgia's Executive Agencies have submitted action plans for succession planning, including major steps, accountable persons, timelines, and identification of measures of success. All of those plans include assessment of leadership talent. Most, we believe, will use TAP as their assessment tool. Thus far, only three agencies have it installed on their system. One agency has used it in assessing high potential leadership talent in their agency.

When fully deployed, we believe the potential value in cost savings for annual talent assessments using TAP versus buying and using an assessment from an outside vendor will exceed \$0.84 million per year (e.g., 42,000 employees/yr. x \$20/assessment = \$840,000/yr.). This, of course, does not include any benefits derived from increased productivity due to more effective leadership development and better leaders. Georgia's payroll exceeds 4 billion dollars annually. A mere increase of only 1% in productivity due to better leadership would be equivalent to a \$40,000,000 increase in value for Georgia.

See a PowerPoint demo of the tool at the following URL:www.gms.state.ga.us//agencyservices/wfplanning/ppt/TAPDemo.ppt —AGN

IPMAAC Across the Nation – News of the Councils

By Kristine Smith, Associate Editor

American Psychological Association (APA)

This year's conference is August 10-13, 2006, in New Orleans. The 2007 conference is scheduled for August 16-19 in San Francisco. For more information, visit their Web site at www.apa.org.

Bay Area Applied Psychologists (BAAP)

The BAAP sponsors a speaker once each quarter. The location varies, but the format involves networking from 6-7 p.m., followed by the speaker's presentation at 7 p.m. BAAP speakers are typically leaders in the field and deliver interactive presentations with plenty of group discussion. Check their Web site at www.baaponline.net for upcoming speakers and topics.

Chicago Industrial/Organizational Psychologists (CI/OP)

CI/OP is a society of human resources professionals from the Greater Chicago area who meet to discuss current issues in I/O psychology. CI/OP generally has Friday afternoon sessions from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. featuring several speakers addressing a topic. For more information and to confirm meeting dates and topics, visit their Web site at www.ciop.net.

Gateway Industrial-Organizational Psychologists (GIOP)

GIOP is a group of psychologists and human resources professionals in the metropolitan St. Louis area. The group consists of over 150 members and offers bi-monthly programs and conferences on a wide range of topics. For more information, visit the GIOP Web site at www.giop.org.

International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA-HR)

The 2006 IPMAAC conference was held June 25-28 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Check the IPMAAC Web site to view presentation materials. The 2006 IPMA-HR International Training Conference will be held on October 7-10 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The 2007 IPMAAC Conference will be held June 10-13, 2007, in St. Louis, Missouri.

Metropolitan New York Association for Applied Psychology (METRO)

For more information, call the MetroLine at (212) 539-7593 or visit METRO's Web site at **www.metro apppsych.com**.

Mid-Atlantic Personnel Assessment Consortium (MAPAC)

MAPAC is a non-profit organization of public sector personnel agencies involved and concerned with testing and personnel selection issues. For details on MAPAC, contact Roberta Ames, Pennsylvania Civil Service Department, at rames@state.pa.us, or visit the MAPAC Web site at www.ipmaac.org/mapac/.

Minnesota Professionals for Psychology Applied to Work (MPPAW)

MPPAW is an organization consisting of a broad range of practitioners, consultants, and professors who meet to encourage an open exchange of information relevant to psychology as applied to work and human resources management. For more information, visit the MPPAW Web site at www.mppaw.org.

Personnel Testing Council of Arizona (PTC/AZ)

PTC/AZ serves as a forum for the discussion of current issues on personnel selection and testing. It encourages education and professional development in the field of personnel selection and testing and advocates the understanding and use of fair and professionally sound testing practices. On October 6, 2006, PTC/AZ will present "ROI and the Metrics of Staffing." Speakers include Dr. Wayne Cascio, University of Colorado at Denver, and Ted Darany, Darany and Associates. For more information about PTC/AZ, contact Vicki Packman, Salt River Project at 602-236-4595 or vspackma@srpnet.com, or visit the PTC/AZ Web site accessible through the IPMAAC Web site at www.ipmaac.org/ptca/.

Personnel Testing Council of Metropolitan Washington (PTC/MW)

PTC/MW offers monthly luncheon programs and publishes an informative newsletter. See the 2006 calendar for scheduled luncheon speakers or visit the PTC/MW Web site accessible through the IPMAAC Web site at www.ipmaac.org.

Personnel Testing Council of Northern California (PTC/NC)

PTC/NC offers monthly training programs addressing topics and issues that are useful and relevant to personnel practitioners of all levels of expertise. The monthly programs are typically scheduled for the second Friday of each month and alternate between Sacramento and the Bay

area. The monthly programs feature speakers who are active contributors to the personnel assessment field. For more information regarding PTC/NC programs, visit the PTC/NC Web site accessible through the IPMAAC Web site at www.ipmaac.org/ptcnc.

Personnel Testing Council of Southern California (PTC/SC)

PTC/SC serves as a forum for the discussion of current issues in personnel selection and testing; encourages education and professional development in the field of personnel selection and testing; advocates the understanding and use of fair and non-discriminatory employment practices; and encourages the use of professionally sound selection and testing practices. For more information regarding luncheon meetings, workshops, upcoming conferences, or membership, visit the PTC/SC Web site accessible through the IPMAAC Web site at www.ipmaac.org/ptcsc.

Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

Contact www.shrm.org/education/ for a current listing of seminars and conferences.

Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychology (SIOP)

The 2007 conference is scheduled for April 27-29 in New York, NY. The 2008 conference is scheduled for April 11-13 in San Francisco, CA.

Western Region Intergovernmental Personnel Assessment Council (WRIPAC)

WRIPAC comprises public agencies from the western region of the United States who have joined together to promote excellence in personnel selection practices. WRIPAC has three meetings each year that are typically preceded by a training offering. Additionally, WRIPAC has published a monograph series and job analysis manual. Additional information may be obtained by visiting WRIPAC's Web site at www.wripac.org.

Western Region Item Bank (WRIB)

WRIB is a cooperative organization of public agencies using a computerized test item bank. Services include draft test questions with complete item history, preparation of "printer ready" exams, and exam scoring and item analysis. Membership includes more than 160 agencies nationwide. For more information, contact Bridget Styers at (909) 387-5575 or bstyers@hr.sbcounty.gov.

Upcoming International, National, and Regional Conferences and Workshops

AUGUST

- 6-10: American Statistical Association. Annual Convention. Seattle, WA. Contact: www.amstat.org.
- 9: PTC/MW Luncheon Meeting. Speakers: David Hamill, Marriott International, and Dr. David Pollack, Sodexho. Topic: "On-Line Performance Management Processes in Two Private Sector Organizations."
- 10-13: American Psychological Association. Annual Convention. New Orleans, LA. Contact: www.apa.org.
- 11-16: Academy of Management. Annual Meeting. Atlanta, GA. Contact: www.aomonline.org.
- 16-18: 2006 National Labor-Management Conference. Chicago, IL.

SEPTEMBER

- 5-6: IPMA-HR Federal Section Annual Conference. Washington, D.C.
- 13: PTC/MW Luncheon Meeting.
- 20-22: IPMA-HR Central California Chapter Conference. Bass Lake, CA.
- 20: WRIPAC Training Courses. "Selection Planning" and "Interpreting and Applying Item Analysis Data" Berkeley, CA.
- 21-22: WRIPAC Meeting. Berkeley, CA.

OCTOBER

- 4-6: SHRM Strategic HR Conference. Phoenix, AZ.
- 6: PTC/AZ workshop. "ROI and the Metrics of Staffing" Presenters: Dr. Wayne Cascio and Ted Darany.
- 11: PTC/MW. Luncheon Meeting.
- 16-18: SHRM Workplace Diversity Conference. Los Angeles, CA.
- 16-20: Human Factors and Ergonomics Society. Annual Conference. San Francisco, CA. Contact: www.hfes.org.
- 22-25: Organization Development Network. Annual Conference. San Francisco, CA. Contact: www.odnetwork.org.
- 27-28: SIOP Leading Edge Consortium. "Talent Attraction, Development, and Retention: The Leading Edge" Charlotte, NC. Contact: www.siop.org.

(Some of the information in this calendar was reprinted with permission from the PTC/MW Newsletter which was compiled by Lance W. Seberhagen, Seberhagen & Associates.)

Kristine Smith is a Senior Associate with Darany and Associates in Redlands, California. If you have regional organization news or an item to add to the calendar, please contact her by e-mail at **smithkl@earthlink.net** or by telephone at (909) 798-4475.—AGN

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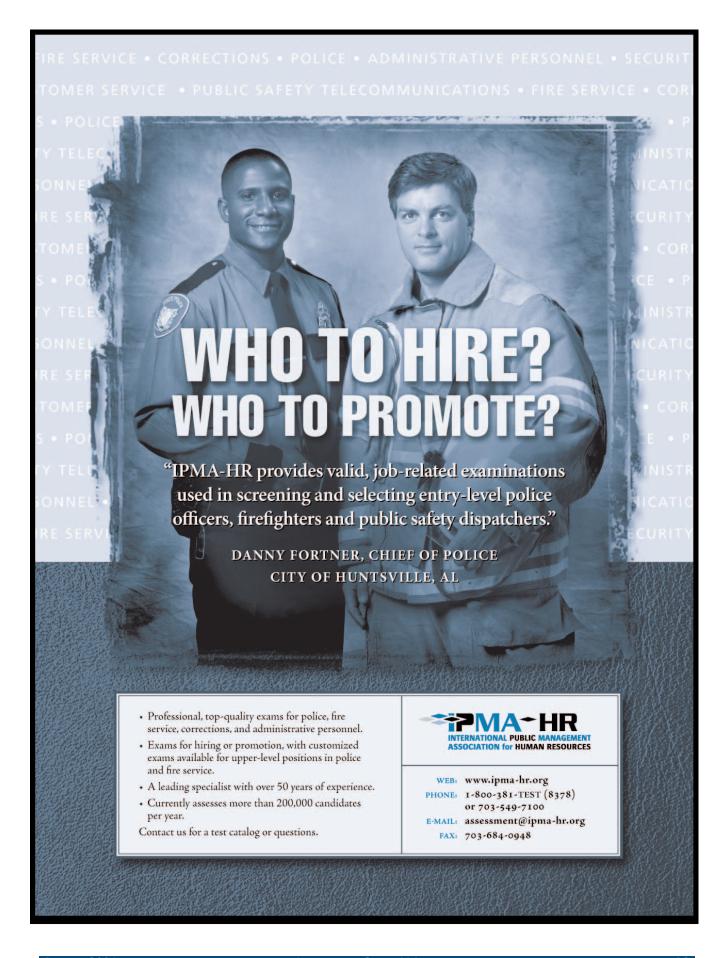
Nominations/Bylaws

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About the *ACN*

The ACN is the official newsletter of the International Public Management Association Assessment Council, an association of individuals actively engaged in or contributing to the professional, academic and practical field of personnel research and assessment. The Council has approximately 700 members.

The ACN is published six times a year during the even months of the year. It serves as a source of information about significant activities of the council, a medium of dialogue and information exchange among members, a method for dissemination of research findings and a forum for the publication of letters and articles of general interest.

Submissions for Publication: Assessment Council members and others with letters or articles of interest are encouraged to submit materials for review and publication. Submission deadlines for 2006 are:

October issue due on September 1 December issue due on November 3

Articles and information for inclusion in the sections (*News of the Councils, Technical Affairs, Public Sector Practice Exchange*) should be submitted directly to the Associate Editor responsible for the appropriate section. Submissions may also be made to the Editor.

If you have questions or need further information please contact the Editor, Associate Editors, or IPMA-HR.

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