



16 PF[®] Newsletter

16PF[®] USER GROUP AGM

The 16PF User Group AGM was held during the meeting on 2nd February 2006 from 12.30 pm and was chaired by David Roberts – Belinda Smith being unavoidably away. There were 21 present and the Chairman welcomed current and new members.

The Chairman's report from Belinda Smith was read out and the meeting thanked her for all her hard work. Her full report is detailed below:

[Chairman's report February 2006](#)

During 2005 we arranged five meetings:

In February we welcomed Professor John Rust of City University who talked about the Psychometric Centre he founded at City University and the work that is undertaken there. He provoked a great discussion about impression management in psychometric questionnaires, particularly the 16PF.

We also welcomed Barrie Watson who introduced us to the Work Roles model and the WorkSet questionnaires that he and Meredith Belbin have developed, and he explained the methodology behind them.

In April we welcomed back Meredith Belbin who looked at the genetic and cultural basis of diversity, and presented themes from his last book "Managing without Power" as well as his forthcoming book "The Tectonic Plates of Human Evolution.

David Frost, Head of Human Resources at Carlsberg UK Ltd, spoke to us in June, and he led a very interesting discussion on the background and use of personality measures in the selection and development of specific employee groups within Carlsberg UK.

At the same meeting we also met Scott Bedwell from IPAT who presented his research findings on Emotional Intelligence and how his work has been incorporated into the Emotional Judgment Inventory (EJI).

In October Dr Hugh McCredie presented 'The essence of managerial competence' drawing on his PhD research. This stimulated our thoughts on which 16PF Big 5 factors + Factor B contribute to management success.

Rob Bailey from OPP brought us up to date with new product development at OPP as well as some of the research they have been doing.

In November we had the third of our informal pre-Christmas evening events which again proved popular and provided those present with a '3 minute of fame' opportunity as well as very valuable networking time and the benefits of 'free' consultancy for work related issues from among the group.

[Newsletters](#)

David has been working with OPP to produce the newsletter for almost 2 years. The content continues to be of a high standard. The committee has decided that, since almost all our members are on email, we will distribute the newsletter by this method. This will enable us to send it out quickly and efficiently



and as near to the meetings as possible. It also offers us scope to be more flexible about the length of the newsletter. As always we look to you for content and interesting stories and articles. David has been joined by Ann Rodrigues as Assistant Editor.

Relationship with OPP

We have continued to build our relationship with OPP and thank them for their support in attending the meetings. Belinda and Ann met OPP during the year to discuss specific issues: e.g. promoting the group through their courses, writing to those people they've trained informing them about the group, and offering help with a User Group website.

Administration

During this year Caro Leitzell has continued to manage the administration of the group. On behalf of us all I'd like to thank Caro for all that she has done for us. She continues to be very thorough as well as being friendly, supportive and efficient.

Membership and Communication

The membership is stable at 77 paid up members. We have 15 new members, and two more about to join. There were a considerable number of people who haven't responded in spite of several attempts to keep in touch, so we have now taken them off the membership list.

We now have a regular diary insert in SDR (Selection and Development Review), several CIPD branches publicise us, and OPP has circulated information to all those they've trained as 16PF users. We have printed cards that we can pass to contacts who might be interested in joining us.

The committee

The committee has grown this year and we have met twice to discuss User Group related matters. These meetings have been very helpful to have a wide ranging discussion about the

User Group and how we want to develop and grow it. It has been a real asset to have Ann, Nicholas and Xanthy involved and their enthusiasm has been greatly appreciated.

The AGM is time for committee members to decide whether they wish to continue. All 7 of the people on this year's committee have agreed to be put forward again: David, Hugh, Nicholas, Chris, Ann, Xanthy, and Belinda. However we would appreciate others joining us – David and Hugh particularly have been on the committee for many years, and Chris and Belinda have now both been involved for 3 and 5 years respectively.

Looking ahead

The User Group exists only for the benefit of its members – it has no other purpose – and for it to thrive it needs the active interest and involvement of everyone. There is plenty of scope for people to be involved - organising events, marketing, getting a website going, or writing articles for the newsletter.

We have circulated a survey to try and elicit what people value and want from the meetings and we'll be ensuring that the feedback is circulated and that ideas are incorporated into the programme. We want to continue to encourage you to take an active role and we appreciate the encouragement we receive from you.

Looking ahead.

Dates for the rest of this year

Wednesday 26 April – we'll be welcoming Mike Smith, of UMIST

Tuesday 20 June – Pauline Willis

Wednesday 4 October – possibly Dr Julian Boon

Thursday 30 November – our annual informal meeting – particularly open to prospective new members

Belinda Smith
Chairman



There were no questions arising from the Chairman's report.

The meeting also thanked Caro Leitzell for her hard work as the Group's very capable Administrator.

The current Group Committee were happy to stand again and had been proposed and seconded. The invitation was open to others who wished to be involved and these members would be co-opted during the year.

The Financial Report was given by Chris Chater and he included mention of the new promotions budget, the stable numbers of membership and the healthy state of the bank deposit (£8000) and bank balance of £1200. He believed that the event/day charge of £45 represented excellent value and went towards CPD.

There were no questions arising from the Financial Report.

[Users Group Survey](#)

Ann Rodrigues thanked all those who had responded so far to the survey. The results were being analysed and would be considered by the Committee before publication to the members.

Marketing Report – This was a new area of activity for the Group and Xanthy Kallis's report was summarised by the Chairman. Her hard work was much appreciated and we looked forward to the results of her contacts with the HR Departments of the FTSE 100 companies and other User Group contacts.

[Newsletter](#)

There had been 4 issues during 2005 and a new emailed distribution method was to be utilised that would speed up distribution and allow more than the usual 4 pages when required.

The User Group Rules had been considered

but no changes were proposed at this time. Any Other Business. There was one item from Madeline McGill who requested that there might be distribution of CPD forms in the future. After some useful discussion, the Chairman agreed to look into this and see if these could be made available at the next meeting. It was felt that the BPS log books were for self completion – but the CIPD did require some official paperwork which was largely self-completed on such items as objectives and results.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.50pm.

Nicholas Bennett

**Psychometrics, Music,
and Photography. Find
the link.**

Roy Childs was in full flight, describing what he saw as some of the weaknesses of psychometrics, and some of the shibboleths that we accept unquestioningly.

At the February meeting, he was talking about the early days of the 16PF User Group, of which he was the founder. What had concerned him at that time was that he believed basic training in 16PF was inadequate. There needed to be some medium through which users could improve their understanding and exchange experiences. Hence the User Group at which one could develop and learn. "The scores will only take you so far," he said.

Immediately my thoughts went to one of the greatest photographers of the 20th century, Ansel Adams, who just happened to be a brilliant pianist also. (No, it isn't fair, is it?) His musicianship was such that he and Paderevski were mates. His photographic prints have appeared in galleries throughout the



world. In his writings, he turned the photographic negative and its subsequent print into a musical metaphor, saying that the negative was the score, and the print was the performance. It's what you do with the score that counts.

I have never forgotten that. And it has obvious relevance to psychometrics, in which it is a straightforward matter to score a test. But what are you going to do with the results? It is certainly not just a question of 'following the textbook', useful though that may be. Two qualified users of a personality test may produce very different narratives from the same data, one sticking slavishly to what had been taught, and the other using the same data, but producing a richer and more meaningful report, using experience, and perhaps tips that he had picked up along the way.

That sums up the purpose of the User Group: to help users move from the hesitant, shadowy, initial stages of using a personality test, into the more confident stages in which one can use the basic data and then add knowledge gained from listening to others.

The 'score' is literally, the 'scores'. But the performance lies in the narrative. And you have to compose that.

David Roberts

PROFILE **Michele Williamson**

Most of our readers will, of course, be inveterate navel gazers. And when we are not pondering our own motivations and moods, we'll be thinking about those of others. So, let me try this out on you: when you go to your GP with a snivelling cold that has hung around for a week or more, or some other trivial complaint, have you ever wondered how your GP might view this? Perhaps you think he'd take it all in his stride because that's what

he's supposed to do. And you'd be right: at least in so far as he may not convey his inner feelings to you. But what if the patient before you had discussed his life-threatening illness, had related a desperately sad account of the illness of a nearest and dearest, or discussed the incurable disease of his child? And then you come in moaning about your cold. (They call it coryza in the trade, by the way.)

Is the doctor's response to your trivial complaint affected by the sad tale he has just heard – perhaps from a distraught patient that he has had to pacify or counsel? As patients we expect him to give us his undivided attention of course, free of any emotional overtones that might cloud his judgement and distract him from dealing with our common cold or stomach upset.

User Group member Michele Williamson also pondered this situation and made it the focus of her dissertation for an MSc in Occupational Psychology at Birkbeck College. She interviewed a small number of GPs for an in-depth qualitative study to identify whether GPs were affected by emotionally charged consultations, and if so whether this affected the patient immediately following, or affected relationships with other staff in the practice.

GPs in her sample typically deal with a caseload of up to 50 patients a day, and a typical face-to-face consultation has to be concluded in 7 minutes. Clearly those 50 would vary from the serious and harrowing, to the trivial and (almost) immediately forgettable. Did GPs have a method, a mental approach to deal with this wide and emotionally demanding range of consultations? Michele noted the impact of individual differences: some GPs seemed completely untouched by the emotional roller coaster that they rode daily, weekly, monthly, annually; whilst others felt the pain, anguish (and occasional happiness) accompanying each and every patient.



Clearly, over their years in practice each GP had found a way of coping, perhaps toughening up, or developing a broad range of medical and personal interests, or relying on the support of their medical colleagues. What surprised Michele most was the GPs' denial that patients' emotions had any affect on their relationships with their medical colleagues, and vice versa; the GPs reported no 'carry over' – not a technical phrase but you'll know what I mean. Michele found this hard to believe; from her family background in medicine she already knew that relationships in GP practices can become very strained and that relationship difficulties like this can have a significant toll on GPs and their practices.

And what of their other duties? The study unexpectedly raised further issues: it suggested that the modern GP needs to change a sense of identity from 'doctor' to 'GP' (where GP = doctor + business manager), and Michele found few of the GPs seemed to have made this transition fully or happily. Typically, doctors have little or no training in finance or management skills and they are just expected to get on with it. Practices generally employ a practice manager, and the more that GPs delegate their business management to the practice manager, the more they have to take instructions from a non-medically trained person, and the more they may resent it. Compounding this dislike of managers and

management is the collapse of the traditional power structure within general practices where consensus management has usurped the role of an all-powerful senior partner; partners now argue about 'how we do things around here' and inevitably those who shout loudest can override less assertive colleagues.

So in addition to the stress of hearing emotionally disturbing accounts, they have the added stress of contending with issues that they feel ill-equipped to deal with. A large medical partnership employs quite a few staff, so what of the GPs management of people? Here again, Michele found that they were not always good at this and preferred to avoid this aspect of their role if they possibly could. Perhaps this is not so surprising since most of us have encountered the trained engineer who has difficulty

running a department, and the accountant likewise. They love engineering and they love accountancy. They hate the baggage that goes with being a manager.

Michele obtained her BSc in psychology from Bristol University, having previously consid-



Michele Williamson

ered - and rejected - a medical career. Her early appointments saw her plunged into the nitty-gritty of personnel management, covering salary administration, performance appraisal, grading structures, recruitment and selection, employment contracts and policies. She gained this experience in a



variety of organisations from computer manufacturers to banking, and as a freelance consultant for several years. But gradually the emphasis of her work has moved away from the systems-driven approach necessitated in the above, to a greater use of her knowledge and experience of psychology and of the mainsprings of human behaviour. Away from personnel management to human resource management and now to organisational psychology. This is the work she finds most satisfying, and which has led her to work on organisational behaviour issues, and with young adults - supporting, preparing and guiding them as they make and evaluate career decisions.

Michele joined the User Group in 2003, and is a strong contributor to group discussions. Over the years she has not neglected academic achievement and her own development, adding her MSc to a post graduate diploma in personnel management, and will soon complete a similar qualification in mentoring and coaching.

And *of course* she has Level A and Level B in psychometrics.

WILLIAMSON, M. E. A. (2005), 'Big doctors don't cry': Emotion at the GP's practice. Proceedings of the British Psychological Society. Vol 13(1) pp57

David Roberts

The Essence of Managerial Competence

The Aga cooker is an icon of domestic solidity and reliability. Simple and efficient, and almost unchanged since its invention by a Swedish scientist in the 1920s.

So much for the product. But what of the people who made it? Might they also be solid

and reliable? The Aga was manufactured by a division of Glynwed, a successful heavy engineering and distribution company based in the Midlands, and from around 1981 Dr Hugh McCredie, at that time the HR manager, assiduously gathered data on his managers - results of ability tests as well as those of personality.

Hugh's presentation was based on his PhD thesis, his doctorate being awarded last year from UMIST. The sample included unit directors and Hugh's peers at Head Office. Around 97% were male, and the average age was around 50 years.

He set out to analyse the interaction between personal characteristics as measured by 16PF4, skill competencies, and actual performance.

Taking the 16PF results first, Hugh presented definitions of Factor B and the Second Order factors approximating to the 'Big Five' model of personality: Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. He invited us to speculate the likely sten scores for a managerial population which we then compared with a large published study by Dave Bartram in 1992. Hugh then disclosed the scores for the Glynwed managers which were almost identical to Bartram's means for Factor B, Extraversion and Conscientiousness; similar for Emotional Stability and Agreeableness; less Open-minded. According to Kline, low open-mindedness combined with conscientiousness suggests authoritarianism (Kline, 1993).

Hugh then posed the question as to why managers might be brighter than the normal adult population. He quoted sources to suggest that they have to handle greater complexity and also that Intelligence correlates with the acquisition of job knowledge. In fact Hugh found that, Factor B correlated with 10 out of



16 skill competencies. However, it did not correlate with overall performance to the same extent as other GMA measures. Hugh suggested that Factor B was saturated with verbal items and reported Eysenck's findings that extraverts tend to do better at general intelligence tests (e.g. Raven) than with verbal reasoning tests; with the reverse being the case for introverts.

As indicated, both Hugh and Bartram's managers were highly extravert, although extraversion did not correlate with overall performance. The extravert cortex is under-stimulated and seeks external stimulation. Rosemary Stewart found that UK managers operated in a very 'busy' environment, and Hugh suggested that intrinsically-stimulated introverts were unlikely to find managerial work congenial.

Hugh's managers were also more stable. However, both his and Bartram's sample were low on Agreeableness. This does not quite mean what everyone thinks it means. In terms of the Five Factor Model, Agreeableness is the opposite pole to Independence. And one would expect managers to have a fairly independent attitude rather than 'going with the flow'.

Conscientiousness in the 16PF is primarily about dependability – an intuitively valuable feature in organisations that exist to deliver quality products and services. However, it did not correlate with performance as had been found in some studies. This is probably because, unlike e.g. NEO PI-R, 16PF Conscientiousness does not cover achievement.

In addition to personality, Hugh asked those attending to speculate the rank order in which four common skill competency clusters correlated with overall performance. He then revealed the rank order that he had found: (1) Results orientation skills, (2) Interpersonal

skills, (3) Resilience/Adaptability skills and (4) Intellectual skills.

Hugh's conclusions were that managers were typically: bright, extraverted, emotionally stable, independent-minded and conscientious and that higher performing managers were brighter, more stable, independent-minded and results oriented. He also concluded that non-verbal measures of GMA may be better predictors of managerial performance than verbally saturated ones.

Finally Hugh reported that whilst personality scores did not add predictive value to supervisory ratings of skill competencies on-job, they were very useful when such ratings were unavailable, as was usually the case in selection situations.

David Roberts and Hugh McCredie

VISUALISATION

All the people-watchers out there, all of you who like to analyse motives, reactions, and all the other elements by which User Group members earn their living, must have at the very least, some interest in sport psychology. Of course it's not really different in substance from occupational psychology; just the focus.

So if you agree that the differences are artificial, you'll probably be interested in the following.

At the time of writing, the Winter Olympics are under way in Turin. (Have you noticed how they're now pronounced as the 'Lympix' and that athletes have become 'ather-letes'? No? Oh, well, it's beside the point, I suppose. But it's just another piece of evidence of our sad ...No! I won't go there! Back to the point!)

My point concerns sport psychology and



visualisation in particular. In a BBC trailer, the camera focused on a woman in our bobsleigh team. Her eyes were half-closed, her head was swaying from side to side, almost like a boxer bobbing and weaving. She was visualising the course down which she would soon be hurtling. Cynics might say it is a waste of time. And indeed some sports writers have subscribed to this view. Step forward Jack Nicklaus, one of the world's greatest golfers, who said that he never addressed a ball without first visualising it through the air, and then settling on the green. Only when he had this clear mental image, did he then play his shot.

Four-man bobsleigh teams reach 90mph. The key persons in the team are the driver and the brakeman. The driver is the only person that can see where he's going; the brakeman's role is to use his strength at the beginning, and to stop the thing after they pass the finishing line. The British Bobsleigh website doesn't tell us why the second and third man needs to be there. Is it just to make up the numbers? Is the driver the Shaper? Is the brakeman the Monitor Evaluator or the Completer Finisher? All you teamwork fanatics: any ideas? And what name would you choose for the second and third man? No prizes but I'd like to know...

Anyway, when I saw the woman in our bobsleigh team, and her visualisation technique, my mind went back to a User Group session on NLP some years ago.

Body language is an essential component of NLP, particularly through clues we give through eye movements. Studies by neurologists have shown that we systematically move our eyes in different directions depending on how we are thinking. These can be vertically or horizontally. When visualizing something from our past experience our eyes move up and to our left; when we try to imagine some-

thing we have never seen, our eyes move up and to the right. When trying to remember sounds, our eyes move horizontally to the left, and to the right for constructed sounds. When our eyes go down and to the right we are accessing our feelings, and when they go to the left we are talking to ourselves. Staring straight ahead with our eyes out of focus can also indicate visualisation (or boredom, I suppose.) I'll stop before you tell me where your eyes are.

David Roberts

**“What’s new in Psychometrics”
Founder of the User Group, Roy Childs’
spoke at our February meeting**

A business psychologist, Roy Childs is MD of Team Focus, which provides training up to full Level B and also develops and publishes its own tests. Roy founded the 16PF User Group in 1988 and chaired it for 10 years.

Taking a contentious stance on some traditionally-held beliefs, Roy challenged us test users to re-examine our whole approach to psychometric testing. Given the changing nature of jobs and ways of working, the maturity of the psychometrics market and the availability of an ever increasing number of new tests, can we be accused of being too rigid, mechanistic and old-fashioned in use of psychometric tools? Rather poetically, I thought, he used the analogy of the human personality being like a waterfall - moving, dynamic and broad - but psychometrics only measures a bucketful, which we can mistake for the whole person.



In the traditional divide between Assessment and Development, ability tests are used for the former and personality questionnaires (PQs) used for both. But he questioned some of the assumptions we might be making regarding the appropriateness of PQs in assessment. For example, the 16PF reassures test takers that there are no right or wrong answers, yet we make important judgments based on the results! Also how accurate are PQs in measuring, say, Persuasiveness, when all we have is a self-report?

Ability tests

Using psychometrics alone to make judgments about people's job capabilities can be misleading. In one of his assignments to measure success factors in salespeople in a particular organisation, Roy found that while the good salesmen were indeed confident extraverts as is widely accepted now, the best salesman by far was an anxious introvert. He believes that psychometrics has its place in assessment, but should be used as a springboard for further evaluation. He challenges the contention that past performance is the best predictor of future success, and suggests that traditional approaches to testing favour certain types. Our task as test users should be to measure **potential** - which traditionally is done through use of ability tests

This led him to examine the appropriateness of some of the most widely used ability tests, e.g. SHL, GMA, Raven and Watson Glaser, in that the wrong level of test may be being used for the level of the job, or they are too narrow and can miss the development angle. Most traditional tests measure deductive thinking, but in today's workplace, should we not be measuring other types of thinking - e.g. the ability to think in a totally new way, memory, attention etc?

In response to what he perceives as unmet needs, Team Focus has developed or are trialling a range of tests. These include PFS Ver

bal, Numerical and Abstract Reasoning, and other tests look at measuring ability to handle ambiguity (DAT), career interests (CII) and motivation (VBIM). *Anyone interested in taking part in trialling some of these tests should contact Roy directly.*

Roy argues that a good use of any psychometric tool is to generate an 'adult to adult' conversation, rather than a way of screening out candidates, and is therefore a strong proponent of coaching as a more effective way of measuring potential.

Personality questionnaires

Roy challenged us to question our assumptions and practices in using PQs. He argues that even widely used PQs such as the 16PF and MBTI have limitations, and that personality is so rich and complex that it is difficult to measure it through just through a questionnaire. Hence he stresses the importance of using feedback to get a truer and more rounded picture of the individual. Personally, in selection, Roy never starts with an ideal profile against which to measure candidates, but uses the psychometric tool as a frame to "get richer stories out of the candidates, rather than just working with the one story coming out of the questionnaire".

Roy and his team are developing a suite of personality profiles, called TDI, LSI and LSQ, based on Jungian theories and Learning Styles.

After this very stimulating and thought-provoking talk, lunch beckoned. Hugh McCredie summarised it perfectly when he thanked Roy and commended him for his "energy and rich tapestry of knowledge".

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