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EDITION 50

THE PSYCHOMETRICS USER FORUM



Chocolate Box Duck Pond

ROAST BEEF AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

If you need to rise at 5.30 am to catch the London train to attend a seminar on emotional intelligence, it's good to arrive in the right frame of mind.

I did.

That was because five half naked men greeted me at St Pancras, offering me cuts of roast beef and a measure of real ale. They were actually lying in wait for French Eurostar passengers, in a bold PR move to mark St George's Day. Well, the French call us *rosbifs* so we might just as well live up to the image. At least it got us all smiling, and in fact I have never seen so many smiling faces at 9.00 am on a main line railway station. (See below)

So, enlivened with a few pieces of roast beef (but I eschewed the real ale), I arrived at the meeting of the newly formed Psychometrics User Forum. This was to be a whole day on emotional intelligence. Paul Vella and Nicky Schlatter (below) conducted the morning session and talked about the Reuven BarOn EQ-i. The afternoon session was conducted by Lynne Hindmarch, independent consultant (below), and Aaron Cockell of Pfizer.

The following is intended to cover some of the key points rather than to represent a detailed account of the day's seminars.

The concept of emotional intelligence has its origins in the ideas first proposed by Darwin, who saw it as an element in our survival as a species. But of course the Greeks had a word for it long beforehand. I'm sure that word was not 'emotional intelligence', but Aristotle said, *"Anyone can become angry – that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way – this is not easy."*

There are three models for measuring emotional intelligence:

- **EQI** (a self report questionnaire plus 360 degree feedback)
- **MSCEIT**
The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) is an ability-based test designed to measure the four branches of the EI model of Mayer and Salovey
- **Emotional Competency Inventory (ECI)**
The ECI 2.0 is a 360-degree tool designed to assess the emotional and social competencies of individuals in organizations. The test is based on emotional competencies identified by Dr. Daniel Goleman in *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1998).

So what is emotional intelligence? One speaker defined it as:

- the ability to perceive, understand, and regulate emotion
- all those factors that are related to success
- it is that which sets apart those that do well, whilst others do not.
- It is distinct from IQ

Goleman said that it was “*The capacity for recognising our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships*”.



Our speakers introduced us to the Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI), which has been derived from the work of Boyatzis, Goleman, McClelland and consultants Hay McBer. The ECI is based on AWARENESS (Self – Awareness and Social Awareness) and ACTIONS (Self Management, and Relationship Management.)

It appears that Self-Awareness is at the heart of the model of Emotional Intelligence. Research has found that where there is a lack of Self Awareness, the chances of

having Self Management and Social Awareness are much reduced. The constituents of these elements are:

Self-Awareness comprises: emotional awareness (how our emotions affect our performance); accurate self-assessment (knowing one’s inner resources, abilities, limits); and self-confidence (a sense of one’s self-worth and capabilities

Social Awareness: empathy (sensing others feelings); organisational awareness (reading a group’s emotional currents and power relationships), and service orientation (meeting customers’ or clients’ needs.)

Self-Management: emotional self-control (keeping disruptive emotions in check); transparency (maintaining integrity, acting in accordance with one’s values); adaptability (flexibility in handling change); achievement orientation (improving and striving to meet a standard of excellence); initiative (readiness to act on opportunities); optimism (persistence in pursuing goals despite setbacks and obstacles).

Relationship Management: developing others (sensing others development needs); inspirational leadership (inspiring individuals and groups); change catalyst (initiating or managing change); influence (having an impact on others); conflict management (resolving conflict); teamwork and collaboration (working with others towards a goal.)

So: looks like we’ll have to walk on water, doesn’t it?

Help is at hand. They are not all equally important! All the competencies in Self-Awareness are *essential*, but in Social Awareness it’s empathy; in Self Management it’s emotional self-control; and in Relationship Management it’s influence.



Having set the scene, our speaker then went on to show us an ECI Feedback Report consisting of the 18 competencies organised around the four clusters mentioned above.

Lynne Hindmarch (above) has been assessing emotional intelligence since 2001, but she says that she would only use it in connection with coaching, and never in selection. She referred to interpersonal power and identified five types of power:

Coercive; Reward; Referent; Legitimate and Expert.

She asks the client which type of power he or she uses most frequently. That will give a strong indicator as to the manner of coaching that is required and will partly determine the coaching structure that she will adopt.

Aaron Cockell, Head of Medical Operations & Information at Pfizer UK Ltd presented the last session of the afternoon and he explained how he worked with Lynne Hindmarch, independent consultant - in introducing the ECI instrument within the company. Pfizer have over 6900 employees in the UK and over 122,000 globally but as with many employers, Pfizer do not do Emotions! However, the clear link between emotional intelligence (termed by some as positive management), leadership styles, organizational climate and results, was clearly understood.

Pfizer used the ECI with 360° feedback. As a scientific community they understood this wider and (probably more objective) data and really appreciated this approach. This was a most useful client-based information session showing how this large pharmaceutical group used ECI in the UK.

Arriving back at St Pancras, I was sorry that the bold beefy men had gone. Perhaps they had heightened Self Awareness, and felt rather silly standing half-naked offering beef and ale to visiting Frenchmen in furtherance of St George. Who wasn't even an Englishman.

*David Roberts
Editor*

Happy lady at St Pancras



ARE YOU FREE?

A simple question, the answer to which has engaged the greatest minds for centuries. Philosophers and psychologists have pondered the mysterious operation of our brains without any definite evidence as to whether the free will that we believe we have, is anything more than an illusion.

The possibility is frightening. If we have no free will, and everything is predetermined, life would have no meaning for us. Religion would be irrelevant, as would our concept of right and wrong. In fact the whole moral fabric of society would be in question.

In the last century opinion amongst the most celebrated psychologists was divided. Sigmund Freud made the assumption that mental phenomena have causes. Because he believed that our *conscious* processes were the result of our *unconscious* mental processes, it proved that determinism existed. In other words our conscious processes are the result of unconscious ones.

Freud believed that forces beyond our control, determine our behaviour, thus depriving us of our free will.

Humanistic psychologists took a much more optimistic view of human nature, notably, George Kelly, Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. (Although William James was a strong advocate of humanistic psychology from the 19th century.) Broadly speaking, these founders of the American Association for Humanistic Psychology believed in our ability to grow and develop.

Thus the early part of the 20th century was dominated to a large extent by Freud's psychoanalytic theory, and from the 1960s onwards, humanistic psychology has been in the ascendant. We can be anything we want to be – within the limits of our biological potential and our environmental circumstances. It seems a good thing to believe.

Now: was Freud right after all? Do we have no free will? Do other forces of which we know nothing control all our actions and thoughts?

Seems like the answer might be 'yes' if we believe the latest research.

At the Max Planck Institute in Leipzig, Professor John-Dylan Haynes and his colleagues, have been conducting some extraordinary experiments.

They have found that several seconds before we consciously make a decision, its outcome can be predicted from unconscious activity in the brain. They used a brain scanner to investigate what happens in the human brain just before a decision is made.

Professor Haynes says: "Many processes in the brain occur automatically and without involvement of our consciousness. This prevents our mind from being overloaded by simple routine tasks. But when it comes to decisions we tend to assume they are made by our conscious mind. This is questioned by our current findings."

So our subconscious minds may be dictating our actions long before we realize it.

Haynes goes on to say, "The impression that we are freely able to choose between different course of action, is fundamental to our mental health."

In a press release, the Max Planck Institute said:

"In the study, participants could freely decide if they wanted to press a button with their left or right hand. They were free to make this decision whenever they wanted, but had to remember at which time they felt they had made up their mind. The aim of the experiment was to find out what happens in the brain in the period just before the person felt the decision was made. The researchers found that it was possible to predict from brain signals which option participants would take already seven seconds before they consciously made their decision. Normally researchers look at what happens when the decision is made, but not at what happens several seconds before. The fact that decisions can be predicted so long before they are made is an astonishing finding."

In the 1980s the American brain scientist Benjamin Libet found a brain signal, the so-called "readiness-potential" that occurred a fraction of a second before a conscious decision. Many scientists argued that if the brain prepares our decisions unconsciously, then our feeling of "free will" must be an illusion. In this view, it is the brain that makes the decision, not a person's conscious mind. Libet found only a brief time delay between brain activity and the conscious decision.

In contrast, Haynes and his colleagues now show that brain activity predicts even up to 7 seconds ahead of time, how a person is going to decide.

On a more reassuring note, they also warn that the study does not *finally* rule out free will (my italics): "Our study shows that decisions are unconsciously prepared much longer ahead than previously thought. But we do not know yet where the final decision is made. We need to investigate whether a decision prepared by these brain areas can still be reversed."

So: it seems to be a question of "Watch this space." We know that scanning our brains is being put to use not just by medical research teams – that's legit – but also by marketing organizations.

Brain scanning, doubts over free will, neuromarketing. And of course the 'surveillance society' with which we are all too familiar.

To paraphrase Wordsworth: *Orwell! Thou should'st be living at the hour!*

June 2008
David Roberts

NEW AND POTENTIAL MEMBERS

Your committee – and indeed the whole membership – consists of experienced consultants who have worked with a wide range of psychometric instruments – usually over many years and in a variety of contexts. Their experience is there for the asking. We recognise that for newly-qualified test users, interpretation can be daunting, especially if you are the only qualified tester in an organisation, and everyone therefore regards you as an 'expert'. Collectively, committee members can offer experience and advice in selection, personal development, coaching, organisational development, 360° feedback, team building, and career guidance. They can of course be approached at our meetings or your queries could be channelled through the Editor or Assistant Editor, who will be able to put you in touch with the most appropriate person.



NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Michael Pratt and Harpal Dhatt, in their short time as committee members, have achieved something that no other member has. Their photographs have now appeared twice in this Newsletter. So what do they bring to the group?

They both have a common interest in emotional intelligence, leadership skills development and in team building strategies.

Harpal Dhatt: Is an Organizational Development Facilitator at Hammersmith and Fulham Primary Care Trust and has been working for the NHS for 5 years. She is working to become a chartered occupational psychologist. She obtained her BPS Level B last year and is making good use of this qualification. When she achieves chartered status, her aspiration is to have her own business at some point, and to travel the world. Contact Harpal at harpal_dhatt@hotmail.com

Michael Pratt: Mike has solid all-round experience in assessment, training, coaching and performance development. With early corporate experience in HR and change management, he has worked independently since 1986 in a wide variety of business sectors, including executive recruitment, photography, health care, banking, dairy foods, brewing, hospitality, retailing, construction, transport

and telecommunications. His work has been entered for a number of prestigious awards. He has an MA in Organizational Behaviour and Change Management, membership of The Association of Business Psychologists, and of course, BPS Levels A and B. Contact Mike Pratt at michael.pratt27@ntlworld.com

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNET TESTING

Helen Baron, formerly of SHL, and now an independent consultant, addressed us some years ago on The Great Eight – SHL’s answer to the The Big Five. At the June meeting she dealt with issues surrounding Internet testing. For many, this has been, and remains, a contentious issue. I recall muted gasps of horror when this was first discussed some years ago. Surely people would cheat? How would you know who was actually taking the test? What about confidentiality issues? Security of test material?

Well, Helen addressed these points. The ‘problems’ that worry us now were there before Internet testing was developed.

Internet testing began around the late 1990s, and is now used as part of the recruitment process, on the milk round, in development centres, 360° feedback and career counselling. Tests are freely available on the Internet. Whilst there are drawbacks, there are also many benefits. For example, candidates in other countries can be tested prior to being invited for interview, showing massive savings on what might otherwise be high travelling costs. Testing can be company-wide as well as countrywide. Administration is standardised. There is a degree of control and consistency. Other benefits might include the relative ease with which normative data can be accumulated – it will always be in one place rather than scattered through filing cabinets with the possibility of loss. Test takers can complete a test at home in a familiar environment that is likely to make them feel more relaxed than otherwise. Helen said that a recent survey showed that 61% of the population now owns a home computer.

On the negative side:

- one might question the identity of the test taker. Was it really the person who should have been taking the test? But this was an issue in the days when paper and pencil tests were prevalent. For example, in graduate recruitment, was the person that took the test, the same person that later attended for interview?
- there is a loss of face-to-face contact, which can be valuable.

- the security of test results might also be of concern (but wasn't it always?) preventing unauthorised use of test materials is also an issue. (But wasn't it always?)

So what about cheating? In a further survey to explore factors that might discourage cheating 77% said that their own honesty would be the main factor; 47% said there would be no long term advantage; fear of being caught accounted for 35%; faith was a factor for 23%; an honesty contract would deter 22%; the prospect of having to do the test again, 21%. Subsequent embarrassment would deter a small percentage.

Helen gave a thorough analysis of the pros and cons of Internet testing, and it seems that if we had doubts about testing procedure beforehand, we may still have doubts now. But technology has opened up opportunities previously denied. It is up to us to take advantage of this, whilst trying to ensure that the ethics of testing are not eclipsed by its growth.

§§

Career Development – Maximising Benefits From Personality Tools

Rob Hepworth of OPP led the afternoon session of the June meeting. His purpose was to demonstrate ways in which tests could be used to inform career decisions.

Employees are now more proactive in managing their careers but in order to do this, they need some insight into their own strengths. Job satisfaction is more likely to be achieved when there is a good fit between the job and the individual's skills and abilities; the job and the personality, and themselves and their colleagues. Data on personality should be integrated with interests and ability, and should be given more weight.

Most readers will be familiar with Holland's Occupational Themes and the following sets out those 16PF Factors:

HOLLAND'S OCCUPATIONAL THEMES

OCCUPATIONAL THEME	16PF FACTORS
REALISTIC	I-; A-; O-; Q1+; Q4-
INVESTIGATIVE	A-; I-; B+; Q4-; M+; N-; Q1+
ARTISTIC	I+; M+; H+; Q1+
SOCIAL	A+; H+; G+; C-; Q1-
ENTERPRISING	A+; E+; H+; I-; N+
CONVENTIONAL	M-; Q3+; I-

The 16PF Career Development Report is available from OPP. This is designed to help a client broaden understanding of themselves and to plan well for the future. It deals with five areas of behaviour: problem solving resources; patterns for coping with stressful conditions; interpersonal interaction styles; organisational role and work-setting preferences. It also includes career-planning exercises for the client and detailed score information for the practitioner. Rob went on to show that other tools are also valuable. For example, Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and FIRO B.

Rob pointed out the differences between a type-based test (for example MBTI) and a trait-based test such as 16PF. Although these are very different, they are complimentary. The MBTI focuses on one's preferences. These preferences are not the cause of behaviour, but an expression of our underlying type preferences. An example of a preference is left- or right-handedness. We did not make a decision about this – it just came naturally to us.

If tests are administered in a battery (smugly, I thought that's what I always do), then one can identify the traits that appear in each test. This, I suppose is common sense. But what is even more rewarding, and likely to produce a richer report, is to identify the traits that appear to be contradictory. So one might have FIRO B elements or MBTI preferences that appear to contradict something in 16PF. That is when the deepest insights are likely to appear.

Rob distributed a 16PF report together with an MBTI report, and in small groups, we were asked to advise on a career change for the test taker. This was a real case, submitted by Lynne Hindmarch, and generated much discussion.

It proved to be a stimulating and satisfactory end to a useful day.

David Roberts
Editor

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 8th October 2008 at The Naval Club, Hill Street, Mayfair.
Subject: The Big Five.

EDITOR

David Roberts Tel 01509 852870
david@roberts-productions.com

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Ann Rodrigues Tel 07947 159848
ann@acer-hr.co.uk

MEMBERSHIP ADMINISTRATOR

Caro Leitzell Tel 01962 880920
admin@leitzell.clara.co.uk

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