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16PF Newsletter No. 1

Introductory Note from the Chair

At last we have the first 16PF Newsletter - intended to be the voice of the 16PF Users Group. Whether you are an existing User Group member or only an intending one, we hope you will find something of interest. This issue includes:

1. Next year's Calendar Events
2. Initial results of our Questionnaire Survey
3. The new "Super 16PF" - update details
4. Report from a 16PF User Group Selection Workshop
5. Reflections on the 16PF Creativity Score

We hope that this initiative will stimulate you to contribute and voice your own opinions.

Roy Childs

SELECTION WORKSHOP

(a report by Andrew Blair)

This is a report from our February meeting. The aim of the meeting was to explore the value of using the 16PF as an aid to selection. The Workshop asked participants to use their interpretation skills to select a candidate for a real job situation.

The 19 Workshop participants were split into small groups and were given information relating to the job and applicants. The position to be filled was that of Planning Manager in a large insurance company. The job description stressed the need for someone to fit into a small dynamic team who produced corporate 5-year plans. The role called for personal qualities such as flexibility, creativity, persuasive and communicative skills.

Candidates' application forms/CVs were given out, along with results from Verbal Critical Reasoning and Abstract Reasoning Tests. All the candidates completed 16PF Form A and their profiles, including Belbin's Team Roles, were provided.

Based on this information the syndicate groups had to select and recommend their favoured candidate. Groups were also asked to write a report on their candidate and present this in a plenary session.

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INTERPRETING THE 16PF CREATIVITY SCORE

(an article by Roy Childs)

Every person specification I have read mentions the need for creativity - the marketing director, the company accountant, the multi-skilled apprentice, the fitter and even the fitter's mate.

If such a popular and desirable quality can be identified and measured we can aid the selection process considerably. The fact that 16PF provides a score with such a name begs the question:
"Does it measure what we want?"

An analysis of the range of meanings of the word across the different jobs immediately cautions us. Does one score allow prediction of a characteristic that has so many apparent forms and levels? Is there a single attribute called creativity which finds its expression in these diverse ways or are there a range of creativity components, some of which apply to some of the situations.

The danger of single concepts and single composite scores is that it can discourage the investigation of such complex issues. Whilst 16PF users are aware, through their training, of the danger of such simplistic matching and overgeneralisation it is, nevertheless, easy to give insufficient thought to the meaning of the attribute with which we are concerned and whether it really relates to 16PF creativity score.

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INTERPRETING THE 16PF CREATIVITY SCORE - cont'd from page 1

I have therefore written this article as a prompt to users to continue questioning the meaning of the score and to think of how we might make better use of it. Sometimes I find myself writing 16PF reports with the vague suggestion that high scores on creativity may, if nurtured, produce more creative output. This seems to me to be making insufficient use of the data. I would therefore like to provoke some discussion on this subject by exploring the following:

- 1 The nature of creativity.
- 2 What is the creativity measured by 16PF.
- 3 How might we use the creativity score.

1 The Nature of Creativity

This is not the place to expound a detailed view of creativity. Suffice to remind us that the emergence of creativity will require a conducive environment, some knowledge and experience, particular abilities and a range of personal attributes.¹ 16PF, therefore, is only claiming to provide information on one of these areas (if I can ignore the contribution of the B scale). This limits its ability to identify creativity. Some authorities, such as Barron, argue that creativity appears in such a wide variety of temperaments that it cannot be the crucial factor in producing creativity. However he asserts that motivation and style do make a difference and goes on to describe the creative person as someone who is "open to new ways of seeing things, intuitive, alert to opportunity, enjoying complexity as a challenge to find simplicity, independence of judgement that questions assumptions, willingness to take risks, unconventionality of thought... To 16PF users such descriptions appear remarkably close to some of the 16PF factors. Barron gives strong pointers towards I+, Q+, M+, E+. Had he mentioned introversion as well he would have got quite close to the creativity specification equation!

However in examining the nature of creativity such agreement is a small part of the story. There are presumably many more attributes worthy of consideration and we are still no clearer about whether some or all of them are necessary. Can one component substitute for another? Are some more environment dependent? How does knowledge, experience and ability interact with them?

2 The 16PF Creativity Score

To understand this score it is worth going back to first principles. People answer questions such as "I would rather write plays than be an engineer". The range of the many items is diverse. These items are combined to give scores on scales that have been shown to correlate with certain criteria of creativity. The first point is that there is no measure of creativity involved. There are very few items that ask the person their self perception of their own creativity. The predictive data is therefore the correlation of circumstantial evidence. The fact that recognised creative people make similar responses suggests common ground which may be a pre-requisite for creative expression. This may be because the person has an appreciation of creativity rather than the ability to produce good ideas.

We also need to remind ourselves that the creativity research by Cattell et al used specific groups of creative people. These were drawn from artists, writers and science fiction writers as well as the marking of creative essays by school children. This therefore biases the results towards the verbal expressive forms of creativity. Cattell also points out the similarity in the profiles of scientists. This may extend the generalisability of the findings or

¹ We can also view some important motivational factors as interactions between these four areas.

it may make us suspicious that we are simply picking up on people who have an academic background and become successful. Certainly the interpretation of the primary factors around I+, M+ and Q₁+ are aspects of a more complex mental approach to life that sits well with academia but need not be a sufficient criteria for creativity. However the generalisability of this initial work was much enhanced by the work at Henley that set out to validate the creativity score. This confirmed that people with profiles that produce high creativity scores are more likely to make creative input during management team games. It is this continual addition to the general construct that helps to give us more confidence in the 16PF compared to the more usual one-off validity studies presented for other tests.

However we must still exercise great caution in attempting to generalise the creativity identified in the handbook to such diverse environments as the bio-chemical research and development posts or marketing consultants in major companies.

3 Reflections on using the Creativity Score

Creativity may have various components that are not all equally necessary for different jobs. There may be some consistent threads that run through them all but, until this has been demonstrated, it would be unwise to assume it. We therefore need to ask ourselves each time:

"Have I defined creativity sufficiently to be able to differentiate sub-components?"

"Do these sub-components differ from the creativity in artists, writers or managers in team games?"

"What 16PF factors should be emphasised or de-emphasised in my circumstances?"

"Can I validate an altered specification equation to check out my analysis?"

Whilst it can seem dangerous to play around with the substantial research that Cattell and Henley have contributed, it seems to me even more worrying to use limited research in an over-generalised way. In any case, the reality is that our view of and emphasis on the creativity score is bound up in the subtle judgements that we make when combining the 16PF data into the broader assessment framework. I believe that we are in effect, altering the specification equation implicitly and my argument is that we should make this more explicit in order to force us to be more critical and evaluative. We should try to define what we are doing and to try to check out our judgements using empirical data. We will always make our judgements on the basis of an integrated evaluation of the circumstances and the data available but the above is intended to insert a more analytic stage during the process.

In the final analysis it is probably fair to regard the 16PF creativity score as being a fallible way of analysing the soil in which creativity is to grow. We will still need to emphasise the need to plant the seed and ensure the right weather conditions before the flower will appear.

References: Barron in Sternberg, R J (1988)

Roy Childs

16PF and OPQ reliabilities

Readers may be interested to know that a paper by Richard Budd and Laurence Paltiel, read by Laurence Paltiel at the recent conference hosted by Team Focus and The Test Agency Ltd. and featuring Dr. Sam Krug and Prof. Paul Kline can now be obtained together with a transcript of both days of the conference from The Test Agency Ltd., Cournswood House, North Dean, Bucks. HP14 4NW. Tel 024 024 3384.

THE USERS' VIEWS -

a Questionnaire Survey
(collated and written by Andrew Life)

Members have been quick to respond to the Users' Group questionnaire, and generous in their expression of views. So here's a brief analysis by Andrew Life of the first 40 questionnaires returned to him.

The Objects of the Group

The Objects of greatest interest to you as members in order of priority are: (1) the improvement of your skills in using and interpreting the 16PF; (2) the extension of your understanding of the 16PF; (3) the regular updating of your knowledge about developments of the 16PF and the latest research results; (4) the facilitation of communication between Users. Whilst the remaining Objects were all ranked around 5.5 on average.

Amongst other potential Objects suggested were: (1) to share data in order to create relevant norms; (2) to liaise with the British Psychological Society (e.g. over competence standards for test users); (3) to extend awareness of other personality tests and their relationships with the 16PF; (4) to educate organisations about the advantages and limitations of the 16PF and other tests. Someone also advocated that the Group should aim to influence the future development of the 16PF, and to nourish contacts with IARC, ASE and IPAT.

Educational methods

Amongst the first 40 respondents, 97% favoured a talk followed by group discussions, and 90% group tasks for developing members' skills. Least popular were activities involving prior preparation, supported by 71%, the main objection to them being the demands they make upon members' limited stock of time. The wider use of closed circuit TV was suggested, as were simulations and research activities using Group expertise. Handouts were welcomed.

Topics for Meetings

The "top five" topics, all supported by 70% or more of the members, were: (1) the interpretation of difficult profiles; (2) the pros and cons of using the 16PF as a selection and development instrument; (3) assessing competencies with the aid of the 16PF; (4) team roles, team formation and interpersonal relationships; (5) recent developments in personality theory.

Members were prolific in their suggestions for other topics for meetings. Several of you are interested in comparisons and evaluations of the 16PF alongside the OPQ, Firo B, and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Others, with a greater interest in occupational psychology, would like to see updates in occupational data complementing those in the Handbook, and a discussion of the factors affecting occupational effectiveness and the methodology for validating 16PF results against job success.

The Newsletter

By far the greatest support (92%) was given to reviews of books and articles on personality and personality testing. The next most popular being accounts by members of how they use the 16PF (82%). An in-depth view of the primary factors attracted 72% of the respondents; but only about 25% were interested in other members' job changes or working organisations. However, news from IPAT and job opportunities for qualified users attracted support from about half of the respondents.

This time we received valuable suggestions for Stephen McCafferty's attention. Readers' letters; an "agony" column for

airing specific queries; a problems page for queries directed at other users' experience; and a "new users" column in which the basics of 16PF interpretation (with explanations) are discussed, were all suggested as being potentially helpful. And of course they would require the participation and support of both experienced and inexperienced members.

Potential Contributors

Fortunately for the Editor, at least 15 of the 40 replying are prepared to contribute on a variety of topics. These include using the 16PF in the process of developing individuals, and gaining acceptance for it in development programmes; the use of 16PF data in individual assessment; career counselling and team building; using psychometrics in assessment centres; assessing competencies; correlating 16PF scores with other variables in managerial contexts; and the role of psychometrics in organisational culture change.

NB. Please remember that the Editor doesn't know the identity of these potential contributors, and will therefore be grateful if you will contact him directly about your readiness to write. As one optimist observes, the Newsletter might one day grow into a specialised "Testing" magazine.

Other forms of Communication

Announcements (a wallboard of notices) at meetings; more meetings; local group meetings outside London; if members agreed, a Directory of Group Members with telephone numbers and descriptions of the role or function of each individual; and social functions, "although the prospect of a social gathering of psychologists is pretty daunting!" Are we really that bad?

Additional Comments

Space in this issue does not allow us to do justice to the wealth of comments made by members. Amongst the key issues raised are the importance of involving as many members as possible in the activities of the Group, and making full use of each other as resources instead of allowing a small clique to run affairs. There is pressure for a Northern group to be created, for local networks, for more meetings, and for more publicity about the Group, especially in organisations teaching the techniques of psychological assessment.

Now we've got to make it all happen!

Andrew Life

***** GOSSIP COLUMN

Dear Editor

I recently analysed a 16PF profile in which the client had a combination of A8 and L9. Such a combination would seem to be contradictory. I would be grateful for your readers' comments.

Yours faithfully

Arthur Unwin

Arthur N Unwin

LOOKING AHEAD

Calendar of Meetings for 1991

Date	Venue
Monday 18 March	London
Tuesday 11 June	London
Thursday 19 Sept	Manchester
Friday 13 Dec	London

Future Issues

We would like future issues of the Newsletter to consider such topics as:

- * "New Users" column in which the basics of interpretation can be explained
- * Mistakes with 16PF
- * Readers' Letters
- * Profile Interpretations
- * Updates on Research
- * Different Norms
- * Review of Conference Papers
- * Research Digest
- * Unusual Applications of 16PF
- * Use of 16PF in individual development

NEW 16PF - Revised Edition

"Super 16PF" is to be based on the best questions in all existing forms and some new items. One of the main concerns of the researchers is to ensure that in the development of the new 16PF, the test remains faithful to the Cattellian principles on which earlier editions were developed.

Some of the weaknesses in the present Forms A and B - in particular such matters as double negatives and inappropriate terms (i.e. applicable in America but not in the UK) - are being excluded and some UK comments by Barbara Tyler on intended items are being incorporated before going to the final stage.

Hopefully, the new forms will be operational as soon as possible: however, the timescale has yet to be finalised. ASE will run a British standardisation and anglicise the new edition, parallel with the US standardisation.

If you have access to potential samples which you think may assist in the UK standardisation, please contact **Rob Feltham** of ASE on 0753 850333.

The Newsletter will keep users up-to-date with developments as they occur.

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SELECTION WORKSHOP^{-continued from front page}

An interesting report format generated by one group was to consider:

Interpersonal Style (A, E, H, L)
Thinking Style (B, I, M, Q₁)
Organisation (Indep., G, Q₃)
Emotions (Anxiety)

The results from the exercise were both interesting and surprising. The "highest-risk" candidate, whose profile showed G-, E+, H+, M+, N-, Q₁+, Q₃-, was rejected by all the workshop groups. In reality he was the only one select by the Insurance Company! Although this was not for the Planning Manager's job, the Company were so impressed by him that they offered him a different position. The workshop was valuable in showing how 16PF can be used non mechanistically in selection.

For more information on the workshop and details of the reports generated, please contact **Andrew Blair** on 0242 21311 Xt 21310.

NEW MEMBERS

The 16PF Users Group is a non-profit making support group. Membership is £25 per year and new members are welcome. Please contact :

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