Edition 73
Spring 2015

Psyche

The newsletter of The Psychometrics Forum

The Psychometrics Forum

Visit our website at **www.psychometricsforum.org**

You will find information about forthcoming events, speakers, the origins of the group and much more.

Want to add something to the website? Contact our Administrator – Caro Leitzell: admin@psychometricsforum.org

Also keep up to date with developments by signing up to The Psychometrics Forum Affiliates Group on LinkedIn

Follow us on Twitter @TPF_UK

Contents

A word from the Chair **3**
Xanthy Kallis, Chair of the Psychometrics Forum

Copy deadlines **4**

Heroes 6 – Circumplex models of personality
Dr. Hugh McCredie, Vice-chair of the Psychometrics Forum **5**

Dr. Robert Hogan – The dark side of personality
Write-up from 24 September 2014 TPF event
Kris Bush, Director of Ascolto Ltd **9**

Supporting transition of armed forces personnel into Civvy Street
Sharon Patmore, CPsychol. Head of Workplace Psychology, Royal British Legion Industries **11**

Coaching, risk & opportunity
Geoff Trickey, Managing Director, Psychological Consultancy Ltd **13**

Tales from the frontier 2014
Write-up from 25 November 2014 TPF event
Dr. Hugh McCredie, Vice-chair of the Psychometrics Forum **16**

New Frontiers 2015 initial flyer
24 November 2015 **18**

A word from the Chair

Xanthy Kallis, Chair of the Psychometrics Forum

Xanthy Kallis

Dear Member, Hello!

I would like to say a few words on what you can expect from TPF in 2015. Perhaps the most exciting news is that we are launching our 'Student Research Award' in November. The award will recognise the work of a student whose research makes a significant contribution to the field of Psychometrics. In the process we also hope that the event will create awareness of the Forum amongst a new generation of potential members.

In our continuing efforts to improve both benefits and events, we have successfully negotiated opportunities for you to train in a number of tools at substantial reductions to advertised catalogue prices. The first such event took place in April 2014, thanks to Stewart Desson CEO of Lumina Learning. In 2015 members will have the opportunity to benefit from preferential rates at an MBTI Step 1 event via OPP and Hogan measures training via PCL. Our objective is to build on-going relationships with the test publishers so that we can continue to offer such opportunities to our members.

Still on the topic of training, we are very pleased to announce that due to the success of the 'HOW TO' workshops last year, OPP are extending this offer into 2015. As a member of our Forum you will continue to benefit from a 50% discount to the 'HOW TO' rates advertised on OPP's website. Places are limited so please visit our website (www.psychometricsforum.org) for more information.

On the subject of our website there are two things worth mentioning. Those of you who have attended recent events will have seen that over the past year we have filmed the presentations of a number of our speakers. Our aim is to add some short sequences to our website to make it a more interactive and engaging experience. Thanks to the work of our resident blogger Raj Chopra we have also moved to a new web-site hosting provider. We hope that this move will serve to refresh and add to the interest of the site.

You will be receiving this edition of Psyche shortly after our March event themed around 'Personality and Politics' – on account of the election in May. In June the topic is 'Diversity', followed by 'Talent Management' in September. In November the stage is once again given to Hugh's highly successful 'New Frontiers', concluding this year with our inaugural 'Student Research Award' Ceremony. So lots to look forward in 2015!

All the best

Xanthy Kallis
Chair of the Psychometrics Forum

Follow us on Twitter @TPF_UK

Copy deadlines

Summer – Monday 11th May

Autumn – Monday 15th July

Winter – Monday 12th October

To book a place on any of the events please contact our Administrator Caro Leitzell on 01962 880920 or email her at admin@psychometricsforum.org

Details of membership are available on the Forum website: www.psychometricsforum.org

Heroes, landmarks and blind alleys in personality assessment

6. Circumplex models of personality

Dr. Hugh McCredie – TPF Vice Chair

Dr. Hugh McCredie

Most students of psychology are aware that there are varying degrees of ambiguity regarding nearly all the categories used to classify things encountered in everyday living. Roche (1973) termed these ubiquitous ambiguities "fuzzy concepts". The nature of a fuzzy concept is that whilst most of us have a reasonably clear idea of what the ideal example, or prototype, looks like, there is no such consensus as to the boundaries of what might be included. From the start, psychometrics has had prototypes like 'extravert' and 'neurotic'. As we saw in Article 3, Gray revealed interesting conditions in the space between these categories; i.e. the equivalent of Galen's 'Choleric' between Eysenck's Neurotic and Extravert poles and 'Melancholic' between Neurotic and Introvert poles. This article will trace the history of efforts to populate the spaces between the major concepts, latterly the Big Five factors, in personality assessment.

What is a circumplex?

The ideal circumplex describes the spaces between two personality axes, nominally depicted at right angles to each other, as a circular pattern without beginning or end as will emerge in Figure 1, overleaf. The first circumplex to be explored involved two axes, the boundaries between which were quite fuzzy.

The interpersonal circumplex

The founding circumplex model, centred on interpersonal relationships, was that of Leary (1957) which Wiggins (1982, p183) described as an attempt 'to provide a systematic language for the description of interpersonal transactions and to demonstrate that this language permits the specification of a set of variables that are common to the enterprises of assessment, diagnosis, and treatment'. Wiggins referred to the two principal axes as 'dominance' and 'affiliation' and said of the intervening points in the circumplex that 'each of the interpersonal variables...may be thought of as representing a particular blend of affiliation and dominance.' (p.184).

Jerry S Wiggins (1931–2006), an American clinical psychologist, took Leary's model as his starting point alongside the lexical studies, especially Goldberg (1977), featured in Articles 2 and 4. He regarded the emerging lexical cluster labels as primarily *descriptive* and sought to relate these to key ***behavioural*** domains of human life, starting with the interpersonal. Drawing on Foa and Foa (1974), Wiggins wrote:

> Interpersonal events may be deemed as *dyadic interactions that have relatively clear-cut social (status) and emotional (love) consequences for both participants (self and other)*... distinguishing interpersonal traits from other categories of trait descriptors, such as temperament, moods, cognitive traits, and physical characteristics. (Wiggins, 1979, p. 398)

Note the obvious association of 'status' with dominance and 'love; with affiliation. Describing the results of his efforts, Wiggins (1982) reported:

> *By a variety of psychometric procedures, we identified those eight items in each of 16 interpersonal categories that had optimal circumplex properties…the interpersonal adjective scales…were meant to serve as semantic markers of interpersonal space for purposes of comparison with other assessment systems…(Wiggins, 1980). Within each octant of the interpersonal system, the interpersonal scales measure narrow semantic dimensions with a high degree of fidelity. (Wiggins, 1982, pp196–198)*

Wiggins' circumplex is replicated in Figure 1, below:

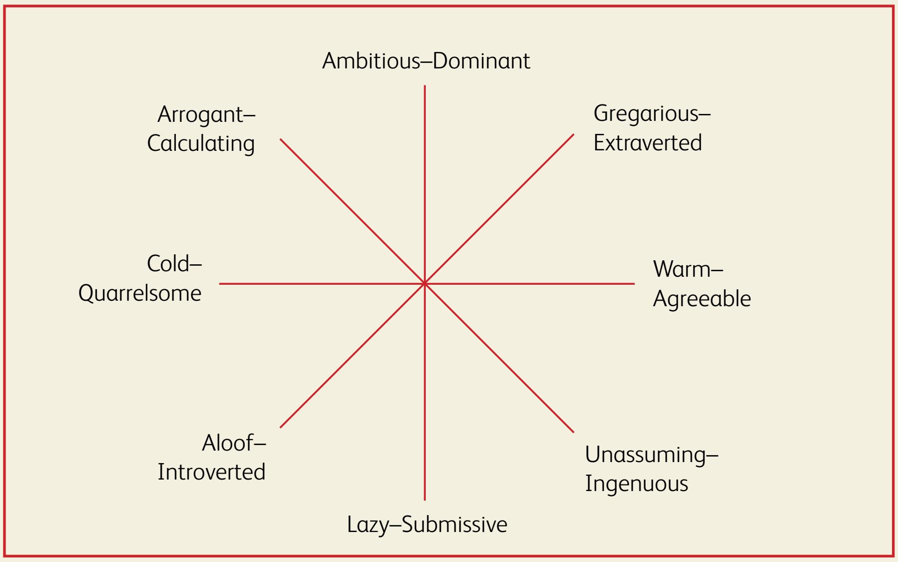


Figure 1: Circumplex model of interpersonal behaviour (After Wiggins, 1980, p. 268)

Note that the familiar extraversion falls between the principal axes: status (Ambitious-Dominant) and love (Warm-Agreeable).

Relating the interpersonal circumplex to the Big Five extraversion and agreeableness.

In the decade which followed, the overarching Big Five personality factors achieved growing prominence. Costa & McCrae (1989 undertook an interesting comparison of the interpersonal circumplex and the five factor model. In essence, they factor-analysed Wiggins interpersonal circumplex scales alongside the NEO-PI scales. They discovered that the extraversion scale of the latter, repositioned as the vertical axis, with warmth as its agreeable form in the upper right quadrant and assertiveness/excitement-seeking as its 'disagreeable' form in the upper left quadrant, was a better fit for the data.

Explaining that their definition of extraversion was broader than that of Wiggins, Costa & McCrae (1989) conceded that Wiggins' model was potentially more useful in the *interactive*, or relational context. They suggested that their rotation, featuring extraversion and agreeableness as the two principal axes, included the 'best concepts for understanding enduring dispositions in individuals'. They also suggested that circumplex models were most suited to those factors between which there was the highest level of inter-correlation. Peabody & Goldberg (1989) reported that such was the case with extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness but that neuroticism and openness were amenable to 'simple solution', i.e. minimal inter-correlations with other factors.

Other Big Five/circumplex relationships

So far, we have focussed on the interpersonal circumplex which Wiggins argued was the most important, having played a key role in our evolutionary history. Ambitious-dominant was paramount for personal survival, warm-nurturing facilitated successful reproduction. They relate to the meta-concepts of 'agency' and 'communion', respectively (Bakan, 1966) and Hogan's (1983) societal challenges of "getting ahead" (status hierarchy) and "getting along" (group living).

Trapnell & Wiggins (1990) combined the 20 adjectival markers for each of their dominance and nurturance factors with 20 adjectives, culled from Goldberg (1977), for each the remaining Big Five domains of Neuroticism (N), Conscientiousness (C) and Openness (O). The resulting measure, the Revised Big Five Interpersonal Adjective Scales (IASR-B5) showed:

> *promising convergent and discriminant properties when compared with the NEO-PI…suggest[ing] that the adjectival measure is well-suited for exploratory research in relatively unchartered domains (p.788)*

They demonstrated how three different personality disorders which fell into or near the same, low dominance/low nurturance, quadrant of the interpersonal circumplex could be differentiated by one or more of the remaining three Big Five factors; *e.g.* N most clearly distinguishes avoidant from schizoid subjects.

Based on ratings of adjectives drawn from Goldberg's (1981) pool, Saucier (1992) found highest inter-correlations between E and A, E and (low) N, and A with N. C and O displayed 'simple structure'. He commented that C and O 'seem to be task oriented, rather than affective or interpersonal' (p. 1028). Saucier saw the inter-relatedness of E/A, E/N and A/N as predicating a *three* dimensional, or spherical model that could possibly accommodate Cattell's 16 oblique personality factors. We explore the E/N relationship, underpinning the 'affective circumplex', in the next article.

Developing the Abridged Big Five Circumplex (AB5C) measure

Hofstee, de Raad & Goldberg (1992) attempted to find markers falling between the principal factor labels for each of the ten possible pairings of the Big Five. It may be recalled (Article 4) that Goldberg (1992) had found support for 100 adjectival 'markers' of the Big Five factors yielding scores which correlated respectably with the NEO PI domains.

To develop the AB5C measure, Hofstee et al. started with ratings on 540 trait terms, including the 100 Big Five markers. They factor-analysed the results and:

- Excluded traits loading less than .20 on all factors
- Assigned those with negligible loadings on a secondary factor to the 30° segment of the circumplex around the pure-factor (*i.e.* E, A, C, N, O)
- Assigned the remainder to one of the two 30° segments between each of the four pure factor segments.

The International Personality Item Pool used this research to measure 'facets' at the intersection of all Big Five factor pairings (IPAP, 2014). The labels used for each of these pairings are given in Table 1, below. Imagine the pairings given on each line as the quadrants of a circumplex with the first referenced factor as the vertical and the second as the horizontal axes, with positive poles at the top and right, respectively.

Table 1: Quadrant labels from the IPAP Abridged Big Five Circumplex

Top right quadrant		Bottom right quadrant		Bottom left quadrant*		Top left quadrant	
E+/A+	Friendly	E-/A+	Co-operative	E-/A-	Quiet	E+/A-	Provocative
E+/C+	Assertive	E-/C+	Cautious	E-/C-	Unenergetic	E+/C-	Self-disclosing
E+N+	Talkative	E-/N+	Unhappy	E-/N-	Controlled	E+/N-	Happy
E+/O+	Ingenious	E-/O+	Introspective	E-/O-	Passive	E+/O-	Sociable
A+/C+	Moral	A-/C+	Rational	A-/C-	Inconsiderate	A+/C-	Sympathetic
A+/N+	Tender	A-/N+	Demanding	A-N-	Imperturbable	A+/N-	Pleasant
A+/O+	Empathic	A-/O+	Creative	A-/O-	Uncharitable	A+/O-	Nurturing
C+/N+	Perfectionist	C-/N+	Inconsistent	C-/N-	Cool-headed	C+/N-	Purposeful
C+/O+	Competent	C-/O+	Imaginative	C-/O-	Haphazard	C+/O-	Orderly
N+/O+	Deep	N-/O+	Quick	N-/O-	Tranquil	N+/O-	(unknown)

The Big Five abbreviations E (Extraversion), A (Agreeableness), C (Conscientiousness), N (Neuroticism) and O (Openness) were assigned by the current author. The IPAP measure uses I (Gregarious), II (Understanding), III (Conscientiousness), IV (Stability) and V (Intellect), respectively.

*As these facets were unlabelled in the IPAP measure, recourse was made to Hofstee et.al. (1992, Table 1)

This just hints at the richness of additional information to be found in the spaces between the Big Five factors. The chief heroes of this facility are undoubtedly Jerry Wiggins and the ubiquitous Lewis Goldberg.

References

Bakan, D. (1966). *The duality of human existence: Isolation and communion in Western man*. Boston: Beacon.

Goldberg, L. R. (1977). *Language and personality: Developing a taxonomy of trait descriptive terms*. Invited address to the Division of Evaluation and Measurement at the 86th annual convention of the American Psychological Association, San Francisco.

Goldberg, L. R. (1981). Language and individual differences: The search for universals in personality lexicons. In L. Wheeler (Ed.), *Review of personality and social psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 141–165). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Hofstee, W. K. B., de Raad, B., & Goldberg, L. R. (1992). Integration of the Big Five and circumplex approaches to trait structure, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 63. No. 1. 146–163.

Hogan, R (1983). A socioanalytic theory of personality. In M. M. Page (Ed.), *1982 Nebraska symposium on motivation: Personality-current theory and research* (pp. 58–89). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

IPIP (2014), The items in the 45 preliminary IPIP scales measuring the 45 AB5C facets. Retrieved 12th May 2014, from http://ipip.ori.org/newAB5CKey.htm

Leary, T. (1957). *Interpersonal diagnosis of personality*. New York: Ronald Press.

McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T., Jr. (1989). The structure of interpersonal traits: Wiggins' circumplex and the five factor model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56, 586–595.

Peabody, D. & Goldberg, L. R. (1989) Some Determinants of Factor Structures From Personality-Trait Descriptors, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57. 3. 552–567.

Rosch, E.H. (1973). Natural categories. *Cognitive Psychology* 4 (3): 328–50.

Saucier, G. (1992). Benchmarks: Integrating affective and interpersonal circles with the Big-Five personality factors. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 62, 1025–1035.

Trapnell, P. D., & Wiggins, J. S. (1990). Extension of the interpersonal adjective scales to include the big five dimensions of personality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 59, 781–790.

Wiggins, J. S. (1979) A psychological taxonomy of trait-descriptive terms: the interpersonal domain, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 37, 3, 395–412.

Wiggins, J. S. (1980). Circumplex models of interpersonal behavior. In L. Wheeler (Ed.), *Review of personality and social psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 265–294). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Wiggins, J. S.(1982) Circumplex models of interpersonal behavior in clinical psychology. In: Philip C. Kendall, James N. Butcher (Eds.), *Handbook of research methods in clinical psychology* (pp. 183–221). New York: Wiley.

Kris Bush

Dr. Robert Hogan's presentation:

The dark side of personality

Write-up from 24 September 2014 TPF event

by Kris Bush, Director of Ascolto Ltd.

Dr Robert Hogan has been shaking up the psychological community since the 1960s. Today he is the leading authority on personality assessment and leadership who has demonstrated the link between personality and organizational effectiveness. His presentation to the Psychometrics Forum on 25th September 2014 was informative and his style was engaging making listening and learning such a pleasure. A flavor is provided in the following quote:

> *"To skeptics who doubt the relevance – even the existence of personality: Believe or suffer the consequences. Personality is real and it determines the careers of individuals and the fate of organizations."*

Freud – not always popular but relevant to the subject

It was pointed out that what people do and why the do it are not the same thing, but they are key aspects to understanding people. This provided the backdrop for Dr Hogan's summary of Freud in which he outlined the importance of Freud's contribution to understanding human nature and behaviour. Freud considered that helping people depended upon an understanding of personality dynamics. He argued that social behaviour is a text to be interpreted and that social behaviour involves symbolic expressions of sexual and aggressive impulses, about which individuals have little personal insight. According to Freud, everyone is neurotic (well except Freud of course!) and the big challenge in life is to overcome one's neuroses. Dr Hogan argued that one of the goals of assessment is to identify the source of peoples' neuroses. However, in organisations it also has to be how to manage and mitigate the negative affects of neuroses?

Freud noted that as social beings we live in groups with a hierarchy - sometimes that hierarchy is more or less obvious. There is usually a desire to fit in with a group and to acquire as much status as possible. Dr Hogan refers to this as "getting along" and "getting ahead". Personality is therefore about individual differences in the ability to get along and get ahead. Neuroses matter because they interfere with this process of getting along and getting ahead. Such getting along and getting ahead is seen in organisations and sometimes the culture of organisations encourages one more than the other. This raises the question of how much is to do with an individual's personality and how much is about the situation and what is rewarded in the workplace?

Dr Hogan and Freud see self-awareness as essential for maturity. Although psychologists are, according to Dr Hogan, addicted to introspection, he argues that many successful people do not introspect. Examples he provided included Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. However, most successful people tend to take good care of their reputations and Dr Hogan explained the trade off that is typically involved between getting along and getting ahead. In this light social interaction is a minefield with other people simultaneously being our supporters and our competitors. Dr Hogan considers that career success requires self-awareness through feedback from others and the replacement of self-deception with self-control.

What is the dark side about?

The dark side is about losing your focus and it is about not being mindful of yourself – it is about losing your self-awareness.

Within the Hogan Development Survey (HDS) framework the ways in which focus may be lost are as follows:

- **Excitable –** Erratic emotional outbursts
- **Cautious –** Risk averse, won't make decisions
- **Skeptical –** Mistrustful and vindictive
- **Reserved –** Poor communicator, insensitive to morale issues
- **Leisurely –** Passive-Aggressive meanness
- **Arrogant –** Narcissistic feelings of entitlement
- **Mischievous –** Careless about commitments, constant lying
- **Colourful –** Manages by crisis to be center of attention
- **Imaginative –** Bad ideas and decisions
- **Diligent –** Over-controlling micro-manager
- **Dutiful –** Too concerned about pleasing superiors

Dr Hogan provided some interesting examples of prominent leaders who seem to have shown a loss of focus. Some practical issues to consider are:

- How to identify people who may lose focus?
- How to self-manage/help others to avoid losing focus?
- What do organisations need to put in place to ensure feedback is acceptable and part of getting along and getting ahead?
- What encourages / allows people to assess that this behaviour is okay?

A useful explanation of the ways in which such characteristic can be expressed was provided in three categories. These really illustrated the way in which the dark side is experienced in the workplace:

Intimidation – anxiety disorders

- Excitable: Do what I want or I will throw a fit – bullying and harassing.
- Skeptical: Don't defy me or I will retaliate – attacking in various ways.
- Reserved: Do what I want or I won't speak to you – using silence as a weapon.
- Cautious: Do what I want or bad things will happen to you – free floating threat.
- Leisurely: Do what I want or you will be sorry – silent menace.

Seduction - hysteria

- Bold: I demand that you do what I want – entitled, arrogant, and non-reciprocating.
- Mischievous: If you do what I want, I will love you – charming and manipulative.
- Colourful: Do what I want and I will entertain you further – dramatic and entertaining.
- Imaginative: Do what I want and you will be amazed at the results.

Compliance – Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

- Diligent: Do what I want because the rules say that you should and disobedience will be severely punished.
- Dutiful: Do what I want because I am in charge and disobedience will be severely punished.

Origins of the dark side

Dr Hogan proposed that these tendencies reflect patterns of behaviour learned in early childhood in response to parenting style and associated rewards. They persist because they tend to work with peers – they lead to short-term wins, but are not always productive in the long term and can serve to erode relationships.

These patterns of behaviour are considered by Dr Hogan to be largely unconscious, with people tending to be unaware of their own behaviour. However, the paradox is that feedback typically happens less and less as people become more senior. Also, just because someone is aware of the impact of their behaviour does not mean that they will choose to stop or change. To my mind this raises the question of what role coaching and awareness raising may have for someone with clear 'dark side' characteristics.

Too much dark side may get a person fired – but then that is too late. According to Dr Hogan some 'dark side' seems essential for success and too little and you probably won't make it to senior roles in the first case. The challenge is therefore how to remain receptive to feedback and sufficiently self-aware to ensure that the 'dark side' is kept in check. It may be that getting on is more important than getting ahead, but how to sell that to an organisation?

Kris Bush is a Chartered Psychologist and experienced senior leadership coach. In her work as Director of Ascolto she regularly uses psychometrics including HDS, always remaining curious as to what her clients make of this science!

Supporting transition of armed forces personnel into Civvy Street

Sharon Patmore, CPsychol. Head of Workplace Psychology, Royal British Legion Industries.

Sharon Patmore

Existing employment and training advice and guidance for members of the Armed Forces community tends to rely on evaluating information from self-report. For many who have good insight, self-awareness and for whom no real change has occurred to affect their abilities, this is a useful process as it is. But there are those who need more information to help them to recognise and decide on the best work and training options; this additional information can be provided through objective assessments.

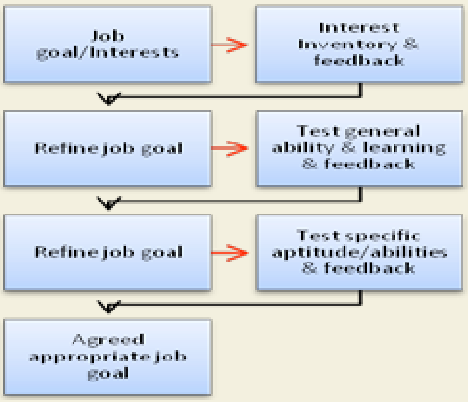
Making the transition from the Armed Forces into civilian life can be a daunting experience; between 18–24,000 men and women each year leave the Armed Forces and although the majority transition successfully some can experience significant difficulties adjusting and settling into a new life. A successful transition can be defined as: '*…one that enables ex-Service personnel to be sufficiently resilient to adapt successfully to civilian life, both now and in the future. This resilience includes financial, psychological, and emotional resilience, and encompasses the ex-Service person and their immediate families.*' (Transition Mapping Study 2013)

It's inevitable that all those who serve in the Armed Forces will at some stage need to leave the services and move into the civilian world. To assist with this transition a range of services and support is available through statutory and non-statutory provision. Support available varies from person to person and includes: advice and guidance on housing and welfare matters, financial advice and funding, and information and guidance on employability, training and careers. For those who find the process of transition problematic the resulting difficulties they experience can manifest into, substance misuse, poor mental health, homelessness, debt, imprisonment and unemployment. Failed transition is not only costly to the individual but it can also be measured in financial terms to the State where the cost is approx £100 million per year (NAS 2007). More specifically the unemployment costs alone are in excess of £21million per year, providing a compelling argument to ensure that service leavers are able to access and sustain the most appropriate employment options.

Employment is an indicator that transition has been successful; it provides greater independence via a regular financial income. Additionally, it provides stability and access to other social and welfare activities when this disposable income becomes available. Transition into new civilian employment is, for almost all Service personnel, an inevitable element of Service life as few leave and retire from work. But employment can bring its own problems if the correct job or career isn't obtained; for example, it can disguise issues of under-employment or poorly matched skills to jobs, that can lead to poor adjustment to civilian life in the medium to longer term. So, the notion of employment becomes an important part of a person's successful transition and it's important to bear in mind the relevancy of ensuring that work choices are the right fit. The National Audit Office study 'Leaving the Services' (2007) indicated that a third of those leaving the Armed Forces reported changing jobs 2–3 times, of which 50 % cited the two main reasons as: 'Did not like the job' or 'Wanted a change in career'. In their desire to obtain employment quickly after leaving some leavers accept jobs that are insufficiently challenging, not suited to their skills set or lack opportunities for progression. This results in several job moves early in their civilian transition, periods of temporary work and periods of unemployment. Poor employment choices at the start of the journey can also result in poor transition outcomes later on.

The purpose of Vocational Assessment is to support the individual in developing their understanding of a realistic and achievable work goal in order to make the right employment choices first time; thus preventing unemployment and other associated difficulties later on. Many existing careers guidance services for the Armed Forces cohort, either serving or veterans, provide information, advice and guidance on careers, training and employment, but rely on an individual's self-report about their abilities. Although this in itself is helpful, the added advantage of objective measurement is that it provides measures against relevant normative groups. Each participant undertakes assessment relevant to their job goal choices, using their test results to make an informed judgement regarding whether or not it is an appropriate choice.

The assessment I have developed within RBLI process, incorporating a coaching approach in feedback, is designed to take into account information from each assessment and review and refine any job goal choices as a dynamic process. (See figure below)



Combining a range of objective assessments ensures that individuals have the opportunity to review their next steps without constraining their views to only what they already know. Interest inventories provide them with an opportunity to identify options that previously may not have been available or known to them, giving them the chance to consider careers in completely new occupational areas. Further measures are then completed identifying learning ability with additional ability and aptitude assessments to assist the individual correctly in identifying the entry point that's appropriate, considering job level and complexity.

The initial assessment completed is Ravens SPM (2000 Edition: Updated 2004), a non-verbal reasoning assessment, to assess an individuals observation skills and clear-thinking ability as well as their test behaviour generally. The overall performance of the individual is then discussed in feedback, providing an opportunity to review and agree the next level of assessments. The second stage of ability assessment measures Verbal Reasoning and Numerical Reasoning (CWS Series – Criterion Partnership) for more manual level jobs and Verbal Critical Reasoning and Numerical Critical Reasoning (B2C – Criterion Partnership) for administrative, supervisory and management roles.

Initial analysis of the data from 113 participants identifies that the general distribution of scores from the Ravens assessment does not indicate a normal distribution; majority of results fell into the score range 0-30, with the mode being 20 (across a range of 97). There was a similar distribution in the CWS Verbal and Numerical Reasoning assessments (see table below) but not the B2C. Overall, most participants seemed to score higher in the numerical assessment than the verbal ones (both CWS and B2C) but the reasons for this are not clear at this stage.

Assessment	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
Ravens	36	29	20	97
CWS Verbal	3	1	1	9
CWS Numerical	4	3	3	8
B2C Verbal	7	7	6	8
B2C Numerical	4	3	3	7

A recent review completed by RBLI reflected a positive view on the assessment process where all participants had experienced this type of assessment for the first time (all were unemployed or under-employed at time of assessments). The majority indicated that their time with the assessor had met their expectations and they found the time productive. At the end of the process 97% of participants reported they had now identified career/work options that matched their ability, interest and personality preferences. Furthermore, they also reported a better understanding of their abilities in relation to their work choices. Other indicators gained pre- and post-assessment suggested that this objective assessment provided added value to individuals as they were able to identify real, good fit work options that increased their confidence in their work choices.

There is further evaluation work to be completed including identifying whether there is a correlation between initial job aspiration, the agreed job goal after assessment and the actual work obtained. Also measures of the length of time spent in their chosen work option will be explored to assess suitability and sustainability of their career/work choices.

References

Forces in Mind (2013) The Transition Mapping Study: Understanding the transition process for Service personnel returning to civilian life. http://cdn.basw.co.uk/upload/basw_102716-1.pdf

National Audit Office (2007) Leaving the Service. http://www.nao.org.uk/report/leaving-the-services/

Note: RBLI (Royal British Legion Industries) delivers vocational assessment to all participants on their LifeWorks™ Course as part of an integrated approach of developing employability skills and managing change to veterans and some serving members of the Armed Forces.

Coaching, risk & opportunity

Geoff Trickey, Managing Director, Psychological Consultancy Ltd.

Geoff Trickey

In the recent financial meltdown, the risk behaviour of quite a small number of people came near to destroying western culture. This serves to remind us of the pivotal significance of risk in every day life and its presence at the heart of all life decisions. The way we manage risk, it turns out, has a great deal to do with our personalities, a perspective that enriches our understanding and sets out a framework for self-awareness and personal development. Viewed through this lens, risk taking and the ways in which a person responds to different kinds of risk, fit very well on the coaching agenda.

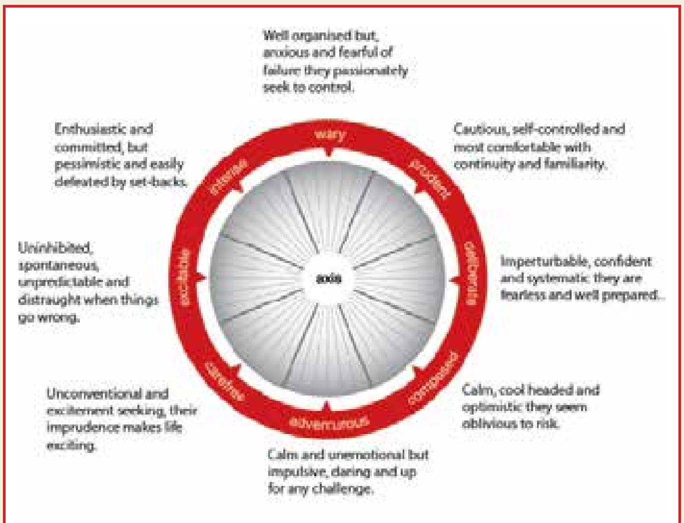
There are many models and philosophies to which a coach may subscribe, but the aim of helping clients to raise self-awareness and to take personal responsibility is something they all share. Although often instigated by a particular problem, of itself, coaching does not have the answer.

Coaching seeks to enable the client to focus on what is achievable and what is appropriate for them.

In order to raise self-awareness and personal responsibility for their risk behaviour, a person needs a vocabulary and a conceptual framework that allows them to appreciate its scope and to gain insight into its nature. They need to clarify what is required of them in terms of restraint, assertiveness or deference, as well as how they can make important risk taking contributions in terms of the identification of opportunities, innovations and business development strategies. In short, achieving a more grounded understanding of what managing the balance between risk and opportunity means for them; an individualised agenda for personal responsibility.

In all of us, our needs and desires are tempered by our fears and anxieties. Perception of opportunity is balanced by perception of risk; we may want things but do we have the courage to go for them? This balance is different for each of us. It is also a feature that distinguishes one species from another; rabbits and sheep are distinctive in their timidity; cats and foxes are distinguished by their adventurous hunting sorties. In both cases, these dispositions are the key to their survival. Within our own species, which is the most bio-diverse of all creatures, there is much more variability. Risk taking characteristics like curiosity, determination and adventurousness are dominant in some, and caution, anxiety and fear are more influential in others.

Propensity for taking risks has typically been oversimplified and perceived as a single factor; a simple distinction between risk takers and the risk averse. It turns out to be a lot more complicated. In reality,



there is an almost infinite diversity of individual risk dispositions but the eight distinctive Risk Types provide reference points that allow us to keep our bearings in this otherwise complex territory.

Prudent

Very self-controlled and detailed in their planning, this type is organised and systematic. Conforming and conventional, they are most comfortable with continuity and familiarity. They like to stick to what they know.

Wary

Self-disciplined, cautious and pessimistic, they are unadventurous and feel strongly about doing things correctly. Alert to risk and always aware that things can go wrong they seek to control events and people accordingly.

Intense

Highly strung, pessimistic and nervous, in extreme examples, personal relationships and decision-making may become an emotional minefield. Passionate and self-critical by nature, they take it personally when things go wrong.

Excitable

Uninhibited and challenging, they enjoy the spontaneity of unplanned decisions. They are attracted to risk like moths to a flame, but are distraught when things go wrong. Their passion and daring make them exciting but unpredictable.

Carefree

Spontaneous, excitement seeking and sometimes reckless, they are comfortable in fast-paced situations and in making decisions ‘on the fly’. Their liveliness, imprudence and spontaneity limits attention to detail or careful preparation.

Adventurous

The Adventurous Risk Type is impulsive and fearless. They combine a deeply constitutional calmness with high impulsivity and a willingness to challenge tradition and convention. They seem imperturbable, fearless and intrepid.

Composed

The Composed Risk Type is cool-headed, confident and optimistic. At the extreme they seem almost oblivious to risk and unaware of its effect on others. They take everything in their stride and manage stress really well.

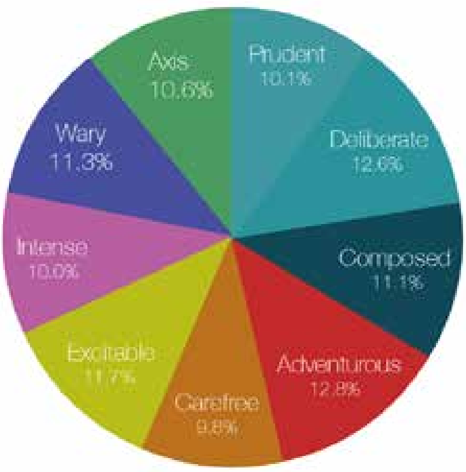
Deliberate

Methodical and compliant, this Risk Type tend to be unusually calm and optimistic. Their self-confidence allows them to tackle risk and uncertainty in a purposeful and business-like way. They never walk into anything unprepared.

The Axial Group

About 12% of people fall close to the axis of the Risk Type Compass; effectively neutral in terms of Risk Type characteristics.

From a counseling perspective, Risk Type is a powerful concept because this balance between the drive to exploit opportunity and the restraints of fear, anxiety and sensitivity to risk are likely to be the most distinctive and consequential aspect of a person's personality. Risk Type is about as close as you can get to your survival instincts; it is deeply rooted and it introduces a persistent bias in behaviour, thought and decision making.



The Risk Type approach recognises individual differences in the prominence in different risk related personality characteristics. In developing the coachee's appreciation of the advantages and challenges these characteristics pose, coaching will be a liberating, performance enhancing experience. Reviewing past successes and difficulties in their management of risk and clarifying their understanding of their Risk Type are all important steps towards insight and self-actualisation.

Given the sheer volume of these issues in large organisations, one-on-one coaching beyond the C-suite is logistically stymied. Group coaching and team development are strategies that can work in this situation. In risk saturated contexts such as heavy industry, financial or emergency services, group coaching can be the most realistic option. This refers to the provision of separate group sessions exclusively for each Risk Type. This approach has distinct advantages as well as being logistically pragmatic. In this context participants can share experiences and insights and discuss strategies that deal with issues common to them all. The model is akin to AA or Weight Watchers; mutual learning and support between individuals with a shared issue; learning directly from those you trust and who know from experience how it feels.

At another level, Risk Type oriented team building addresses the diversity of Risk Types within the team and focuses on relationships, communication, social dynamics, mutual respect for opposing viewpoints and decision making processes. The Risk Type vocabulary facilitates discussion about the strength, limitations and potential for improving working relationships and effectiveness of that team's Risk Type configuration.

Risk is an issue where, in the past, the human factor has been overshadowed by the effort to define and quantify the risk itself, and to develop procedures, processes and systems designed to contain the problem. Partly, this 'people blind' approach may have developed because risk managers have needed to be risk averse and also because the personality domain was considered too remote to be relevant. One way or another, the risk management professions have been systems, rather than people, oriented. The value of Risk Type is that it makes risk related aspects of personality accessible, providing a clear structure and terminology, an approach that allows this imbalance to be addressed and opens up new horizons for personal and organisational risk management.

Tales from the frontier 2014

Write-up from 25 November 2014 TPF event

Dr. Hugh McCredie, Vice-chair
The Psychometrics Forum

Dr. Hugh McCredie

The annual New Frontiers in Psychometrics seminar seeks to present contributions which cohere around the Big Five personality dimensions. We look for research and developments which are directly related to the Big Five model or for those which centre on different personality or behavioural constructs which can be related to one or other of the Big Five dimensions and, so, give us fresh insights.

Our opening speaker **Dr Nigel Guenole** from Goldsmiths UCL looked at recent developments in construing maladaptive personalities. Until now such constructs have derived from clinical judgements, but some associations with the Big Five dimensions had been subsequently discovered. Nigel told us how the most recent clinical diagnostic manual (DSM5) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) had included an alternative method for differentiating personality disorders actually based on the Big Five model, but taking it beyond the range covered by measures of normal personality. He reported that the use of such extended measures could add value in the prediction of work performance. Nigel is currently developing such an extended measure, G-60-F, and experimenting with forced choice and Item Response Theory (IRT) features. He is working with several organizations to test alternative models and would be like to hear from other potentially interested parties.

Prof Dave Bartram, CEB/SHL made his third appearance as a New Frontiers presenter. He explored the relationships with personality dimensions, as measured by Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ) variants, and (1) countries and (2) organisations. Mapping extraversion (E) and emotional stability (N-) scores by country: Scandinavian nations tended to be high on both dimensions, Middle- and Far-Eastern states low and the UK occupied the middle ground. With regard to organisations, Dave reported The Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) Model (Holland, 1997) concluding that, over time, people with similar personalities would tend to congregate in organizations with similar others producing relative homogeneity of personality in organizations. Of the Big Five dimensions, variation in agreeableness (A) was the most strongly related to both country and organisation. The relationship of country, but not organisation, was even higher with N. A key conclusion of the research was that A had the greatest, beneficial, relationship with both national well-being and organisational performance/reputation. This finding was somewhat at odds with studies of factors contributing to *individual* success measures.

Dr Paul Flaxman, City University, shared with us his work on perfectionism and work-related worry and rumination. He offered us Johnny Wilkinson, of Rugby fame, as a model of extreme perfectionism followed by two scales for measuring the construct and its facets. He suggested that perfectionism to avoid the disapproval of others, motivated by self-doubt, was related to neuroticism (N) and was a source of distress, whilst self-motivated perfectionist strivings to obtain positive consequences associated with high conscientiousness (C). Paul then demonstrated how self-doubt perfectionism was related to the non-reduction of stress levels following a period of respite from demanding work. This was due to the self-doubter's proneness to negative ruminations during and after the respite period. Such ruminations were a cause of sleep deprivation and burnout. Finally, self-doubt-inspired perfectionism was characterised by Avoidant coping (behavioural disengagement/suppressive coping) whilst self-motivated perfectionism led to Active coping involving planning.

The closing presentation was by **Tom Hopton**, Saville Consulting and was a further demonstration of the WAVE Questionnaire's range of convenience; earlier TPF presentations had related WAVE to the Big Five dimensions, Team Roles and the Great 8 competencies. Tom demonstrated how the 108 Wave Professional Styles facets yielded 24 Leadership Styles cohering around six broader measures of general leadership which could be conceptually grouped into three areas – Professional, People and Pioneering. In the 360 degree validation study, the 3Ps were found to correlate with hypothesised workplace criteria (four measures of overall performance and the Great Eight competencies). Tom concluded by hinting there was empirical evidence to suggest that the Professional aspect of leadership may be more amenable to development than the People dimension.

Once again, this event proved so popular that we were unable to accommodate all those who wish to attend. BOOK EARLY FOR 2015! Information on speakers for 2015 is to be found at the end of this edition of Psyche.

References

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). Washington, DC.

Holland, J. L. (1997). *Making vocational choices* (3rd ed.). Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc.

Dr. Hugh McCredie & Prof. Dave Bartram

Dr. Nigel Guenole

Dr. Paul Flaxman

The UK's leading independent group of psychometric practitioners

New Frontiers in Psychometrics Seminar

Tuesday 24th November 2015

The Naval Club.38 Hill Street, Mayfair, London W1J 5NS

In 2015, this popular annual event will explore a theme:

From intuition to algorithms in selection and development

Inspired by the findings of Paul Everett Meehl (1954) and re-energised by the Nobel prizewinning psychologist Daniel Kahneman (2011) in his bestselling monograph 'Thinking, fast and slow'

10.00	**Coffee & conversation**	
10.30	**Introductions**	Dr Hugh McCredie, Vice-chair The Psychometrics Forum
10.45	**Towards a generic algorithm for selecting managers**	
A broad prototype algorithm for those using psychometrics in management selection		
11.30	**Closing the academic-practitioner-nonexpert gap: automated selection in SMEs**	John Hackston, Head of R & D OPP
A commercially available expert system for objective selection in smaller businesses		
12.30	**Lunch**	
14.00	**Improving report interpretation - consistent, valid, bespoke?**	Rab MacIver and Lauren Jeffery-Smith, Saville Consulting UK Ltd
Shifting validity from the test to the output. How to configure outputs to improve validity for the user.		
15.00	**Tea/Coffee**	
15.15	**Creating selection algorithms: What is the evidence?**	Helen Baron, Convenor, BPS Assessment Centre Standards Working Group
16.00	**Close**	