CODESP

Cooperative Organization for the Development of Employee Selection Procedures

August 2011

### CODESP Transitions

Due to the current financial constraints within the State of California that many of our member districts are facing, CODESP is similarly striving to reallocate its fiscal resources. In accomplishing this goal, CODESP remains committed to prioritizing and serving our membership above all else. Toward that end, CODESP has decided to move in a more strategic direction which will ultimately allow us to provide more frequent product updates and a higher level of service. By providing better tools and resources to our customers, we hope to increase the human resource efficiency in your agencies. Unfortunately, to accomplish this realignment we had to eliminate three clerical support staff positions at CODESP. This was a difficult decision to make that involved a great deal of time and thought, but it was a fiscally necessary decision. If you have questions or comments during this time of transition please do not hesitate to contact me at marcodesp@aol.com

Office Yogis!

As yoga has taken this country by storm, most of us are probably fairly familiar with the basic concepts and benefits of it. You do not have to be a yogi or even like yoga to know that one of the most underlying goals of the practice is to become calm and content. Some styles of yoga even practice in rooms of 110 degrees while balancing in awkward and strenuous postures for 90 minutes. But the goal all the while is the importance of staying calm and content.
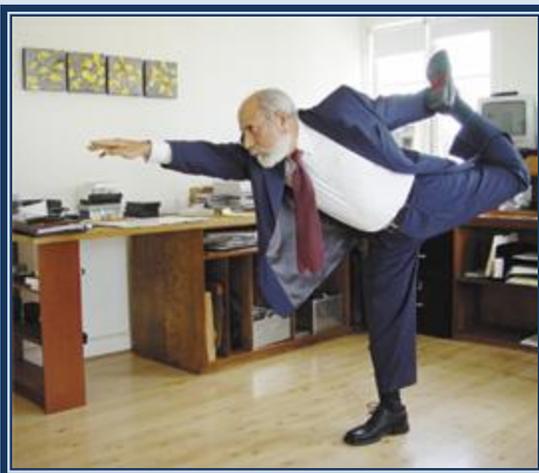
Now although yoga is not the same as practicing HR. There are some lessons that can be taken away. For instance, our current economy reflects a 110 degree room which leads to a significant level of discomfort. The office atmosphere is hot, full of pressure, and there may be some stressed-out employees sweating and trying to balance strenuous job responsibilities, hoping they do not fall (or better yet – get laid off). HR officials are being asked to develop the best employment practices yet ensure that current rules and regulations are being upheld to the highest standards of the law. We are in constant practice of balancing new ideas with current rules and regulations all the while needing to remain calm, cool, and collected.

In a recent article "HR Fiddles While Organizations Burn" by Margaret Morford in the online version of Human Resource Executive, Ms Morford challenges HR professionals with these ideas:

Article can be found at: **http://www.hreonline.com/HRE/story.jsp?storyId=533339729**

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Questions to Consider
1. Which will have a more dramatic affect on your agency – talent management and succession planning or compliance, compensation, and benefits?
2. Should everyone really be treated the same within the organization? – Let's think beyond equality and equity and think about productivity/efficiency.
3. What are the metrics that matter?

Question number one is almost like asking, "What is more important to life – water or air." Both are necessary and neither should be neglected. Due to our experiences in school or the industry, we develop an opinion that one or the other area deserves more attention. So how do we do both? It takes so much energy and staff to stay in compliance with current regulations and practices, that it often feels impossible to go after new projects. More importantly, what if the new project fails or is rejected? This is the balance we can take from yoga.

First of all, we must be okay with failure! Failure is a part of life. Our ideas will be rejected, and we will fall down. The fun is getting back up and trying again – this time with a new sense of what can be done differently. This is where our skill with metrics becomes key. We use metrics in hiring and evaluation practices. Why not use them to complete a utility analysis to show the administrators that new ideas will save or create money. Money is a universally understood language. If we can show how our ideas translate into dollars, we will be successful. Determine what it costs to do it the old way, determine what it costs to do it the new way, and make decisions accordingly.

Secondly, the balance of new development in an environment full of rules, regulations and compliance may be as simple as brainstorming new methods to handle department operations more efficiently and effectively. Each employee must add value to the organization. In our current economy, efficiency is key and requires a constant re-examination of staff duties and available technology. Perhaps the employees that are more comfortable with consistency, and fear change, should be assigned to compliance-type projects such as reviewing current practices in hiring, evaluation, compensation, workers comp, benefits, etc. Let those who thrive on change become your development team. Charge them with finding new and more efficient practices in the areas of HR and remind them to give a metric to show how changes affect the bottom line.

Ideas to Consider
1. One extreme to the next is never healthy!
2. Benchmark for ideas not solutions!
3. "We can't. We'll get sued. We've always done it this way" – Really means: "We'd rather not."

Why are we drawn to extremes? We can see this phenomenon in many forms of society. One group grows up with one extreme way of doing things, and the subsequent group does the exact opposite extreme. Society tends to over-correct itself. Remember our friends in yoga – balance is key. Find benefits of multiple extremes and create hybrid methods. For example, in the field of selection, rather than argue for or against multiple choice testing, make the argument about finding the best way to hire the most qualified candidates. Maybe multiple choice testing is good for one position but not another.

Following trends and benchmarks are a nice way to move forward and search for new ideas. But these benchmarks should only serve as a springboard to spark creative solutions that fit your specific office. Let what others do inspire you to do something even better. Network, ask questions, and search the web.

Finally do what is fair and right. Follow the truths that you know to be right. Fear of being sued is only a fear if you are doing something in direct violation of the rules or is unethical or unjust. Let the legal system work for you. Do not be afraid to create new systems. If you aren't part of the solution, you are part of the problem. Remember our yogis, and find a calm content feeling as you strenuously work to solve the inequities of the workplace with balance and poise. Namaste.

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www.codesp.com

Welcome New & Returning Customers

We would like to welcome our new customers. For those returning members, we appreciate your continued loyalty & for those new customers, we look forward to building a strong relationship with you. A special welcome to Hanford Joint UHSD, Monterey Peninsula USD, Pacific Grove USD, Salinas UHSD and San Leandro USD.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that we are moving into the rest of the United States. We are happy to welcome: <u>Conroe Independent School District out of Conroe, Texas</u>!

Furthermore we have expanded to include all public agency's beyond the educational industry including cities, counties, and special districts including the <u>City of Pacific Grove</u>, the <u>City of San Bernardino</u>, & the <u>County of Yolo</u>.

CSPCA & CODESP Joint Webinar Training

"Post-Layoff Workforce Triage"
Webinar Presented by Suzanne Speck, School Services of California, Inc

Training Summary
Disabled employees working either with or without accommodations will undoubtedly experience a material change in circumstances. Has your district experienced layoffs? Have you engaged in the interactive process with your disabled employees? During this session we will examine how the post-layoff work environment is affecting employees who are, or who may become disabled, and what LEAs can do to avoid costly disability discrimination lawsuits.

This webinar is offered to members/subscribers of CODESP as well as all Merit System School Districts. Visit our website or contact us for information on how to join or subscribe
Register at www.codesp.com   Sept. 20th 10:00 a.m. -11:15 a.m. PDT

What can CODESP do for you? By utilizing CODESP services, customers improve their selection procedures and ability to develop valid employee test instruments to meet federal and state employment regulations. CODESP's easy-to-access online test materials provide the necessary tools for agencies to determine the minimum qualifications of applicants required for success on the job prior to hire. Furthermore, CODESP products work to screen out unqualified applicants to better select the applicants that will best serve your agency.

Statistics 101

<u>Difficulty and Discrimination</u> – words we use in testing that, without the proper context, have a negative connotation. "That test was difficult and discriminated." How do you interpret this? If you are involved in employment testing, we want it to mean that the difficulty of the test was appropriately set to discriminate the candidates who could successfully perform on the job from those who could not. These two variables are measured by a variety of statistics.

<u>Difficulty</u>

Difficulty in Classical Test Theory (CTT) is a measure of correct responses divided by total responses. This can be applied on a test level or item level. For example:

<u>Job Entry Exam with 100 multiple choice items.</u>

- *200 job applicants took the test.*
- The average score on the exam was a <u>75%. (Difficulty of Test)</u>
- Bob scored 90 items correctly out of 100 – <u>90% (Test Difficulty for Bob)</u>
- Item 13 on the test was answered correctly by 50 of 200 candidates. <u>25% (#13 Item Difficulty)</u>

Item difficulty of employment tests should normally be between .90 (easy) to .40 (difficult) with a balanced range of easy and difficult items. It should also be noted that having a range of easy and difficult items will have an adverse effect on the reliability estimate of the test, as variance in difficulty has a negative effect on reliability estimates. Inversely a test with a majority of easy items will give an artificially inflated reliability estimate.

<u>Discrimination</u>

Discrimination in CTT is a measure used to determine how well a test or test item differentiates between potentially successful candidates and potentially unsuccessful candidates. For example:

<u>Job Entry Exam with 100 multiple choice items.</u>

- *200 job applicants took the test. (We will pretend that all were hired for theoretical purposes, and one year later, we compare job applicant test scores with their one year performance ratings.)*

Test Level (more commonly referred to as Criterion Validity)
A highly discriminating test will show a positive correlation between Job Entry Exam score and successful performance ratings. This is often measured with a correlation coefficient such as 'r' – which ranges from -1.0 (perfect negative correlation) to +1.0 (perfect positive correlation). Thus an r=.80 would be a strong indication that success on the Job Entry Exam predicts success on the job. In reality, these numbers are usually much lower (closer to .25).
Item Level
Item discrimination is measured by comparing how candidates performed on an individual item (correct vs. incorrect) with how they performed on the test as a whole (difficulty index). Often a point biserial statistic is used. It ranges from -.80 to +.80, but anything above a positive .20 is usually an indication of a highly discriminating item. Discrimination can also be examined by comparing the difficulty indices of the lower 27% to the upper 27%. We want the difference to be large and positive.

More Training Opportunities

NC-CSPCA Conference

"Moving Ahead With Merit"

The 2011 CSPCA/NC conference will provide an opportunity to learn about the most current HR issues and to network with your fellow merit system colleagues.

W- Hotel – Silicon Valley
8200 Gateway Boulevard
Newark CA
9/21/11 – 9/22/11
(Conference begins on Friday afternoon and ends on Saturday afternoon)
Register at www.codesp.com

Violence in the Workplace/Discipline

Joseph Sanchez of Best, Best and Krieger
The program summary and topic details will be announced by 9/01
Webinar is co-sponsored by CODESP / CSPCA
Free for Members/Subscribers and Merit Districts
October 19, 2011   10:00 am to 11:15 am
Register at www.codesp.com
Check under Training on the website for more information

Training & Experience Applications - September 21

WRIPAC

Trainer: Mike Willihnganz   Location: Berkeley

This one-day class is designed to acquaint participants with a variety of techniques that can be used to assess training and experience (T&E) at the application stage of the recruitment process. Advantages and disadvantages of T&E evaluation methods will be addressed, as well as issues related to reliability, validity, instrument development, and scoring of these assessment techniques.

The Free WRIPAC meeting will follow on Thursday through noon Friday. Check the website for presenters and the agenda.

Free WRIPAC Meeting: September 22-23, 2011
Doubletree Hotel

Register at http://wripac.org/

Our Low Annual Fee Includes:

Our Products!

Multiple Choice Test Item Bank
Interview Bank
Supplemental Applications
Performance Examinations
Writing Exercises
Job Description Builder
Job Analysis Questionnaires

Our Services!

Test Scoring
Item Analysis
Online Testing
Job Analysis
Recruitment
Classification
On-Site/Webinar Training

Most services - $1,850/year

Interview Bank

Our interview bank contains over 900 preassembled interviews. Example rating scales and guides are included.

Job Description Builder

Online system allows for import of job analysis data or use of the existing data to produce job descriptions. Checklists provide customers with pre-populated options for task statements & minimum qualifications.

Networking

As a CODESP customer you will be able to network with other professionals in your industry and your area.

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Online Testing

Proctored online testing is available on the "cloud." Customers can create, administer, and score multiple choice tests, and receive item analysis all online. Online testing is an additional yet affordable yearly fee for non-educational agencies & is determined by size of organization. No per test fees!

Training

CODESP provides FREE on-site and webinar training in various human resource subject areas such as interviews, job analysis, supplemental applications, job description development, exam planning, legal updates, interpreting test results and classification.

Job Analysis Questionnaires

Available online in a easy-to-complete, flexible and comprehensive format for collection of job information.

Job-related knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies required to perform the job are captured and linked to the tasks performed.

Working conditions, physical and mental requirements are collected to assist in ADA/return-to-work issues.

Customers

CODESP provides employment test products and related services to: Public agencies including school districts, colleges, charter schools, afterschool programs, cities, counties, sanitary, water, and other special public districts.

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