

AMP Connection

Third Quarter 2009

Technology That Works ■ People Who Care

What is a Psychometrician?

Lawrence J. Fabrey, PhD
Senior Vice President, Psychometrics

The basic question “What is a psychometrician?” is fairly easy to answer, primarily because others have already created and agreed upon definitions. The definition that seems to best describe the psychometricians at AMP has been provided by the National Organization for Competency Assurance in *The NOCA Guide to Understanding Credentialing Concepts*. That guide describes a psychometrician as “A practitioner of psychometrics; an individual who normally holds a doctoral degree in measurement or a discipline of psychology (such as educational or industrial/organizational psychology) who can understand, apply, and describe the science and technology of mental measurement.” (Durley, 2005).

Of course it's not fair to define one word by using a variation of the word (i.e., a psychometrician is a ‘practitioner of psychometrics’) without shedding a little light on the derivative word. Again, from the *NOCA Guide*, psychometrics is defined as “The science and technology of mental measurement, including psychology, behavioral science, education, statistics, and information technology.” When asked at a party or by a fellow passenger on an airplane what I do for a living, I sometimes take a chance and respond that I am

a psychometrician. Most of the time that ends the conversation, but every once in a while someone pretends to be interested and asks what that means. That's when I might answer that the word is formed by two parts, and the parts convey the basic meaning: ‘metric’ refers to measurement and ‘psycho’ to the mind, so psychometrics could be said to refer to measurement of the mind. A much better definition, and one that I now use as often as possible, was included in a *New York Times* article: “Psychometrics, one of the most obscure, esoteric and cerebral professions in America, is also one of the hottest.” (Herszenhorn, 2006)

Why is it necessary to have a psychometrician working on your certification program? How do AMP psychometricians work with our clients?

The psychometrician working with your organization helps ensure the overall integrity of the certification program, and in many respects, this can best be described as looking at the “big picture” for a program. We sometimes talk about the role of the psychometrician as “ensuring the links in the chain of evidence used to support the validity of the examination results,” which includes

continued on page 2

A practitioner of psychometrics; an individual who normally holds a doctoral degree in measurement or a discipline of psychology (such as educational or industrial/organizational psychology) who can understand, apply, and describe the science and technology of mental measurement.

New Business

2

Educational Achievement

3

The “Top Ten” List

3

AMP On the Road

4

the following activities: job analysis, development of examination specifications, item writing, examination development, standard setting, examination administration, and scoring and reporting of results. The psychometrician is actively involved in most of those activities, and consults with other departments at AMP to ensure that all aspects of the program are being performed in a manner consistent with standards related to the testing industry.

Many readers of this article already know that AMP's test development staff members are very bright, well trained, and personable, and they have an excellent grasp of the process of developing a high quality certification examination. They are experts at helping to facilitate item review, selecting examination forms, and finalizing an examination. In

addition, our test scoring staff members understand the statistical characteristics of items and examinations, and are experts at helping document the performance of examination forms. Your psychometrician



works closely with the test development and scoring staff.

With most client programs, active involvement of the psychometrician occurs with every activity, and while direct involvement with examination administration is rare, the psychometrician would provide expertise on out of the ordinary situations, such as an unusual request for accommodations under ADA or a case of suspected cheating. The psychometrician on your program ensures that all AMP staff members are working together to ensure integrity of the overall examination process.

How many psychometricians does AMP have and what are their credentials?

Within its Psychometrics Division, AMP employs six individuals with doctoral degrees, five of whom serve as the program director for various client programs.

Steven S. Nettles, EdD, Senior Vice President of Psychometrics

Education: EdD in Educational Psychology from Rutgers University
Tenure with AMP: 24 years

Lawrence J. Fabrey, PhD, Senior Vice President of Psychometrics

Education: PhD in Educational Psychology from the Pennsylvania State University
Tenure with AMP: 20 years

Andrew J. Falcone, PhD, Director of Psychometrics

Education: PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from the Illinois Institute of Technology
Tenure with AMP: 17 years

Robert C. Shaw, Jr., PhD, Program Director

Education: PhD in Higher and Adult Education from the University of Missouri
Tenure with AMP: 14 years

Daniel H. Breidenbach, PhD, Program Director

Education: PhD in Educational Psychology from Washington State University
Tenure with AMP: 2 years.

Catherine B. Johnson, PhD, Director of Test Development and Scoring

Education: PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Kansas State University
Tenure with AMP: 18 years

In addition, other key staff members in the psychometrics department provide psychometric services, either as a Program Manager or in consultation with another Program Director.

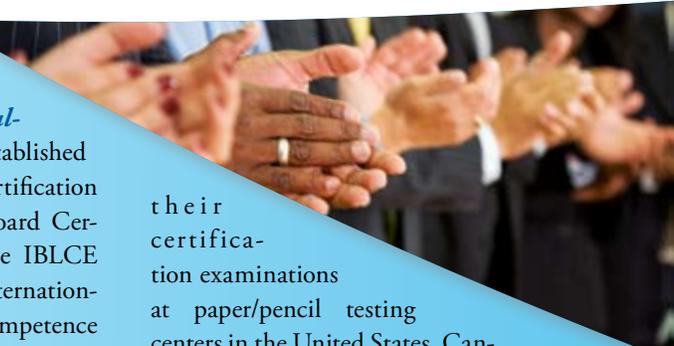
Founded in 1985, the *International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE)* was established to develop and administer the certification examination for International Board Certified Lactation Consultants. The IBLCE examination is the premier internationally recognized measure of competence in lactation consulting and awards credentials to individuals who demonstrate competence in breastfeeding assistance to mothers and children worldwide. IBLCE has partnered with AMP to administer

their certification examinations at paper/pencil testing centers in the United States, Canada, Brazil, Israel, Peru, DANTES military sites and other international locations. For more information about IBLCE, visit www.iblce.org.

The *interNational Association of Lighting Management Companies (NALMCO®)* is an organization of lighting management companies and lighting professionals dedicated to delivering services, information and industry relationships for the benefit of its members and their customers. In June 2009, AMP was awarded a contract with NALMCO to provide examination development and computer-based test administration for the Certified Sustainable Lighting Consultant (CSLC) and Certified Lighting Management Consultant (CLMC®) examination programs.



New Business:



J. Michael Clark, MS, Program Manager

Education: MS in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from the University of Tennessee; working on PhD in Quantitative Psychology at the University of Kansas (2010)
Tenure with AMP: 4 years

Christopher P. Traynor, MS, Research Associate

Education: MS in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Missouri State University
Tenure with AMP: 4 years

Cameron Clyne, MS, Research Associate

Education: MS in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from the University of North Carolina, Charlotte
Tenure with AMP: 1 year

Jennifer Benavente, BEd, Research Associate

Education: BS in Mathematics and BEd from the University of Toledo
Tenure with AMP: 7 years

Recent presentations, publications, and other achievements by our psychometricians:

AMP’s psychometric staff members have authored hundreds of job analysis reports, cut score study reports, and test analysis reports over the past few years. Several of those studies have been published

in professional journals, including studies of infection control practitioners, hospice and palliative nurses, and genetic counselors. AMP’s psychometricians are active participants in various professional organizations, including the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the Association of Test Publishers (ATP), the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME), and the Society for Industrial & Organizational Psychology (SIOP). Dr. Nettles is a frequent presenter at the annual conference of the Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR) and he has been active on various CLEAR committees. Dr. Fabrey is a frequent presenter at the annual conference of the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA), and he is the former chairperson of the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). Dr. Shaw is a bi-annual contributor to the CLEAR Exam Review as the author of the “Testing and Technology” column. Some of the publications of our psychometricians include:

Fabrey, LJ and Hartigan, C (2009, in press). *Basic Psychometric Principles*, in Knapp, L. and Anderson, L (Eds.), *Certification: A NOCA handbook*. Washington DC: National Organization for Competency Assurance (2nd Edition).

continued on page 4

Educational Achievements:

AMP is a strong supporter of providing staff with higher education and continuing education opportunities. The advanced skills and knowledge attained through these opportunities promotes a more positive workplace with confident employees that can better serve our clients. We are pleased to recognize the following staff for their recent educational achievements:

Danny Breidenbach, AMP Program Director: Doctorate in Educational Psychology, Washington State University

Nisha Bhagchandani, Manager of Technology Planning and Development: Master in Business Administration, Ottawa University

Josh Loeffert, Test Development and Scoring Specialist (Level 2): Master in Business Administration, University of Kansas



THANKS •FOR YOUR• FEEDBACK

TOP



Thank you to all AMP clients who completed our most recent Client Satisfaction Survey. We appreciate the time each of you took from your busy schedules to provide us with feedback regarding our services and products. We are most proud to report once again that **100% of those responding indicated they would recommend AMP** to other organizations seeking testing services. This is the highest praise we can receive.

This year, we also asked why AMP was selected as your testing vendor. Through this process, we enjoyed revisiting why our newer clients entrusted their examination programs to AMP and why our veteran clients have stuck with us for so long. This always reenergizes us to continue emphasizing the quality service our clients rely on and to continue exploring ways to improve. Drum roll please:

TOP TEN REASONS CLIENTS CHOOSE AMP

- 10 Excellent Customer Service
- 9 Ability to provide Testing and Management Services
- 8 Great Reputation in the Marketplace
- 7 Flexibility in Working with our Program(s)
- 6 Credentials of Staff
- 5 Lowest Bid
- 4 Best Overall Response to Competitive Bidding Situation
- 3 Best Value (Cost and Services)
- 2 Recommendation from other organization(s)
- 1 Strong History of Excellent Work

Do you have comments or questions regarding your services? Don't wait for the next satisfaction survey. Contact a member of the AMP team today.



Falcone, AJ and Raju, NS (2003). *Setting Standards*, in Edwards, JE, Scott, JC, and Raju, NS (eds.), *The Human Resources Program-Evaluation Handbook* (pp. 89-108). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Nettles, SS (1995). *Future Psychometric Practices in Licensure Testing (FPPLT)*, in Impara, J.C. (Ed.), *Licensure Testing: Purposes, Procedures and Practices* (pp. 321-345). Lincoln NE: Buros Institute of Mental Measurements.

With all of the professional activities of our psychometricians, working to ensure the psychometric integrity of our clients' programs remains our highest priority. One of the things that we believe sets AMP psychometricians apart from others is our ability to communicate complex concepts so they may be applied to the real circumstances of our clients' programs. The word 'Applied' in our company name is not just a coincidence. We believe the name of our company is very descriptive: our psychometricians are professional in every sense of the word, we deal with issues regarding measurement; and we apply knowledge and abilities to ensure the integrity of our clients' programs.

References

1. Durley, C.C. [Primary Author] (2005) *The NOCA Guide to Understanding Credentialing Concepts*, published by the National Organization for Competency Assurance
2. Herszenhorn, D.M. (May 5, 2006) *As Test-Taking Grows, Test-Makers Grow Rarer*: New York Times

NOCA Annual Educational Conference

11/18/2009 - 11/21/2009

Phoenix, Arizona

CLEAR Mid-Year Business Meeting

01/07/2010 - 01/09/2010

New Orleans, Louisiana

ATP Annual Conference

02/07/2010 - 02/10/2010

Orlando, Florida

AMC Institute Annual Meeting

02/10/2010 - 02/12/2010

San Antonio, Texas

ARELLO Mid-Year Meeting

04/07/2010 - 04/10/2010

Colorado Springs, Colorado



We look forward to seeing you at one of these upcoming *On the Road* events!

For more information about any of our products or services, please contact the AMP Marketing department at 913.895.4600 or visit our website at www.goAMP.com.

Stay Connected

Visit www.goAMP.com and join our mailing list to receive the eConnect newsletter or sign up for RSS feed for news and press releases.