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Table of Contents

Chair's Column 1

CSIOP Membership..... 2

CSIOP News 2

Practice Makes Perfect 3

State of the Science 6

Communication Update 7

Student Update..... 8

Update On: Alliance for Organizational Psychology..... 9

The Convention Corner..... 11

Safety and Reasonableness: Recent Arbitral Decisions in COVID Times 11

Chair's Column



Winny Shen, Ph.D.
York University

Dear CSIOP members,

After an unprecedented year, I suspect we are all looking forward to spring and the arrival of some nicer weather that will allow us all to spend more time outdoors, including with others – even if these gatherings continue to be at a distance for now. I sincerely hope that you and your loved ones are coping all right and have some glimmer of brighter days ahead.

The passage of time during this pandemic has been an odd experience for me personally. Some days, it seems to crawl along so very slowly, but at the same time, it seems that a year at home has flown by in the blink of an eye. Somehow, this is already my last column as the Chair of CSIOP. Although I never expected to be Chair during a global pandemic, I am still very grateful for this opportunity to help lead this great organization and work closely with a wonderful Executive Team. I look forward to working closely with our incoming Chair, Joshua Bourdage, as he takes the rein after Convention.

CIJS SPECIAL ISSUE ON “EMERGING RESEARCH IN INDUSTRIAL-ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY IN CANADA”

We are excited to announce that this special issue should be forthcoming and available next month (April 2021)! The editorial team for this special issue was led by our Past-Chair, Nicolas Roulin, with the participation of several members of the current and past executive team (Joshua Bourdage, Leah Hamilton, Tom O’Neill, and myself). This exciting collection highlights some of the great research being conducted by Canadian scholars. It also includes two invited pieces, one by Ivona Hideg and Anja Krstic on the future of research on gender equity and one by Ramona Bobocel on novel directions to study organizational justice. We encourage everyone to peruse and share widely once it becomes available!

The CPA Convention

As you may know, CPA 2021 will again be a virtual convention, which will take place over three weeks in June. Thanks to your collective willingness to serve as reviewers, we anticipate that decisions regarding conference submissions should be delivered soon. Conference registration is now open and we hope that you will choose be involved in what is sure to be an exciting slate of programming, including invited presentations by Marylene Gagne (Curtin University) and Arianne Ollier-Malaterre (UQAM). For more details, please see our program coordinator, Lindie Liang’s (Wilfrid Laurier University) message in this newsletter!

Reminder: NEW Section Associate Membership

In our last newsletter, we announced that CPA has developed a new membership category. We are excited that some new associates have joined our section, and hope that you will consider sharing this opportunity with others in your networks who may also benefit. Specifically, the new section associate category is for people who want to be affiliated with a particular section, such as CSIOP, but for various reasons may not desire full membership in the broader CPA association. For example, we believe this may be of interest to I/O practitioners who are interested in

being involved in the Canadian I/O community through CSIOP, or academics, practitioners, or students in allied or related fields (e.g., business, management), who may not necessarily qualify for membership in CPA as they do not have a background or training in psychology. This membership is at a lower price point: \$85 + section fee (\$110 in total), which makes it a more affordable option if the benefits of full membership are not critical to you! To join or for more information: <https://cpa.ca/membership/becomeamemberofcpa/>

Closing Remarks

Thank you for your continued support of CSIOP. This is definitely an organization where “the people make the place”, and we could not continue to do this without your continued commitment and involvement. We are a small community, so if you have comments, ideas, or would like to get more involved – please never hesitate to reach out to me directly!

Warmest Regards,
Winnie Shen

CSIOP Membership



Aleka MacLellan, Ph.D.
LHH

As of 20 March 2020, CSIOP has a total of 138 members, which consists of 15 CPA Fellows, 1 Honorary Lifetime Member, 8 Special Affiliates, 1 CPA International Affiliate, 4 Retired Members (including 3 CPA Retired Fellows), 32 Student Members, and 77 Full Members.

CSIOP News



Samantha Hancock, Ph.D. Candidate
Wilfrid Laurier University

University of Calgary

- Congratulations to Stephanie Law and Amanda Julian on completing their PhDs!



University of Guelph

- PhD student Jordan Ho was recently awarded a CPA Student Research Grant for his project: "Stigmatization of Tattooed Black Men in Hiring Contexts: A Multiple Categorization Approach". Congratulations, Jordan!



Western University

- Eva Kwan published an industry report investigating gender diversity in the Ontario manufacturing sector. Her report, “Gender Diversity and Ontario Manufacturing: Lessons from Five Leading Companies”, outlines five case studies of manufacturers and provides a blueprint for how to increase diversity in the manufacturing industry. She was subsequently interviewed by CBC, Global News, and Western News. See the report hosted on the Trillium Network for Advanced Manufacturing’s website [here!](#)
- Dr. Johanna Weststar and Shruti Kumar published a report on how COVID-19 has impacted the working arrangements for staff at Western University. Their report, “Impact of COVID-19 on Working Arrangements and Working Experiences at Western University”, can be found on Western’s scholarship portal [here!](#)



Practice Makes Perfect



*Ameetha Garbharran, Ph.D.
expsyt*

We are consistently exposed to conflict throughout the course of our lives, from sibling rivalry and schoolyard spats in our early years to disagreements about how to execute on a plan or what our organizational strategy should be in our workplaces. Yet, the mere thought of conflict elicits palpable visceral reactions and feelings of intense psychological discomfort in most of us. Early research in the organizational theory, organizational behaviour and I-O psychology literature focused primarily on the aversive and dysfunctional nature of conflict and how to minimize it. Scholarly thinking about conflict has since evolved and its strategic, productive and constructive impacts in the world of work are now also increasingly recognized.

In this issue, we are privileged to have Liane Davey, Ph.D. share her perspectives on how to embrace and normalize conflict as a necessary part of effective team functioning. She proposes productive strategies for neutralizing conflict's potential for dysfunction while capitalizing on its constructive contributions. Dr. Davey is an I-O Psychology professional who wrote the book [The Good Fight: Use Productive Conflict to Get Your Team and Organization Back on Track](#). She has dedicated her career to understanding teams and helping them maximize their potential for collaboration and optimal performance by productively navigating the complex tensions and intricate nuances of conflict in the course of executing on business imperatives. We hope that you are inspired by her insightful, practical and expert advice to facilitate healthy synergies, diversity, innovation and success in your teams and organizations.

Helping Leadership Teams Have More, Better Conflict

By. Liane Davey, Ph.D.



From the very beginning, my interest in I/O psychology was focused on the inner workings of teams. I was drawn to the social psychology of collaboration and especially to the interpersonal dynamics that get in the way of people achieving amazing things together. You can imagine that conflict is high on the list of dysfunctional dynamics. Interestingly, lack of conflict is just as high, if not higher. Helping teams foster the right amount and the right kind of conflict is important, challenging, and endlessly fascinating work. Not enough I/O practitioners are working in this space.

Unhealthy Conflict

I've spent my fair share of days helping teams work their way through unpleasant conflicts. (On the plus side, the more unpleasant the conversation the team needs to have, the more likely the team leader is to host it in a picturesque offsite location.) Ocean view or not, the scenery inside the room tends to be bleak: adversaries yelling across the table at one another, individuals dishing out brutal feedback and then storming out when someone returns the favor, everyone watching the boss to see who's winning the battle. It takes months of work, and often one or more terminations, to restore a team in this much conflict to health. The challenge is unwinding entrenched views, mending hurt feelings, and restoring some degree of trust. Some of the processes feel more like clinical or counselling psychology than traditional I/O.

Underground Conflict

Thankfully, that kind of overt, royal rumble conflict is relatively rare. What's much more common is the room where the conflict is palpable, but unspoken. In this case, the underlying issues have often been left to fester beneath the surface, creating what I call a "conflict debt." By the time I arrive, that conflict debt has cost the team in productivity and compounded into disengagement and eroded trust. Once a conflict has been avoided for a while, it's just as time consuming, just as precarious to extricate the team from the mess as it would be if they were throwing things across the room at one another.

Our Insufficient Answer

For the most part, the organizational development answer to unproductive conflict has been to teach people how to have conflict more constructively. We've been fortunate to have excellent books (and associated training) that provide a roadmap for Difficult Conversations, Fierce Conversations, Crucial Conversations, and Radical Candor. I like each of these approaches and call on their insights and techniques frequently.

The problem is that we're building a skillset that many people are loath to apply. Yes, it's true that they lack the skills to work through uncomfortable conversations, but they also lack the *will*. The result is one of two scenarios: 1) they smile, nod, and leave the conflict training with absolutely no intention of ever applying what they just learned; or 2) they give productive conflict the ol' college try but quickly become exhausted and overwhelmed by the gumption required to face so many uncomfortable situations head on.

What we really need to focus on is reducing the need to have uncomfortable conversations. We need to move away from conflict as an event and move toward conflict as habit. That's where my work has taken me: How do we, as I/O practitioners, do things that will help employees face fewer unpleasant and uncomfortable conflicts while simultaneously increasing the use of productive conflict as a force for good in our organizations? I'll focus on two opportunities. First, an approach to reduce unpleasant and unproductive conflict in the workplace. Second, an exercise to increase the amount productive, healthy conflict.

Neutralize Potential Conflicts

The frenetic culture in many organizations causes leaders to shortchange up front planning to get things moving faster. The irony is that failing to clarify expectations actually slows things down and also sets up an uncomfortable dynamic (i.e., one of judgment, disappointment, and negative feedback) after the fact.

We can help prevent these misunderstandings that lead to unproductive conflict by helping leadership teams (teams where the members are managers) clarify roles and set expectations from the outset. It is a great opportunity to put our Personnel Psychology training about role clarity to use.

I use a process that works teams through the following questions:

- 1) What is your unique value in the value chain? What is it that others are counting on this team to deliver?
- 2) What do you need from your superiors to be able to add your full value? What decisions must be made by others to create the boundaries for your contribution?
- 3) What can you delegate to your direct reports? Where are the best opportunities to liberate the team so you can focus on higher value activities?
- 4) What are your expectations of good quality work from individual contributors?
- 5) What value do you expect front-line managers to add in first-level review? What types of issues would you like to be resolved without your involvement?
- 6) What value can, and should your leadership team add even if the front-line managers have done a great job?
- 7) What types of issues or decisions do you not have the authority to decide or resolve? What must you escalate to the layer above?

The answers to these questions can be used to address several very common sources of team conflict and dysfunction, such as: an absentee boss who is delegating without providing direction or context, a micro-managing boss who is disempowering the team, a management layer that is unable or unwilling to delegate, or employees who resist or become annoyed when you don't rubber stamp their work. I have seen this conversation surface so many misunderstandings and provide the framework for conversations that set everyone up for success in the future.

If everyone is clear on their role and the value they are expected to add, they will be less likely to disappoint, or be disappointed by, others in the group.

Normalize Required Conflicts

Many unproductive conflicts can be neutralized by doing a better job of setting expectations—many, but not all. Some conflicts are valuable, important, and even inevitable. The opportunity for practitioners here is to normalize productive conflict as a part of healthy team functioning.

One obstacle to normalizing conflict is that the language and metaphors we use to talk about teams in the workplace make conflict seem like a problem. Our images of teams are all about getting along and going in the same direction, not about conflict. My personal favorite (and by that, I mean the one that drives me completely mad) is the office poster with a crew of rowers making serene and synchronous ripples in the calm blue water. It has the word "*TEAMWORK*" in big letters below. If that's hanging on the wall of the conference room, it's no surprise that people meeting in the room will have problems with conflict.

You can help normalize the conflict on teams by using an exercise to map out the unique value of each role and the tensions that *should* exist among them. For each role, ask:

- 1) What is the unique value of your role on this team? What are you paying attention to that no one else is? What would we miss if your role wasn't here?
- 2) Which stakeholders is your role most focused on? Who do you serve? Who must you advocate for? Who measures your success?
- 3) What is the most common tension you put on team discussions? What one thing do you have to say in your role that frequently makes others bristle? (It's useful to answer this question with a question that uses an adjective, such as "is it viable?" or "is it compelling?")

Answer those questions for each member of the team, emphasizing how the different roles are *supposed* to be in tension with one another.

What you discover using this exercise will open up so many great discussions. I particularly like to use the exercise to address issues such as: someone who is advocating too hard for their narrow point of view; a team member who has stopped adding their unique value and as a result left the team exposed in some way; an imbalance on a team with multiple incumbents in one role who overpower the single-incumbent roles; and to expose conflicting performance objectives that are encouraging siloed thinking.

With heightened awareness and a shared language, you can help the team realize that much of what they have been interpreting as interpersonal friction has actually been perfectly healthy role-based tension.

Conflict and tensions are not the antithesis of cross-functional teams, they're one of the main benefits of them.

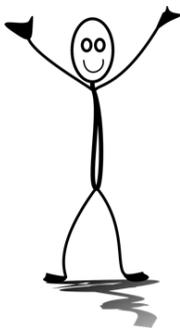
Prevent Unproductive Conflict

I have to admit, much of my work on productive conflict has been to meet my own needs. I've always been conflict averse and early in my career I paid the price for getting into conflict debt. I saw the impact on my business, my team, and my stress levels. I got a little better as I learned the skills of productive conflict, but conflict still took a lot out of me.

The secret was learning how to prevent the vast majority of team conflicts in the first place. By setting much clearer expectations up front and by reframing many discussions as healthy tension rather than unhealthy friction, I finally got the frequency of true conflict in my job to a manageable level. Now, when I need to gather my strength and courage and have a fierce conversation, I can. I'm just glad those situations are few and far between. I'm even more glad that my job as an I/O practitioner allows me to share these techniques with those who are conflict-avoidant like me!

Liane Davey, Ph.D. is the New York Times bestselling author of You First and The Good Fight: Use Productive Conflict to Get Your Team and Your Organization on Back on Track. Liane has a PhD in I/O psychology from the University of Waterloo I/O psychology. Connect with Liane on [LinkedIn](#).

Do you have ideas on how to merge the science and practice of I-O Psychology to advance the interests of organizations and their people? Would you like to share your practical perspectives with us? We would love to hear from you. Please contact Dr. Ameetha Garbharran at ameetha@expsyt.com if you have comments, suggestions or would like to contribute an article to the Practice Makes Perfect column in an upcoming issue of the CSIOP newsletter.



State of the Science

*Lance Ferris, Ph.D.
Michigan State University*

Welcome back to “The State of the Science,” where we highlight recently published or in press research coming out of Canadian universities that is relevant to I/O psychology. Each issue, new research will be summarized for our readers who may not have time to read, or access to, the full articles. If you have any suggestions for research to cover in future columns, please see the contact information at the end of this column.

Chances are, at some point in your life, you’ve had to deliver bad news to someone – if not in the workplace, then certainly outside of it. Being well-versed in I/O psychology, we (ideally!) remember how important interactional fairness is when delivering the bad news – that is, a manager should deliver the bad news in a polite and interpersonally sensitive manner to the employee. Interactional fairness leads to more favorable responses from the employee – it cushions the blow, as it were – and so some straightforward advice is that managers should just be nice and caring when delivering bad news. Simple, right? Well, as it turns out, not so much – again, chances are, if you’ve had to deliver bad news to someone, you also probably didn’t want to do it. You may have found the experience to be personally distressing; maybe you put off doing it, maybe you tried to get it over with quickly, maybe you tried to be coldly neutral rather than warmly empathetic.

The same applies when managers have to deliver bad news to employees: despite the fact that managers should be interactionally fair when delivering bad news, it’s easier said than done. How can we help managers get better at it? That was the question examined in a recent study by University of Waterloo researchers Lauren Holt, Ramona Bobocel, and Valerie Chen, published in the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. They argued that the key was getting managers to take the point of view of the employee receiving the news – not just feeling sympathy or concern for them but trying to adopt their perspective or put themselves in their shoes. Doing so would make them realize how important it is to be interpersonally fair and motivate them to act in such a way, versus being more focused on their own distress.

Drawing from construal level theory, Holt and colleagues argued that one way to help managers adopt the employee’s perspective is to encourage them to take an abstract (vs. concrete) mindset. People with concrete mindsets tend to focus more on what is actually being done (e.g., delivering a bad performance review), while people with abstract mindsets tend to focus more on why something is being done (e.g., to help an employee develop better work habits). As such, managers with abstract mindsets should be more likely to adopt the employee’s perspective and consider what would be most valuable from their point of view: not so much the bad review itself but a discussion of how to improve (and a polite discussion, at that). Consequently, they predicted that managers with more abstract mindsets would be more likely to be interpersonally fair in their delivering of bad news, compared to managers with more concrete mindsets.

Across three studies, they found support for their predictions. The first two studies were conducted on managers recruited via an online research platform, where their construal levels were manipulated to be either abstract or concrete. Managers then wrote out how they would tell an employee about a decision to demote the employee; independent coders rated to what extent the manager’s decisions were polite, respectful, clear, justified, and expressed concern for the employee. The third study used a similar design but with undergraduate students asked to write out how they would tell another student that their scholarship was being revoked. Study 1 found that managers primed to adopt more abstract mindsets were more likely to be interpersonally fair when delivering bad news; Study 2 found similar results using a measure of construal level and found the effect of construal level on interpersonal fairness was mediated by adopting the other person’s perspective. Finally, Study 3 found these effects were stronger for people who scored higher (vs. lower) on a measure of trait perspective taking.

For those interested in the complete paper, the full citation for the article is as follows:

Holt, L., Bobocel, D. R., & Chen, V. (2020). Delivering bad news fairly: Higher construal level promotes interactional justice enactment through perspective taking. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2497>

Are you or one of your co-authors a researcher at a Canadian university? Do you have an I/O-relevant research article that has been recently published (i.e., roughly within the last 6 months), or is in press at, a peer-reviewed academic management journal? Would you like to have your research summarized in a future edition of this column? If so, please contact Lance Ferris at lanceferris@gmail.com.



Communication Update

*Peter Fisher, MSc.
Ryerson University*

Dear CSIOP Members,

Have you revolutionized the way your organization manages working from home? Are you studying the ways in which we can improve our hiring processes virtually? Are you planning on revising your organization's pay structure to account for the new ways people are working? Are you starting a new research project about resiliency at work? Are you doing something completely different? Do you want to share what you're passionate about with the rest of CSIOP?

As part of my role as Editor for CSIOP, one of my responsibilities is to try to enhance the ways we can engage with our members. We have a wonderful community and an ever-increasing presence on social media, but working from home and online conferences as a result of the pandemic have meant that we all get a lot less face-to-face interaction, and (speaking from my own experience at least) have perhaps become a little more siloed than we were before. Hallway chats and random encounters with colleagues you don't normally collaborate with are some of the best ways to get new perspectives on things, and we're really missing that right now. A while back we had an active blog with a variety of contributors sharing their work and recent findings. That's something that I want to bring back!

I would like to open this up as a call to any CSIOP members who are interested in summarizing and sharing work-in-progress, published academic work, or new practices your organization has implemented (or hopes to implement) as a part of our blog. We would be happy to highlight whatever it is that you are doing (provided it's IO-related) in a way that is accessible to the rest of our members. Your contribution could be as long or as short as you would like it to be – we just want to hear about what you're interested in!

Also, as a CSIOP member, we encourage you to get involved. Reach out if you have ideas about how we can be more interactive and engaging. We would love to hear it



Student Update

*Rachael Jones-Chick, M.Sc.
Saint Mary's University*

Getting the Most From Virtual Conferences

Hello CSIOP student members!

Conference season is upon us, and for the second year in a row, we will be attending these events remotely.

Unlike last year, however, we are now armed with greater virtual meeting and presentation skills. Additionally, we have more time to prepare for these virtual conferences since the online format has been planned from the start rather than a sudden shift to a virtual platform.

Without the excitement of exploring a new city or even a new country, trying new foods and collecting new pens from the expo booths, virtual conferences can seem a bit isolating and lacklustre. That being said, virtual or in-person, conferences can be a great opportunity to meet other students and researchers with common interests, spark new research ideas, and to learn a lot in general.

So instead of writing off conferences entirely, I would like to share a few tips to get the most out of the upcoming virtual events:

1) *Prioritize and schedule*

Even though you don't have to travel out of town for these conferences, setting aside the time to attend them as if you were there in person will increase the amount of information you are able to take away. Even if you can't attend the entire event, try to block out time in your schedule and set calendar reminders for the sessions you are interested in attending.

2) *Engage*

Use chat features and question & answer sessions to connect and network with presenters and attendees. This may feel less personal, but it can also be a great opportunity to have your questions answered when they could easily be missed in a crowded conference room. Another great tip is to attend live sessions whenever possible to get the most out of asking questions and engaging with the audience and presenters (and hopefully soon you will even get to meet the people you engage with at an in-person conference!)

3) *Focus*

It can be tempting to try and do work or other tasks while attending virtual presentations. I know that for me, this sometimes results in poor quality work in the secondary task in addition to minimal information uptake from the presentation. Therefore, my next recommendation would be to try and focus on the presentations that you choose to attend and limit multitasking when possible. Of course, there may be times when you must multitask if you have an urgent deadline or another meeting during a virtual conference, so it can also be helpful to check ahead of time whether sessions are recorded or if slides will be available after the session so you can find any sections that you may have missed. Having access to presentation recordings or other electronic materials can be another great benefit to virtual conferences because this can also allow you to engage fully rather than taking notes constantly!

4) *Coffee break!*

Virtual conferences are typically shorter, part-day events, often held over multiple days, but since you aren't getting up to walk to different sessions, remember to take breaks to stretch, hydrate, and refuel! This is also your chance to have your favourite snacks or meals rather than whatever is available at the conference venue, so consider preparing these ahead of time to make the virtual conference more special than just another day of working from home! Being able to wear slippers instead of uncomfortable dress shoes is also a great perk if you ask me!

5) *Attend with friends*

If you know friends, peers, or colleagues attending the same conference, you could consider creating a group chat to message each other to discuss sessions, just like you might do at an in-person conference. This may help everyone to feel more engaged in the conference and to get more from the sessions!

In general, it seems likely that virtual events will be more common even post-pandemic, so rather than thinking of these virtual events as a downgrade from their traditional in-person counterparts, we should find ways to make virtual conferences equally enriching and enjoyable. While different from what we are used to, there are lots of perks to virtual conferences and you can learn just as much! You may even get to hear from speakers you might never have had the chance to learn from at a traditional conference due to geographic location. The benefits will be different for every individual, but I hope this helps to give you a few ideas to make the most of virtual conferences!

Check out these links for more tips:

<https://unito.io/blog/virtual-conference-online-event-tips/>

<https://discover.jackhenry.com/fintalk/8-tips-for-getting-the-most-out-of-a-virtual-conference>

<https://www.cvent.com/en/blog/events/10-tips-attending-virtual-conference>

<https://www.missiontolearn.com/attending-a-virtual-conference/>

<https://www.qps.com/2020/07/17/tips-for-attending-virtual-conferences/>

Update On: Alliance for Organizational Psychology



*Lynda Zugec, M.A.
The Workforce Consultants*

The Alliance for Organizational Psychology (AOP) was established in 2009 and member organizations include the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP), the European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology (EAWOP), the Organizational Psychology Division of the International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP-Division 1), and the Canadian Society for Industrial & Organizational Psychology (CSIOIP).



the british
psychological society
promoting excellence in psychology

The British Psychological Society (BPS) and the BPS Division of Occupational Psychology (DOP) are delighted to announce that the British Psychological Society has become a Network Partner in the Alliance for Organizational Psychology's (AOP) and the "Big Tent" initiative.



Division of
Occupational Psychology

This opportunity will enable the Division of Occupational psychology to build our international collaboration with major professional associations and promote on a global scale the values of best practice, visibility, and enhancing our science which we hold in common with our partners.

The DOP aims to raise the profile of Occupational Psychology and encourage the advancement and sharing of psychological knowledge and practice. We are excited at the prospect of networking with colleagues from around the world.

We look forward to working with the Alliance for Organizational Psychology and being part of the “Big Tent” Initiative. Through combined efforts and leveraging joint communications, we hope to facilitate understanding, develop international opportunities, and support collective activities with the AOP.

The BPS, www.bps.org.uk, is the representative body for psychologists in the United Kingdom. It is home to over 62,000 members and has 154 networks.

One of these networks is the Division of Occupational Psychology, which represents the interests of occupational psychologists in the UK.

The BPS and DOP provide resources and a community for members across psychology, whether practitioners, academics, or part of the wider psychological family.

As Dr Hazel McLaughlin, President of the British Psychological Society commented, *“We are committed to international collaboration. We have worked informally within the Alliance for several years and are delighted to formally become a Network Partner of the Alliance for Organizational Psychology. We look forward to sharing research, knowledge, and ideas and to learning from our international partners. Together we are stronger.”*



We Need Your Feedback on Our Identity as a Profession!!!

IWOP DECLARATION OF IDENTITY

Barbara Kożusznik¹ & Sharon Glazer²

¹University of Silesia, Poland; President of IAAP, Division 1

²University of Baltimore, USA, co-Chair of SIOP's International Affairs Committee

INTRODUCTION

Industrial and Organizational (IO) Psychology, also known as Work and Organizational (WO) Psychology, henceforth referred to as IWOP*, as a worldwide profession, does not have foundational values about its public voice. As Lowman (2006; Lowman & Cooper, 2018) and Lefkowitz (2005; 2017) in various publications note, IWOP is now considered a profession and professions affect societies. IWOP has a responsibility as a profession to support difficult decisions at the societal, organizational, and group level so as to always ensure that workers and worker-eligible people are reaping benefits rather than are harmed by their work engagements.

The IWOP profession is concerned with both individual work-related wellbeing and effective performance. This duality can create ambiguity about IWOPs' contributions. IWOPs have a clear understanding of our abilities to navigate between well-being and performance effectiveness. We must make this understanding visible and audible to the public we serve, including all stakeholders involved in the world of work, whether employees, employers, governing boards, unemployed, precarious workers, labor unions, and more.

With the aid of over 50 participants at various international congresses and conferences since 2013, plus several surveys that IAAP has administered since 2009, it has become clear that IWOPs wish to have a more globally inclusive identity and to become more visible with relevant stakeholders. Therefore, drawing from communications and discussions that ensued among IWOP affiliates attending IAAP events within Division 1, Organizational Psychology, as well as in cooperation with the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP), European Association for Work and Organizational Psychology (EAWOP), Canadian Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (C-SIOP), and the Alliance for Organizational Psychology (AOP), President of IAAP, Division 1 (Organizational Psychology) and co-chair of SIOP's International Affairs Committee, have created a draft [Declaration of Identity](#).

*IWOP is used to be inclusive of the various permutations of our professional title around the globe.

The Convention Corner



*Lindie Liang, Ph.D.
Wilfrid Laurier University*

This year, I am pleased to report that we received 33 submissions ranging from poster presentations, snapshots, conversation sessions, and symposia. At this point, the reviews of conference submissions have been completed and you should be hearing back about the results of your submissions soon (if not already by the time you see this newsletter)!

The conference planning is well underway and we're looking to have a range of sessions and events. There are some exciting sessions to look forward to:

- A conference plenary session by Dr. Marylène Gagné
- An invited keynote address by Dr. Ariane Ollier-Malaterre entitled "Work from home during a pandemic: Blurred work-life boundaries and the renewal of organizational control"
- CSIOP Graduate Student Symposium organized by our student rep Rachael Jones-Chick, featuring the amazing work being conducted by students in I/O psychology and related programs across Canada. The topics range from gender and racial stereotypes to disability disclosure strategy.

Finally, a huge thank you to our wonderful reviewers, who have helped tremendously with our program by reviewing our conference submissions. Many thanks to Alex Benson, Angela Febbraro, Deborah Powell, Ivona Hideg, Joan Finegan, Josh Bourdage, Kevin Kelloway, Leah Hamilton, Matthew McLarnon, Nicolas Roulin, Peter Fisher, Ramona Bobocel, Sara Murphy, Silvia Bonaccio, Theresa Kline, Thomas Sasso, and Winny Shen!

If you have any suggestions on how to improve our convention or if you have any ideas for our program, please email me at lliang@wlu.ca. Don't forget to follow CSIOP on Twitter (@CSIOP_SCPIO) and Facebook for convention updates. The full program will also be posted on our website. I look forward to seeing you all virtually in June!

Lindie

Safety and Reasonableness: Recent Arbitral Decisions in COVID Times



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On March 11, 2020, our world changed forever when COVID-19 was declared a pandemic. Since then, employers have been making unprecedented decisions in an effort to keep their employees and customers safe, pivot to new realities and keep their businesses alive. Some decisions are based on evidence and instructions available in the moment, and some are anticipatory of changing events and requirements.

Now, more than a year later, we are starting to see some of those employer decisions being questioned in legal forums. The first case law to emerge across the country has been from labour grievance arbitrations, where unions have pursued the concerns of their members. Two cases will be discussed briefly below, one in which the arbitrator upheld the employer's decision and one in which the employer was found to have violated the collective agreement.

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Garda Security: Justification for Termination

In *Garda Security Screen Inc. v IAM, District 40*,² an employee was terminated for cause after she chose to attend at work while waiting for the results of her COVID-19 test.

The grievor worked at an airport where the rules of the employer followed the Public Health Agency of Canada's COVID-19 guidelines (Guidelines) in requiring that employees self-isolate if they are waiting for results of a COVID-19 test. On April 6, 2020, the grievor was tested for COVID-19 but continued to attend at work and didn't tell her employer, because she did not feel sick and did not want to miss her shifts. On April 12, 2020, however, she was informed that she had tested positive for COVID-19. She informed her employer of the positive results and began isolation.

The arbitrator determined that the grievor was aware of and violated her employer's reasonable Guidelines when she went to work after being tested for COVID-19 and while waiting for her results, rather than self-isolating as she was required to do. The arbitrator concluded that these actions justified a dismissal for cause. Upon dismissing the grievance, the arbitrator noted:

- The employer took great efforts to ensure that all employees were aware of the Guidelines, not to mention that the public health announcements concerning this requirement were rampant in the media;
- The grievor was aware of the consequences of spreading the virus if she was infected, which could result in illness or death to her colleagues as well as passengers flying from the airport and those seeing the travellers at their destinations;
- Although she knew that for the health and safety of others she was required to isolate, the grievor chose not to in clear violation of the Guidelines; and
- The grievor showed no remorse for her actions or concern for their potential consequences.

What this means:

If employers develop reasonable COVID-19 rules, following public health guidelines, and take reasonable steps to make their employees aware of the rules and that employees are expected to follow them, they may dismiss employees who chooses to violate the rules. Safety is paramount and adjudicators will support a dismissal for cause if the employee chooses to put their colleagues or others at risk of becoming ill or of dying from COVID-19, in clear violation of reasonable guidelines.

British Columbia Ferries: No Justification for Termination

In the meantime, on the other side of the country, an arbitrator did not uphold the temporary layoff of hundreds of employees.³

A British Columbia ferry operator announced approximately 1,000 temporary layoffs as a result of COVID-19 business restrictions. The collective agreement that the employer had with the union did not permit the employer to place regular employees unilaterally on "off-duty status," as it did during the pandemic. In April of 2020 when the pandemic hit, the union and the employer were in negotiations to try to avoid a layoff. Based on the concerns and information it had at the time, the employer provided the union with details of looming service cuts as a result of pandemic travel restrictions on April 1 and then two days later alerted all employees that hundreds of union members would be laid off. The following day, the layoffs began. In contravention of the collective bargaining agreement, some more junior employees kept working while other senior employees were laid off.

The union grieved the dismissals, and a few days later the employer rescinded the temporary layoffs for regular employees. The layoffs for casual employees remained intact until July.

The arbitrator held that "...the employer did not have an inherent or residual management right to temporarily lay off ferry services employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic."

² [2020] O.L.A.A. No. 162, available online: https://www.littler.com/files/garda_-_arbitrators_decision.pdf.

³ *British Columbia Ferry Services Inc. v British Columbia Ferry and Marine Workers Union*, 2020 CanLII 89913 (BC LA), <<https://canlii.ca/t/jbp8n>>

What this means:

Employers cannot rely on unprecedented pandemic circumstances to blatantly disregard the fundamental principles of collective bargaining. Even if the economics determined that layoffs were necessary, the process and order would need to follow the collective bargaining agreement.

Conclusion

Employers may need to be nimble in the current pandemic environment, making quick decisions with imperfect information. The case law emerging from the union grievance arbitrations is mounting as the arbitral process is often quicker than the court process for non-unionized employees. Case law thus far suggests that employers will be able to discipline and change their workplace when matters of safety are in issue, provided they have acted reasonably in informing all employees about the workplace rules, and the rules are reasonable in the circumstances at that point in time. Employer, however, cannot rely on COVID-19 as an excuse to make workplace changes that are not reasonable, unfair or disregard existing rights without clear justifications.

As variants appear on the landscape, employees return to workplaces (or request work from home arrangements to continue), organizations question mandatory vaccines and sensitive, personal information is demanded, we surely have not seen the end of COVID case law in Canadian employment.

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