

PRESS NOTICE

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from the **Assessment Centre Study Group** – a non-for-profit organization of academics and other professionals dedicated to the study, promotion and continual development of Assessment Centre technique in South Africa.

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Assessment Centre Study Group Conference, March 22, 23 and 24, 2006, at Spier, Stellenbosch is a must for HR professionals

The Assessment Centre Study Group (ACSG) annual conference has been a great resource for over 25 years. Assessment Centres (AC) and Development Centres (DC) are becoming increasingly popular in South Africa. More and more HR professionals and line managers recognize that ACs can be much fairer and a far better predictor of future performance than the traditional job interview. Participants, in particular, appreciate the powerful knowledge about their own strengths and weaknesses that a DC can give them.

The robust multi-method, multi-observer technique of ACs and DCs has stood the test of time as a cost-effective way of managing the risk of new hires and of pinpointing development needs and focusing training efforts.

For 25 years HR professionals, academics, psychologists and consultants have met at ACSG annual conferences, mostly in Stellenbosch, to exchange notes, meet with distinguished foreign presenters, and have a good time.

Next year's ACSG Conference will be held on March 21, 22 and 23 at Spier, Stellenbosch. ACSG's marketing person, Anthony Wilson, expects it to be better than ever. "Last year we started preconference workshops and they were a great success," says Anthony. "This year we're repeating the opportunity both for newcomers to AC methodology and old hands to learn something helpful. About the conference itself Anthony says, "Perhaps almost as helpful as the presentations and Open Space sessions is the informal chatting and making new contacts. It's a great international meeting place for purchasers and suppliers of AC expertise."

The five preconference workshops include a one day, basic course, to give a grounding in all aspects of ACs including, job or work analysis, AC policy, design, piloting, administration, assessor training, scoring, integration, report writing and feedback to participants and management. This practical workshop will help those unfamiliar with ACs to gain full benefit from attending the conference.

The other four workshops are half-day sessions. Filip Lievens, is an well known academic in the Assessment Centre realm and a prolific researcher on the subject. A search in the internet using the words "assessment centre", will soon bring up plenty of references to Filip. He will present a workshop on an exciting new technique – the Situational Judgment Test.

Sherin Bickrum will give a workshop about using stratified systems theory (levels of work) in conjunction with ACs. This will feature the remarkably informative Cognitive Process Profile (CPP). Anyone whose ever used instrument or read CPP reports should attend.

Eugene de Bruin will give an observer training workshop. Without good observing and assessing any AC is simply dead in the water.

"The only problem I have with these workshops," says Anthony, "is that I can't attend them all."

As for the 2-day conference proper, we kick off with Rubin Richards who will give the opening address – with the daunting title – *Finding Talent in South Africa, a transformational minefield*. This talk will be a must for all HR professionals.

Ian Williamson, a black academic and international speaker from the US will present a paper called, *Different Strokes for Different Folks: the role of race and culture in the job search and job choice process*.

Then there's more choices to make. Sovash Hefele will present a paper entitled, *Identifying and selecting talent for accelerated development and progression: A Sanlam distribution Case Study*.

Jacques Haworth will give a session entitled *The relationship between potential and applied capability in a transformational leadership context*.

Kas Koekemoer will speak on *Using Assessment Centres to conduct skills audits in the new South Africa*.

Esme Smith is going to address us on *Using a Career Development Centre as tool to identify talent in the IT industry*.

Then we'll have a wonderful, Spier lunch in beautiful surroundings.

Lunchtime is a great chance to meet new people, discuss and argue about what we've heard and, as the tour operators like to say, "soak up some of the local atmosphere" – and maybe product.

After lunch Danie Oosthuizen will wake us up with a talk entitled, *How to use qualitative research methodology in doing Assessment Center related research*.

Or you might like to hear Jan Hendrik van der Westhuizen tell us about *The value of Assessment Centres in or as part of an enterprise business simulations*.

Or maybe you'll choose Benny Olivier and Ben Meyer on the subject of *Assessment Centres as a vehicle to growth leadership*,

Or perhaps Deon Meiring (the ACSG Chairperson) taking us through a case study on *Developing a Situational Judgment Test for the South African Police Services*.

To round off the day Sesh Paruk will present a paper on *Using Assessment Centre technologies to identify fitness for duty and associated behavioural risks of nuclear plant operators*.

Then the evening fun starts with a Spier Wine Tasting, and later a Spit Braai and entertainment.

Next morning Deon Meiring bring us up to date on ACSG activities. Then we have overseas guests speaking.

Ian Williamson will speak on *The role of social factors in the selection process: why who you know and where you are from matters*

Then Marisa Born, from the Netherlands will talk on *The application of the Social Relation Model in performance ratings: a South African case study*.

Then we split up and make our choices in the Open Space session. Elize de Beer and Anton Grobler - *Fairness perceptions of the Assessment Centre - An SAPS Case Study* is one of the topics.

Gerhard Roodt and Sandra Schlebusch will speak on *Validation research on a collaborative development centre*.

Wilma Botha will give a practical talk: *Assessment Centre feedback: lessons learnt*

And Flip Diedricks will talk about *Common global leadership issues – A South African Case Study*

To round off there's a panel discussion with a red-hot, controversial topic with Wendy Anyster, Ian Williamson, Petra Abrahams, Anthony Wilson and Filip Lievens. The subject under discussion is, *Can we assess values, in terms of "company fit." If so, should it play a role in the AC.*

We end with another excellent lunch.

Check out the ACSG website for conference booking details, downloadable papers from previous conferences, AC guidelines and checklists, practitioners ads and more. A mine of information. It's at www.acsg.co.za or call the Conference Coordinator, Gwendoline Geldenhuys at gwendoline@cpt.shl.co.za

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