

## Introduction

---

# From the Editor

The goal of focal articles in *Industrial and Organizational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice* is to present new ideas or different takes on existing ideas and stimulate a conversation in the form of comment articles that extend the arguments in the focal article or that present new ideas stimulated by those articles. The two focal articles in this issue stimulated a wide range of reactions and a good deal of constructive input.

### The Current Issue

In our first article, “Putting an End to Bad Talent Management: A Call to Action for the Field of Industrial and Organizational (I-O) Psychology,” Christopher Rotolo, Allan H. Church, Seymour Adler, James W. Smither, Alan L. Colquitt, Amanda C. Shull, Karen B. Paul, and Garrett Foster describe a disturbing trend that is impacting the field of I-O psychology and the constituent organizations that it serves. This trend, termed by the authors as *anti-industrial and organizational psychology* (AIO), relates to a spate of new approaches to talent management that are being peddled to and adopted by organizations without proper vetting or supporting research. The authors contend that I-O psychologists may be unwitting accomplices to this trend due to a lack of involvement with these fads and the fact that their more traditional reliance on theory, sound methodology, and *pragmatic science* frequently runs afoul of organizational leaders’ desire for a simple, prescriptive, one-size-fits-all magic bullet solution to talent management issues.

Rotolo et al. provide examples of how AIO concepts and tools become embedded within organizations and bemoan how I-O psychologists are frequently asked to evaluate and/or salvage these “quick fix” solutions. The authors present a call to action and framework for I-O psychologists to become more strategic in identifying and vetting AIO trends—as well as becoming proactive in setting the agenda and driving innovation—which they argue will lead to the increased relevancy and impact of I-O psychology.

Some key themes emerged from the commentaries and extended the propositions put forth in the focal article. The first set of commentaries highlight the incentive incongruity that exists between practitioners and academics in addressing AIO trends and discusses why frontier research is discouraged among academic researchers—which, if unchecked, will allow AIO

practices to flourish. The second set of commentaries addresses how I-O psychology research can be made more impactful and consumable for organizational stakeholders, with the goal of stemming the AIO assault on I-O science and practice. The third set of commentaries provides specific recommendations for preempting bad talent management practices such as the unvetted adoption of big data applications and improvident approaches to high potential talent identification. The final commentary challenges I-O psychologists to address the underlying organizational issues that have driven the emergence of AIO practices. The authors believe that we must understand that AIO talent management practices have evolved out of business's need to adapt to pressing macrolevel trends. Therefore I-O psychologists should be building on and getting ahead of these emerging AIO practices to better align with and address organizational demands.

In our second article, "From 'Her' Problem to 'Our' Problem: Using an Individual Lens Versus a Social-Structural Lens to Understand Gender Inequity in STEM," Kathi N. Miner, Jessica M. Walker, Mindy E. Bergman, Vanessa A. Jean, Adrienne Carter-Sowell, Samantha C. January, and Christine Kaunas compare two different perspectives for explaining gender inequity in the STEM workforce. The "individual-lens" perspective, which is the most entrenched, places responsibility for gender inequity on the choices, behaviors, and expectations of individual women. The authors argue that this perspective serves to legitimize female stereotypes and reifies the role of women as the agents of unfair treatment. The "social-structural" perspective on the other hand provides a more useful and actionable approach for understanding gender inequity in the workplace, including those in the STEM workforce. This perspective reframes the problem as a much broader societal issue that links the differential experiences of women and men to long-standing structures, processes, and biases, rather than focusing on the individual behavior, choices, and preferences devoid of context. This explanation of gender inequity presents a logical course of action that requires intervention from all members of society. The authors also highlight the role that I-O psychologists can play in addressing this problem by applying a social-structural lens when partnering with organizations.

The commentaries extend the focal article by addressing several key themes, including (a) the need to apply an intersectional lens that incorporates race, gender, class and culture to truly understand the issues facing women in STEM fields; (b) recognition that gender inequity in STEM is not a monolithic phenomenon but instead has to be examined by disaggregating STEM into its unique subfields; and (c) a convincing reminder that gender disparity extends well beyond STEM into other fields and disciplines as well so that I-O psychologists need to think more broadly—viewing causal factors from a multilevel perspective—about how women are treated within the

U.S. workforce and globally. To do otherwise significantly limits our ability to understand and impact gender disparities throughout the world of work.

It would not be possible to publish this journal without the hard work of talented reviewers. I appreciate the significant help and input of John Boudreau, Lilia Cortina, Beryl Hesketh, George Hollenbeck, Jeff McHenry, Ann Marie Ryan, Rob Silzer, and Stephen Steinhaus.

John C. Scott

### **Practice Forum**

In the Practice Forum article entitled “The Looming Cybersecurity Crisis and What It Means for the Practice of I-O Psychology,” Rachel C. Dreibelbis, Jaclyn Martin, Michael D. Coover, and David W. Dorsey discuss how those who practice I-O psychology can assist organizations and employees with their cybersecurity efforts. The authors begin by discussing the broad implications brought upon by rapid changes in the cyber domain, then provide an overview of different types of cyber threats. Against this backdrop, the authors describe how I-O psychologists can use interventions such as job analysis, recruitment and selection, and training to help organizations attract and retain cybersecurity professionals, prevent insider threats to cybersecurity, and build a strong security culture. In doing so, the authors point out some unique considerations that the cyber domain presents for traditional I-O psychology interventions and discuss potential strategies that I-O psychologists might adopt. The authors also highlight the role and responsibilities of I-O psychologists for ensuring security of data within their own work, using the potential loss of intellectual property as an example of how they can tighten data security measures.

Mark L. Potteet