

## THE MODIFIED CAREER PATH APPRECIATION (MCPA®)

### MCPA

The MCPA<sup>1</sup> is a computerised variant of an interview process called Career Path Appreciation (CPA) developed by our strategic partners Bioss International Ltd. The outcomes of the MCPA help to identify:

- A candidate's current level of capability.
- How that capability is likely to grow over time.
- The degree to which the person's current capability matches the demands of their present job.
- As a result of this, the most appropriate career path for the candidate and their organisation to plan that keeps the candidate in 'Flow' and making the fullest possible contribution.
- Whether or not the candidate is likely to succeed at higher management levels in the organisation.

### Work Challenge

All organisational work falls into a hierarchy of discrete levels of challenge. At successively higher levels of challenge, the work involves dealing with identifiably different levels of complexity. Complexity grows as decision-making involves more variables, greater uncertainty and longer time horizons. Each job in the organisation can be assigned to a particular level of work. No one level is more important than another and each progressive layer adds value to the work beneath.

### Levels of Work

Level	Theme	Management Tasks and Responsibilities	Time Horizon
Level 7	Corporate Prescience	Bringing into being current and nascent contexts for future generations	20-50 Years
Level 6	Corporate Citizenship	Creating and sustaining a climate to protect strategic units, embed them in host cultures and alert them to possibilities of evolution	10-20 Years
Level 5	Strategic Intent	Ensuring the external and internal viability of the enterprise as a financial and social entity	5-10 Years
Level 4	Strategic Development	Managing current products, services, systems and practices, and the changes required to align them with the strategic intent	2-5 Years
Level 3	Practice	Providing practices and systems to support production or service, to contain costs, realise purpose and enhance reputation	1-2 Years
Level 2	Service	Responding to both the obvious and underlying complexities of particular situations or people	3-12 Months
Level 1	Quality	Making or doing something to specified output, on which the viability of the organisation depends	From 1 Day to 3 Months

We define 7 Levels of Work, their associated Themes, tasks and responsibilities and decision time horizons.

The vast majority of corporate management takes place at Level 5 and below, with only the very largest multinational, multi-sector businesses operating at Level 6.

Level 7 is a societal level - the realm of paradigm-shifting individuals and multi-state entities.

Level 1, however, underpins the success of all enterprise.

### People Capability

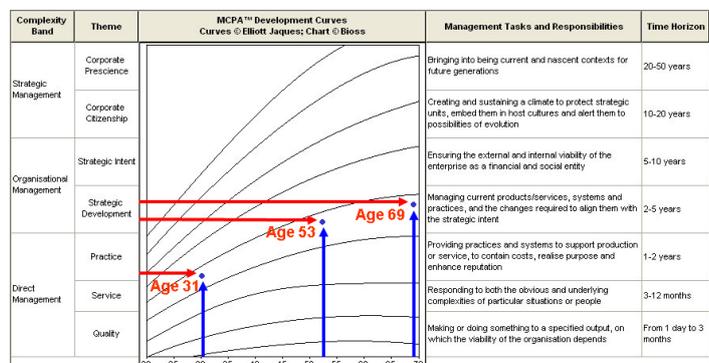
Individual capability also falls into a hierarchy of discrete levels and needs to match the scale of the work challenge for optimum results. Capability is the ability of someone to get their head around a particular level of work challenge, and potential is the future capability of someone to work at a particular level.

### Capability Now and in the Future

The MCPA identifies a person's current level of capability in Levels of Work terms and shows how that capability may grow over time.

Here we see a candidate aged 30 whose current level of capability (CLC) is Low Level 3. When the result is plotted on the MCPA Development Curves, these predict a growth of capability to High Level 4 when the candidate is aged 69.

There is a very high degree of reliability in these forecasts of capability growth.



<sup>1</sup> MCPA is a registered trademark of EDAC Ltd. MCPA is owned jointly by EDAC and Bioss International Ltd.

The word 'capability' is used to describe the way in which people 'pattern and order' their experience as a basis for making sense of their world and acting in it with purpose and intent. Capability can be understood as an energy force. It cannot be created from nothing and has to go somewhere. Individual capability to handle increasing levels of complexity and ambiguity grows throughout life. It will, however, have different starting points and will grow and unfold along consistent paths. As work becomes more complex we need to rely more on judgement - judgement is capability in action. Judgement, therefore, is the making of decisions when experience, skills and knowledge alone are not enough.

The model is supported by more than 30 years of research, including independent validation at a national research institute level in the USA.

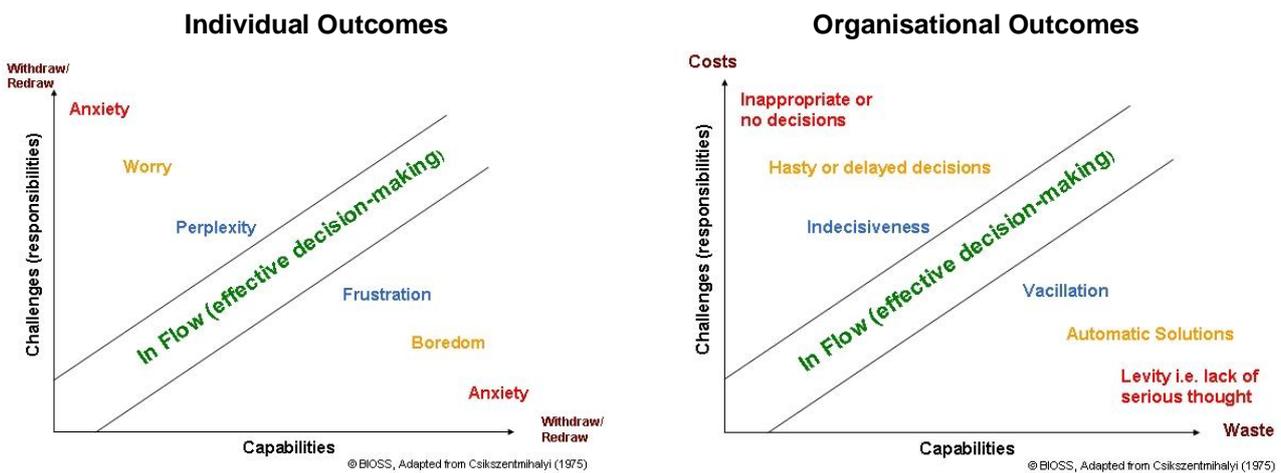
**The Notion of 'Flow'**

When CLC and Work Level are aligned, people feel comfortable in their work, are able to contribute fully, and crucially to make appropriate decisions in a timely manner. We term this notion 'Flow'.

**'Flow' for the Individual**

Implicit in this process is the notion that those people whose personal capability matches the challenges posed by their work will be able to make the strongest contribution to the organisation.

For the individual the consequences of moving out of 'Flow' can be deeply harmful. At the extreme ends of both scales this can lead to anxiety and the almost total inability to make sound decisions. People so severely out of 'Flow' will simply withdraw from the whole decision-making process.



**'Flow' for the Organisation**

For the organisation, the impact of failing to match individuals to the correct challenges at work will have a direct impact of the bottom line. In extreme cases this will lead directly to unacceptably high costs or waste.

**Looking at Teams**

Integrated utilities in the MCPA program enable any size team or group (up to 2,000) to be displayed.

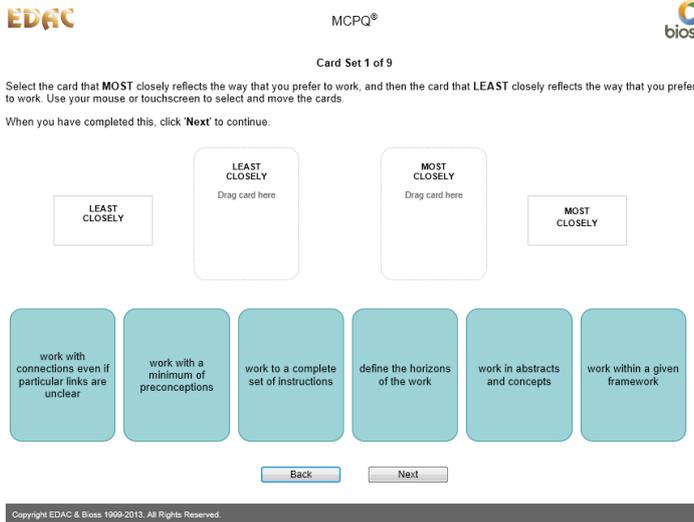
Required limits can be indicated as shown here, where the role requirement is for a manager with CLC not higher than CLC 3. In this case 4 managers have higher CLCs.

It is also possible to project results forward in time to see how groups will move through an organisation in the future.

Complexity Band	Theme	MCPA™ Development Curves Curves © Elliott Jaques; Chart © BioSS	Management Tasks and Responsibilities	Time Horizon
Strategic Management	Corporate Prescience		Bringing into being current and nascent contexts for future generations	20-50 years
	Corporate Citizenship		Creating and sustaining a climate to protect strategic units, embed them in host cultures and alert them to possibilities of evolution	10-20 years
Organisational Management	Strategic Intent		Ensuring the external and internal viability of the enterprise as a financial and social entity	5-10 years
	Strategic Development		Managing current products/services, systems and practices, and the changes required to align them with the strategic intent	2-5 years
Direct Management	Practice		Providing practices and systems to support production or service, to contain costs, realise purpose and enhance reputation	1-2 years
	Service		Responding to both the obvious and underlying complexities of particular situations or people	3-12 months
	Quality	Making or doing something to a specified output, on which the viability of the organisation depends	From 1 day to 3 months	

## MCPA Administration

The MCPA is a two-part procedure. Candidates first complete an online questionnaire in which they select their most and least preferred statements from nine sets of Phrase Cards, noting their reasons for making these selections as they work through the questionnaire. On conclusion they are asked to indicate their work-related decision making time horizons.



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Card Set 1 of 9

Select the card that **MOST** closely reflects the way that you prefer to work, and then the card that **LEAST** closely reflects the way that you prefer to work. Use your mouse or touchscreen to select and move the cards.

When you have completed this, click 'Next' to continue.

LEAST CLOSELY Drag card here MOST CLOSELY Drag card here MOST CLOSELY

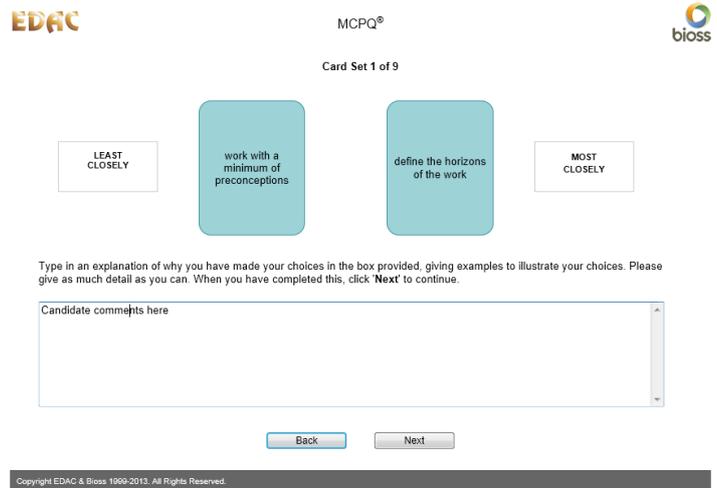
work with connections even if particular links are unclear  
work with a minimum of preconceptions  
work to a complete set of instructions  
define the horizons of the work  
work in abstracts and concepts  
work within a given framework

Back Next

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An example question from the MCPA questionnaire.

There are 9 x card sets for the candidate to work through, and no time limit or limit to the length of the comments.



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Card Set 1 of 9

LEAST CLOSELY work with a minimum of preconceptions define the horizons of the work MOST CLOSELY

Type in an explanation of why you have made your choices in the box provided, giving examples to illustrate your choices. Please give as much detail as you can. When you have completed this, click 'Next' to continue.

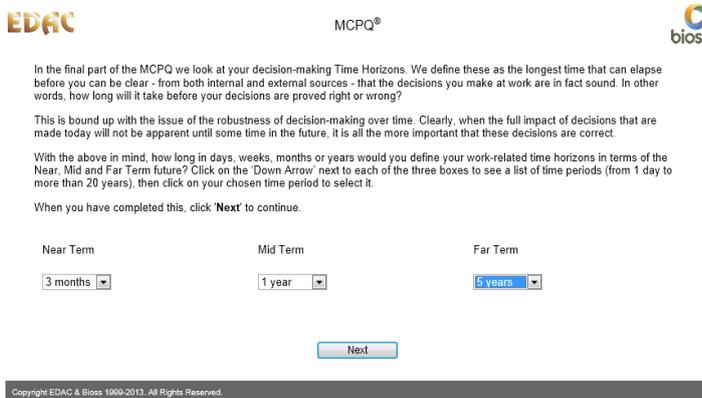
Candidate comments here

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Cards selected and comments provided.

Candidates are able to review and change their responses if they wish.



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In the final part of the MCPQ we look at your decision-making Time Horizons. We define these as the longest time that can elapse before you can be clear - from both internal and external sources - that the decisions you make at work are in fact sound. In other words, how long will it take before your decisions are proved right or wrong?

This is bound up with the issue of the robustness of decision-making over time. Clearly, when the full impact of decisions that are made today will not be apparent until some time in the future, it is all the more important that these decisions are correct.

With the above in mind, how long in days, weeks, months or years would you define your work-related time horizons in terms of the Near, Mid and Far Term future? Click on the 'Down Arrow' next to each of the three boxes to see a list of time periods (from 1 day more than 20 years), then click on your chosen time period to select it.

When you have completed this, click 'Next' to continue.

Near Term Mid Term Far Term

3 months 1 year 5 years

Next

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The final task is to indicate work-related time horizons using the drop-down menus provided.

Near Term                      Mid Term                      Far Term

3 months                      1 year                      5 years

Please try to give at least one example of decisions you have made - or would like to have made - for each of the time periods that you have chosen under Near, Mid and Far Terms.

When you have completed this, click 'Next' to continue.

Candidates type their explanations here|

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Candidates are asked to give explanations for their choices

In total the questionnaire normally takes from 45-60 minutes to complete.

The questionnaire is currently available in English, Dutch, German, Portuguese (EU & Brazil), Spanish, French, Swedish, Norwegian and Turkish. Additional languages are added as required.

This questionnaire data is then imported in the PC-based MCPA program where it is used to support a one to one interview with a trained practitioner. This interview may be conducted face to face or online using web conferencing software or Skype™ screen sharing.

### Interpreting the Results

Once the result is confirmed, feedback will be provided. Both the validation interview and feedback are conducted on-screen, either face to face or online.

Phase Selections for Two Training, aged 39 years

Assessment Date: 14 09 01      Time to Complete: 41 minutes 49 seconds

Phrase Set: [dropdown]      < Previous Phrase Set      Next Phrase Set >

Phrase Selections:

Context: Phrase Set 1

Most Closely: work with a minimum of preconceptions

Least Closely: work to a complete set of instructions

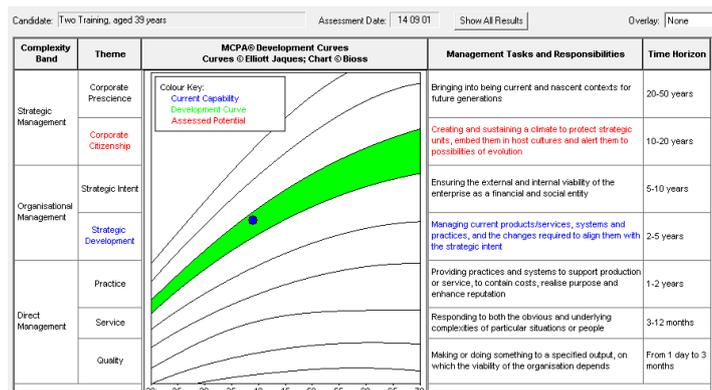
Changes: 0

Comments: Working without preconceptions is more likely to lead to radical or innovative approaches to complex problems - it certainly increases the possible solution set. A complete set of instructions implies that the thinking has already been done and that a mechanistic, by rote approach is all that is required. Write this would be useful. If, for example, I had to conduct a roadside surgical procedure on the end of a cellphone, it is not appropriate for most complex managerial problem situations.

< Back      Next >      Cancel      Help

An example of the on-screen validation interview showing the candidate's choice of phrases and comments.

Part of the on-screen feedback process in which the candidate's final practitioner-determined result is displayed.



It is extremely important to understand that the MCPA is not a psychometric instrument in the sense that the questionnaire is scored and the results reported to the candidate. The MCPA outcome is determined by the practitioner, which is why a validation interview forms an integral part of the process. In the validation interview the practitioner is required to review the responses with the candidate and then confirm the result.

### Supporting Studies

The CPA process has been subjected to exhaustive validation study since its development in 1978. This has included a full independent validation study at the US Army Research Institute (ARI) in Washington DC.

CPA has inter-rater reliability coefficients ranging from 0.78 to 0.95 on samples of up to 150 subjects. Concurrent validity studies against current assessed work performance have given results between 0.71 and 0.79. Construct validity has been assessed against the following: Creativity, using the Kirton Adaptation Innovation Inventory; achievement, using the Graduate Record Exam, Scholastic Achievement Test, and grade point average; age; problem solving ability, as measured by a multiple cue probability learning task and a 'code breaker' game; intelligence, as measured by the Wonderlic and the Culture Fair Intelligence Test; the depth of one's career exploration and the complexity of one's chosen career, as measured by the Career Development Inventory; and personality traits, as measured by the NEO-PI-R and the MBTI®.

A significant number of predictive validity studies have also been carried out with periods extending to 15 years. Here results range from 0.70 to 0.90 on samples of up to 362 subjects.

In South Africa the CPA process has also been established to be culture and gender fair and applicable across all educational classes.

The early development work on the MCPA was completed by Dr Owen Jacobs and his team at ARI. In their development studies the MCPA was found to correlate with CPA at up to .91. For this validation study, all MCPAs were double scored by two interviewers, with a .95 inter-rater reliability.

Further analysis by EDAC has shown a number of significant correlations between the MCPA Development Curve and the LPA® psychometric assessment. Correlations from a large managerial sample n=1,204 are shown in the table below

LPA Dimensions	Positive @ 1%	Negative @ 1%
Team Roles	Consulting Type Driving Type New Ideas Type Catalyst Type	Practical Type Supportive Type Detail Type
Conflict Handling	Resolving Style	Defusing Style
Work Styles	-	Stimulus Control Style Planning Style
Learning Styles	Active	Reflective Theoretical Pragmatic
Personality	Dominance Ingenuity	Persistence Risk Control
Managerial Style	Synthesis of: Supervisory Ability, Achievement Motivation, Self Actualisation, Self Assurance and Decisiveness	-

Further details may be found in the MCPA Training Manual, Part 5 – Statistics, with recent studies published on the EDAC website.