

# For Industry Leader Psychological Associates, the CPI™ 434 Assessment Is the Gold Standard

**Behavioral Scientists Who Specialize in Business Performance Administer Thousands of Personality Assessments Each Year**



## CASE STUDY AT A GLANCE

### COMPANY OVERVIEW

Founded in 1958, Psychological Associates is one of the oldest human resource development firms in the world. Focusing on the top management levels of its client companies, Psychological Associates delivers behavioral science solutions to maximize individual and organizational performance for enterprises worldwide.

### PRACTICE

Psychological Associates brings a wide range of tools to its consulting, assessment, and development practices. To conduct the 2,500 to 4,000 personality assessments it administers each year, the firm needs a proven instrument that yields consistent, reliable results that dovetail with its own tools and practices.

### TOOL OF CHOICE

For decades, CPP's CPI™ 434 assessment has served Psychological Associates as its core personality assessment. With its accuracy and consistency, the reliable CPI 434 measurement tool and the commonsense insights it yields provide a solid foundation for personal and professional development.

### RESULTS

Psychological Associates helps businesses in every stage of evolution: through growth and change, mergers and acquisitions, maintenance, and more. In virtually every engagement, the CPI 434 tool helps identify the leadership qualities companies need—as well as the people who have those strengths or the potential for developing them.

Founded in 1958, Psychological Associates (PA) justly calls itself one of the oldest human resource development firms in the world, with its motto “50 years of developing leaders.” The firm is based in St. Louis, Missouri, but with “Partners in Performance” affiliates in Mexico, Canada, and Europe, PA serves enterprises worldwide, from nonprofits to the *Fortune* 500. Focusing on the top management levels of its client companies, PA delivers behavioral science solutions to accelerate individual and organizational performance.

### AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO TRAINING AND PERFORMANCE

As “business experts who specialize in human performance,” PA professionals bring a wide range of tools to their assessment, development, and consulting practices. Many of these tools have been developed over time by the company's own behavioral scientists, building on the work of previous generations as well as the latest developments in social, psychological, and behavioral research. All reflect the firm's commitment to “the use of empirically validated measurements.”

For example, a cornerstone for many of PA's products and services is its own Dimensional Model of Behavior. As the firm's Web site describes it, this “scientifically proven means of simplifying and categorizing human behavior... helps managers and salespeople recognize, understand, and adapt to the wide range of behaviors they are likely to encounter on



the job.” Originally developed as a means of understanding and influencing customer and consumer behavior through the sales and marketing processes, the Dimensional Model has been extended into a range of offerings. These include team-building and planning workshops for senior managers, leadership development programs for executives, and an executive coaching consultancy that has helped many firms develop their overall vision, mission, and values.

A further extension of the Dimensional Model began some 20 years ago, when a number of PA’s national clients started asking the firm for testing and assessment services to complement its coaching services, especially as applied to executive appraisal, development, and succession management. In response, PA developed several survey and feedback instruments based on its behavioral approach as embodied in the Dimensional Model.

#### CPP’S CPI™ 434 ASSESSMENT: THE PERFECT FIT

Given that so many of these tools have been developed in-house, it’s not surprising that the various instruments PA uses are carefully integrated to provide complete, coherent performance measurement and development solutions. But the firm goes “out of house” for one key component of its services and solutions—its core personality assessment. For that, Psychological Associates relies on CPP’s CPI 434 tool.

According to Psychological Associates president Dr. Ann Beatty, the firm performs 2,500 to 4,000 personality assessments each year, and the CPI 434 assessment is the baseline measurement in every single one.

“The CPI 434 has been part of our history,” says Dr. Beatty. “We consider it the gold standard in personality assessment—accurate, consistent, and insightful in all the ways we need. It’s a perfect fit for our ways of working and thinking.

“We like its practical, commonsense nature,” she continues. “The instrument’s results describe human beings—their competencies and proclivities, their potential as well as their limitations.”

#### DEVELOPING PEOPLE SO ORGANIZATIONS CAN PERFORM

In the 1990s, Psychological Associates integrated its training and consulting practices by introducing its High-Performance Model, a comprehensive approach to identifying and filling the

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Dr. Ann Beatty,  
President, Psychological Associates

performance needs of organizations as well as individuals. The model has four components:

1. Know where you are going.
2. Ensure your people have what it takes to get there.
3. Enable and develop them if they don’t.
4. Help them stay on track.

“Our core work, of course, is focused on steps two and three of the High-Performance Model,” Dr. Beatty notes, and she cites two representative engagements that illustrate how PA delivers on the model as well as the pivotal role of the CPI 434 instrument.

The first case involved the largest producer of protein in the world. In 2001, this company acquired another food company, then the number one beef packer and number two pork processor in the U.S. The acquiring company engaged a business consulting firm to address the business issues associated with merging the two companies. But senior management knew that it also had to address the leadership needs of the “new” combined organization.

“The CEO of the combined organization realized that fully two-thirds of his employees were now new and unknown to him,” Dr. Beatty recalls, “including hundreds of managers who would be instrumental in making the integration work.

“He wanted to understand, literally, the people he was going to be working with. And he wanted to understand them from a common and empirically sound perspective.” For that, he turned to Psychological Associates, who turned to the CPI 434 tool among other instruments and methodologies.

“We produced Executive Profile Reports on 136 top officers from both organizations—all in a matter of months,” Dr. Beatty recalls. “These included education and job history, problem-solving skills, multi-rater 360-degree survey results, performance appraisal ratings, short- and long-term goals—

and, of course, key personality characteristics measured through the CPI 434.”

As a result, the company’s senior management was able to do more than simply populate an expanded business and management structure. Based on PA’s full, empirically based understanding of its executive talent base, the company implemented programs to develop existing leaders and identify emerging ones in order to nurture future executives and orchestrate a successful succession management effort.

### THE RIGHT PEOPLE AT THE RIGHT TIME

Psychological Associates uses the CPI 434 assessment not only to serve various clients but also to help individual clients achieve various organizational objectives at various times.

As an example, PA’s Dr. Beatty cites a large consumer goods manufacturing company in the St. Louis area that is a longtime client of PA. Some years ago, market and other conditions drove the company’s management to decide to go into “maintenance mode.” So they called on PA to help them identify and select managers and other employees with the

right personal, cognitive, and problem-solving profiles to lead and thrive in that kind of business environment. The CPI 434 tool was instrumental in PA’s assessment process.

Some years later, things changed. The company’s management decided the time was right to grow, and this different mission would require leaders and others with different personalities, skills, and potentials. Again, management called on PA. And again, the CPI 434 assessment played a baseline role in selecting and developing the kinds of leader and managers needed.

“Our High-Performance Model starts with ‘Know where you are going,’” Dr. Beatty says. “So, as organizational objectives change, we help our clients figure out what skills and traits they need in their leaders, managers, and other employees to reach the new goals.

“That provides a road map for selecting, promoting, and developing the right people to get the job done,” she continues. “And the CPI 434 is the instrument of choice for identifying and assessing those people.”

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