



## simplifying human resources

Regardless of your public agency's size, type or geographical location, CODESP has the ideal web-based talent assessment tools to fit your needs. Improve candidate quality, hire more efficiently, cut costs, and boost employee performance.



## December 2015

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**WELCOME TO CODESP!**

**New Customer: Sequoia Union HSD**

## Holiday Office Closure—Test Request Information

We hope all of our customers enjoy a wonderful holiday. Our offices will be closed Monday, December 21, 2015 through Friday, January 1, 2016, to allow CODESP employees to take well-deserved vacation. This has been a busy and exciting year here at CODESP with a record number of new test materials developed. We have found we can serve our customers more efficiently by using some vacation time during this slower time of the year.

No Test Material Requests will be accepted with due dates during this time period. Also, no Requests will be filled prior to closure, if they are not received by noon Friday, December 11. The earliest due dates for Requests submitted after December 11, must be January 8, 2016.

Please take this closure into consideration when selecting a due date for any upcoming requests. Please email any questions regarding test materials to [tests@codesp.com](mailto:tests@codesp.com) or any other questions to [codesp@codesp.com](mailto:codesp@codesp.com).

The Interview Builder and posted generic Test Materials, other than Multiple Choice, will be available on the website during this time. You will still be able to access your Test Packets and the Test Library. Always regenerate your tests (open the test packet used to develop the test and click on Create Test) to capture any updates to the items. If you have an old packet, request a newer version prior to using as we have retired many items and developed new.

Online testing will not be supported by CODESP staff December 23-25, 31 and Jan 1.

Tutorials are available from the Blue Toolbar and in the left column of the website under Interview Builder. There are also CODESP Product webinars available under Links/Webinar Archives after login.

## CODESP BOARD OF DIRECTORS



TR Lin, Director, Classified Personnel for the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District has been on the CODESP Board of Directors for 10 years. He has served the past several years as our Board President. We want to thank him for his dedication and service to CODESP and our customers.

Due to TR Lin's retirement as of December 31, 2015, the Board elected Kristin Olson, Director of Classified Personnel at Santa Clara COE as President and Michael Arnoldus, Director of Recruitment at Ventura County Community College District as Vice President.

Cynthia Carrillo, Personnel Director from Lompoc USD was appointed from the list of those who ran in the last election to fill the upcoming vacant Board seat.

## DECLINING WRITING SKILLS

Writing skills are an important part of communication. Good writing skills allow for messages to be communicated with clarity and ease. Individuals with poor writing skills ramble. Their emails, letters and reports are a series of long sentences filled with big words that don't really say anything. It isn't professional to write this way. Writing should be clear, crisp, concise.

Poor writing skills can be found in print and on the web. They create poor first impressions and many readers will have an immediate negative reaction if they spot a spelling or grammatical mistake. For example, a spelling mistake on a web page may cause visitors to doubt the credibility of the website and the organization.

Employees' writing skills, or the lack of them, affect the bottom line in many ways. Some examples include:

- Badly written instructions can lead to incorrect procedures, lost time, workplace injuries, angry customers, etc.
- Ineffective email messages, which often took too long to write in the first place, can create a poor agency image, wasted time and bad citizen relations.
- Interdepartmental miscommunication – incomprehensible email exchanges can lead to fragmentation of the workforce, missed collaboration opportunities and co-worker issues.
- Cold, impersonal “template” letters in response to problems or complaints can lead to an image problem for the agency.

Mangled syntax and incorrect punctuation can cause expensive confusion, inconvenience or even danger. Writing is often mistakenly considered a “soft skill”, but when done badly it can cost the organization its reputation and efficiency.

Some organizations are offering Business Writing Skills to their employees to help with the situation. Consider using current qualified employees to teach lunch-time classes or use In-Service days to provide classes.

The Human Resource Institute offers several writing classes for Federal employees. Their Effective Writing Course Objectives include:

- Plain language techniques for writing easy-to-read and easy-to-understand documents.
- Write precise and concise sentences and paragraphs that effectively communicate information and ideas.

### References

<http://www.turningmanagersintoleaders.com/bottom-line-impact-poor-writing>; <http://www.skillsyouneed.com/writing-skills.html>; <http://www.careerealism.com/promotion-killers-poor-writing-skills>

## COACHING SKILLS FOR SUPERVISORS

**Date: 1/12/16**

**Time: 10:00 - 11:15 AM PT**

Coaching is an employee-centered and time-focused process. It can provide a realistic prescription for change through the use of tools, experiences, guidance, career-path mentoring, and continued support. When using coaching interventions, employees can be taught to build their skills, redirect unproductive behaviors, and become more self-reliant. It can result in creating a workplace where focused, motivated and self-directed employees want to come to work, and will develop and grow. This webinar will focus on coaching tools rather than theories, and will help solve a complex organizational problem: how to get the very best from employees, at every level.

Dr. Steve Albrecht, PHR, CPP, BCC is internationally known for his training and consulting work on high-risk HR issues. In 1994, he co-wrote Ticking Bombs, one of the first business books on workplace violence. He is board certified in HR, security, and coaching. He holds a doctorate in Business Administration, an M.A. in Security Management, a B.A. in English, and a B.S. in Psychology. He is retired from the San Diego Police Department and is a member of the California Narcotics Officers Association. For more information on Dr. Albrecht, visit [www.drstevealbrecht.com](http://www.drstevealbrecht.com).

**Presenter: Dr. Steve Albrecht, PHR, CPP, BCC**

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE AWARENESS FOR SUPERVISORS

**Date: 2/9/16**

**Time: 10:00 - 11:15 AM PT**

In these stressful and uncertain times, it's no surprise that more and more employees are abusing alcohol, illegal drugs, medical marijuana, and pain medicine prescriptions. What starts out at home often crosses over to the workplace. One of the primary indicators of alcohol use in employees is absenteeism, while one of the primary indicators of employee drug use is theft. Substance abuse in the workplace has become much more secretive, especially as employees move away from illegal drugs and more toward prescription drugs. This session will discuss the new realities of "reasonable suspicion" or "for-cause testing"; medical marijuana concerns; the testing and return to work process; and how to have that "crucial conversation" with employees suspected of being impaired at work.

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**Presenter: Dr. Steve Albrecht, PHR, CPP, BCC**

**Webinars/Training Registration: [www.codesp.com](http://www.codesp.com)**

**Customers: login prior to registration**

**Guests: no login is necessary**



**Dec. 10-11, 2015: Job Analysis  
Stockton, CA**

*Presenters: Mike Willihnganz, PhD., IPMA-CP & Karen Coffee, MPA, IP-MA-CP*

**Jan. 14-15, 2016: Job Analysis  
Hayward, CA**

*Presenters: Mike Willihnganz, PhD., IPMA-CP & Karen Coffee, MPA, IPMA-CP*

**Jan. 28-29, 2016: Job Analysis  
Alameda, CA**

*Presenters: Mike Willihnganz, PhD., IPMA-CP & Karen Coffee, MPA, IPMA-CP*

[www.wripac.org](http://www.wripac.org)

## **CSPCA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

*Reaching Excellence with Merit*

Thursday, February 25, 2016  
Paradise Pier Hotel - Anaheim, CA

[www.meritsystem.org](http://www.meritsystem.org)

## **NCCIPMA-HR ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

March 4, 2016 – DoubleTree Hotel Napa Valley

[nccipmahr.wildapricot.org](http://nccipmahr.wildapricot.org)

Northern California Chapter of IPMA-HR