

The Emerging Domain of wisdom – WQ?

- **Wisdom** as a system of expert knowledge (Baltes, et al.)
- **Wisdom** as a property of a person (Ardelt)
- **Wisdom** as interaction between person, task, and situation (Sternberg, et al.)
- **Wisdom** as a mapping process (Kilburg)

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The Berlin Wisdom Paradigm

"Wisdom is defined as expert knowledge about the meaning and conduct of life"

(Baltes, et al., 2000)

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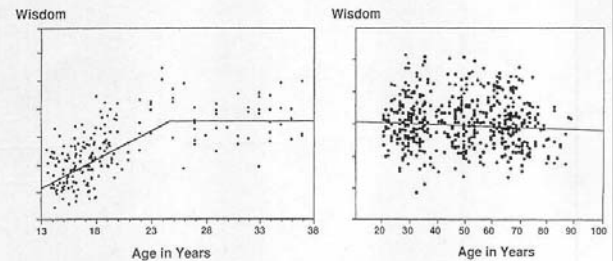
General properties of wisdom

- **Wisdom** represents a truly superior level of knowledge, judgment, and advice
- **Wisdom** addresses important and difficult questions and strategies about the meaning and conduct of life
- **Wisdom** includes knowledge about the limits of knowledge and the uncertainties of the world
- **Wisdom** constitutes knowledge with extraordinary scope, depth, measure, and balance
- **Wisdom** involves perfect synergy of mind and character
- **Wisdom** represents knowledge used for the good or well-being of oneself and that of others
- **Wisdom**, although difficult to achieve and to specify, is easily recognized when manifested

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(Baltes & Staudinger, 2000)

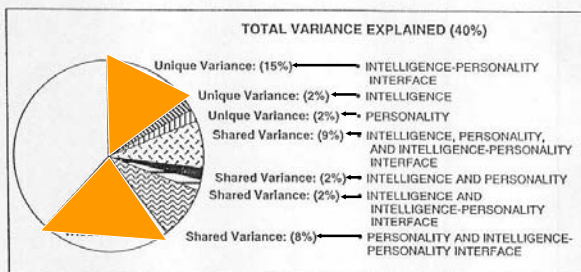
Wisdom-related performance by age



(Baltes, Glück, & Kunzman, 2002)

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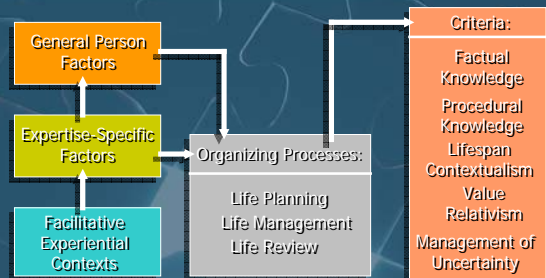
Psychometric location of wisdom-related performance



(Staudinger, Lopez, & Baltes 1997)

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A framework for wisdom



(Baltes & Staudinger, 2000)

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Wisdom-related performance criteria

- Rich **factual** (declarative) knowledge about life
- Rich **procedural** (strategies and heuristics) knowledge about life
- **Lifespan contextualism** (social, cultural, and temporal aspects)
- **Value relativism** (tolerance for value differences)
- Awareness and management of **uncertainty**

(Baltes & Staudinger, 2000)

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Wisdom-related performance assessment



"It may be wrong, but it's how I feel."

Wisdom as personality

"The simultaneous presence of cognitive, reflective, and affective personality characteristics is necessary but also sufficient for a person to be considered wise"

(Ardelt, 2004)

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Who is wise?



Wisdom as a 3-dimensional personality characteristic

- **Cognitive**: An understanding of life and a desire to comprehend the significance and deeper meaning of intrapersonal and interpersonal matters
- **Reflective**: A perception of events from multiple perspectives
- **Affective**: Sympathetic and compassionate love for others

(Ardelt, 2004)

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Coping with crises and obstacles in life

Relatively high wisdom respondents:

- Mental distancing
- Active coping
 - (a) Reframing: Making the best of things
 - (b) Taking control of the situation
- Application of life lessons
 - (a) Learning from life experiences
 - (b) Recognition and acceptance of life's unpredictability and uncertainties

(Ardelt, 2005)

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Coping with crises and obstacles in life

Relatively low wisdom respondents:

- Passive coping
 - (a) Acceptance
 - (b) Reliance on God
- Avoidance of reflection

(Ardelt, 2005)

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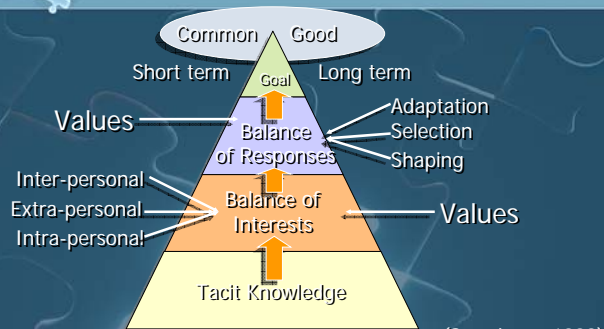
Wisdom as decision making

“Wisdom is in large part a decision to use one’s intelligence, creativity, and experience for a common good”

(Sternberg, 2005)

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A balance theory of wisdom



(Sternberg, 1998)

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Intelligence

- Academic (IQ)
- Practical (Tacit Knowledge)
 - (a) Tends to increase with experience
 - (b) Correlates minimally with IQ
 - (c) Does not correlate with personality
 - (d) Predicts job performance significantly
 - (e) Significant incremental prediction over IQ measures

(Sternberg, et al., 2000)

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Creativity characteristics

- Defying the crowd
- Relatively domain specific
- Weakly related to traditional intelligence

(Sternberg, et al., 1995)

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WICS leadership model

- **W**isdom – seeking a common good
- **I**ntelligence – academic and practical
- **C**reativity – skills and attitudes
- **S**ynthesis – creativity, intelligence, and wisdom working in harmony

(Sternberg, 2004)

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Why smart people can be so foolish!

- The **unrealistic optimism fallacy**: "I know everything will come out all right in the end!"
- The **egocentrism fallacy**: "The world revolves around me!"
- The **omniscience fallacy**: "I know all there is to know!" (groupthink)
- The **omnipotence fallacy**: "My intelligence/education makes me all-powerful!"
- The **invulnerability fallacy**: "No one is clever enough to catch me out!"

(Sternberg, 2004)

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Executive wisdom

"I define executive wisdom as an expert system in the fundamental pragmatics of organized human life"

(Kilburg, 2006)

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Executive wisdom emergent



(Kilburg, 2006)

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Mapping a pathway to executive wisdom

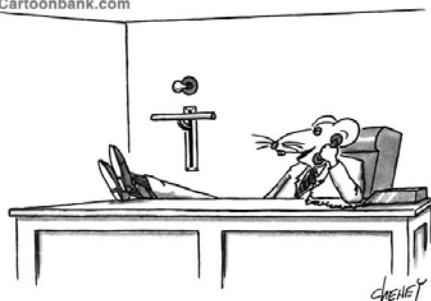


(Kilburg, 2006)

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Can wisdom be enhanced?

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"Oh, not bad. The light comes on, I press the bar, they write me a check.
How about you?"

Wisdom-enhancing interventions

- Life experience (Brugman, 2006)
- Having a mentor (Pascual-Leone, 2000; Baltes & Staudinger, 2000)
- Teaching skills and ways of thinking (Sternberg, 2001)
- Short-term interventions (Staudinger, Baltes, et al., 1996, 2000, 2002, 2006)

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Teaching for wisdom

*"The current conflict in the Middle East is a good example of a situation where wisdom is sorely needed....
The world risks falling deeper and deeper into that swamp. Teaching for wisdom may be our last hope of pulling ourselves out of it."*

(Sternberg, 2002)

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A wisdom curriculum (for sixth grade!)

- Teach the usefulness of *interdependence*
- *Role-model* wisdom behaviour
- Read about *wise judgments*
- Help them to *recognize* and *balance* their own *interests*, those of other people, and those of institutions
- Teach that the "means" by which the end is obtained matters, not just the end
- Help them learn the roles of *adaptation*, *shaping*, and *selection*, and how to balance them
- Encourage them to form, critique, and integrate their own *values* in their thinking
- Encourage them to think *dialectically*
- Show the importance of *dialogical* thinking
- Teach them to search for and try to reach the *common good*
- Teach them to *monitor* their own lives and their own thought processes about events
- Help them understand the importance of *inoculating* oneself against the pressures of unbalanced self-interest and small-group interest

(Sternberg, 2001)

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Wisdom-enhancing intervention: Imaginary dialogue

"Participants who discussed life problems with significant other persons and then reflected on the conversation before responding outperformed a standard-instruction control group by about two-thirds of a standard deviation"

"An equal effect, however, was found with such conversations about life problems that the participants only imagined"

(Staudinger & Baltes, 1996)

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Wisdom-enhancing intervention: "Cloud travel"

"Participants were instructed to imagine travelling to various regions of the world on a cloud and to reflect on the respective locations, cultures, and peoples before responding to wisdom tasks"

"The group who received this intervention showed higher levels of performance than a control group"

(Böhmig-Krumhaar, Staudinger, & Baltes, 2002)

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Activating wisdom resources

Wisdom Resources:

- Intelligence
- Life experience
- Personality-interface

"Try to give a wise response"

(Glück & Baltes, 2006)

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Wisdom mapping

- *"What's the wisest thing you have ever done as a person or as a professional?"*
- *"What made the decision or action wise? When and how did you know it was wise? What criteria did you use to judge its merits?"*

(Kilburg, 2006)

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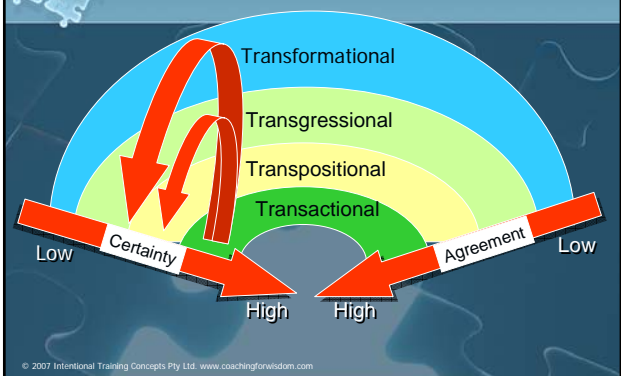
Wisdom-related performance assessment (again!)



A wisdom compass



Four horizons of coaching



George Constanza's
...WORDS OF WISDOM...

"The most unfair thing about life is the way it ends. I mean, life is tough. It takes up a lot of your time. What do you get at the end of it? A death. What's that, a bonus?!? I think the life cycle is all backwards. You should die first, get it out of the way. Then you go live in an old age home. You get kicked out for being too healthy, go collect your pension, then, when you start work, you get a gold watch on your first day. You work forty years until you're young enough to enjoy your retirement. You drink alcohol, you party, and you get ready for High School. You go to primary school, you become a kid, you play, you have no responsibilities, you become a little baby, you go back, you spend your last 9 months floating with luxuries like central heating, spa, room service on tap, then you finish off as an orgasm!! Amen"