

A short history of Psychological Associates

# *An Incredible Journey*

1958–2008



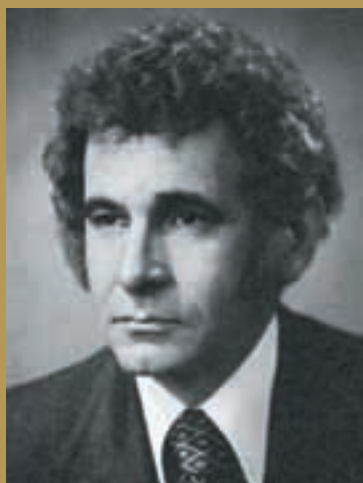


*P*ychological Associates was founded in 1958 by its two partners and co-owners, psychologists V. R. Buzzotta, Ph.D., and Robert E. Lefton, Ph.D., who met while students at Washington University. They opened their first office in Clayton, MO.

In its early years, PA conducted a clinical practice, working with emotional disorders in adults and the learning problems of children. The two psychologists quickly gained a reputation for providing reliable and valid psychological testing. Thus, two characteristics of PA emerged from the start: the use of empirically validated measurements and an emphasis on behavior, particularly objective, observable behavior.

Soon, the firm was receiving referrals from businesses needing assistance in employee selection, selection validation studies, and attitude surveys. By 1961, PA had the largest practice of its kind in the St. Louis area. Their work included conducting some of the first behavioral marketing research in the form of focus groups. Several national advertising campaigns were launched in this period, shaped significantly by PA's participation in this new way of gathering consumer information.

Tom Stanton, a marketing specialist who would later head PA's marketing efforts, designed PA's original logo, which incorporated the psi symbol.



Robert E. Lefton, Ph.D., and V. R. Buzzotta, Ph.D.,  
founders of Psychological Associates



## *pioneers in human development*

*I*n the 1960s, a number of elements came together that would shape the design of all of Psychological Associates' training programs. As the company became more involved in the development of employees, both owners felt that T-groups, a prevalent method of training, were too subjective and unstructured to be productive for business application.

In 1962, Drs. Lefton and Buzzotta learned about a model of behavior, the Managerial Grid, developed by psychologists Robert Blake and Jane Mouton. The appeal of this model was its focus on observable behavior that could be identified and discussed in a much more objective way than other psychological approaches at the time. So, as part of an agreement, PA began working with Blake-Mouton, who had developed this more structured approach to managerial improvement.

Then, in the early 1960s, one of PA's business clients, A.G. Edwards, became interested in sales training for its financial advisors. While the Managerial Grid had been useful as a diagnostic tool, it had little application value and didn't develop skills. Under the leadership of Ben Edwards, CEO of A.G. Edwards and a PA Board member, the firm agreed to subsidize PA's design of an original, behavior-based training seminar. A full year and a half was spent researching the literature and developing a

Psychological Associates founded  
**1958**



Psychological Associates' first office was located at 111 S. Meramec in Clayton, MO.



## TRAINING SALESMEN -

“people skills” sales program from the ground up. During that time, PA created the Dimensional<sup>®</sup> Model of Behavior<sup>™</sup>, based upon the validated research of psychologist H. S. Coffey and his colleagues. The Model served as the foundation of DIMENSIONAL SALES TRAINING<sup>®</sup>, the first-ever sales training course developed by behavioral scientists. It applied behavioral skills, specifically assessing and influencing skills, which salespeople could apply to engage customers more effectively.

Other innovative components that became a familiar nucleus of all PA programs originated at this time.

While the Model provided insight into buying and selling behavior, the hard-hitting sales training that clients wanted meant the course had to include a set of learnable skills. For instance, PA was the first to introduce probing as a sales tool. The company was inspired by the work of eminent University of Ohio psychologist, Carl Rogers. He developed a style of therapy that used questions so that patients would freely discuss their concerns and needs to gain insights about themselves. Applied to selling, probing became a tool that helped customers communicate their needs.

Other tools that were part of this first program were the Five-Step Format for conducting a meeting, the APAC system for overcoming

objections, and a set of practical communication skills.

As the course took shape and was tested with groups of salespeople, a distinctive method evolved for transferring new skills. PA called it Learning Engineering. This format required that learning concepts be translated into skills. The key was *practicing* them. Participants then received feedback on their skill performance. This method was groundbreaking at the time and became the core for PA development programs to follow.

Another request from clients Eli Lilly, Moore Paragon, Motorola, and Ryder Systems was the impetus for the next training courses, DIMENSIONAL SALES MANAGEMENT<sup>®</sup> (DSM-II) and DIMENSIONAL MANAGEMENT TRAINING<sup>®</sup> (DMT-II).

DSM concentrated on coaching skills for sales managers. Its equivalent for middle management outside of sales, DMT, was the forerunner to LEADERSHIP THROUGH PEOPLE SKILLS<sup>®</sup>, PA's current flagship managerial seminar. These management programs began as half-day seminars and expanded to four or more days as they were developed with clients. As the company moved into the 1970s, DST-II, DSM-II, and DMT-II were also offered as public seminars.

A watershed event for PA took place at the national American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) meeting in Miami, FL

The field was so unregulated in the 1950s that under “psychologist” in the Yellow Pages were several hypnotists and a Swami.



## *partnering for success*

in 1965. PA was scheduled to speak about its new type of training programs. Interest became so widespread that the presentation, originally scheduled for a room holding 40 people, had to be moved to an auditorium seating 500. From this appearance, PA made contacts with potential clients around the country. This effectively moved PA beyond its status as a local business.

In time, managers at another client, Merrill Lynch, who were enrolled in DMT-II, expressed a need for help in giving appraisals to employees. To accomplish this, PA received a grant from Merrill to develop DIMENSIONAL APPRAISAL TRAINING® (DAT-II) in 1977.

*When Psychological Associates developed its first training seminar for A.G. Edwards, PA had agreed to provide the client with a book to accompany the program. That text became *Effective Selling Through Psychology*, written by Dr. Buzzotta, Dr. Lefton, and Manuel Sherberg, a director at PA.*

For many years, Sherberg wrote or edited most of PA's publications. He also became a trainer who wrote and tested training materials. One of his major contributions was to remove the clinical tone from the "voice" of PA publications in favor of a conversational style.

One early brochure stated that PA was "consultants to advertisers in motivation research."

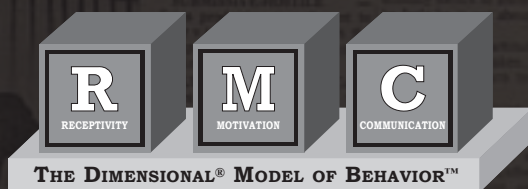
The Dimensional® Model of Behavior™ and DIMENSIONAL SALES TRAINING® (DST-II) introduced  
**1965**

DIMENSIONAL SALES MANAGEMENT® (DSM-II) and DIMENSIONAL MANAGEMENT TRAINING® (DMT-II) launched  
**Late 1960s**

*Effective Selling Through Psychology and Dimensional Management* published  
**1969**

*Effective Motivation Through Performance Appraisal* released  
**1977**

# What Kind of a Salesman Are YOU?



*Dimensional Management* was also published in 1969. As the company conducted more research and received feedback among a wide variety of clients, this knowledge was applied to subsequent editions. Still companions to their respective seminars, these books also served as stand-alone, self-improvement books in the burgeoning business publication field.

A third book, *Effective Motivation Through Performance Appraisal*, was published in conjunction with the appraisal training seminar in 1977. Dean L. Karraker was an additional author, the first full-time trainer hired by PA. When programs and materials began needing revisions and updates, he took on the task and became head of Research & Development.

**U***ntil the end of the 1970s, PA's training programs were designed for participants who possessed fundamental sales or management people skills.*

By 1980, clients wanted training programs that would bring Dimensional® skills to first-level personnel. PA designed DIMENSIONAL SALES TRAINING-I® and its counterparts, DIMENSIONAL MANAGEMENT TRAINING-I® and DIMENSIONAL APPRAISAL TRAINING-I®, as foundation programs for new or relatively inexperienced salespeople and managers.

Drs. Buzzotta and Lefton were founding members of the Instructional Systems Association.

While development of content and materials was not difficult, the much larger number of participants presented a logistical problem: how to certify a greater number of trainers quickly while maintaining a high level of consistency and quality. Part of the solution was to offer clients the option of presenting all of the new seminars' contents on videotape.

Because of his strong background in media and television production, John Lena was hired to oversee the extensive production required to deliver seminar content on video. He also supervised upgrading and standardizing the look and presentation of PA materials.

Around this time, PA also branded all of its training activities under the banner Dimensional Training System®, which distinguished training from the assessment and consulting areas of the company.

**W***ith the expanded number of programs and services offered, Psychological Associates had truly become a nationwide company in the 1970s, with clients, satellite offices, or representatives in every major city in the U.S. It was inevitable, then, that the appeal of Dimensional® skills would translate to other cultures.*

The first video demonstrations were taped by staff members in PA offices. Music from a radio station off-camera was used to begin scenes.



*nationwide and beyond*

When Canadian Neill R. MacMillan enrolled in a PA seminar in the late 1970s, he didn't know it would change his life. Impressed by the experience, he contacted PA and became the Canadian distributor of Dimensional Training® in 1978. His company, Communicare, Inc., located in Toronto, has been a successful affiliate ever since.

For the most part, client need was the main impetus for PA's international growth. Many clients, particularly in financial areas, were themselves international organizations and wanted to bring Dimensional® solutions to their locations outside North America. PA translated its materials into Portuguese for Brazil and into Spanish for Mexico. In 1984, People Skills International, headquartered in London, became the PA affiliate serving the United Kingdom. It distributed PA's consulting and training services to England, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Western Europe, and Asia.

Over the years, the Dimensional® Worldwide network has also included strategic partners in France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Africa, South America, and Australasia.

*A*nother training milestone occurred in 1986 when PA introduced its first one-day program, CONDUCTING APPRAISAL MEETINGS® (CAM), which was a flexible, modular seminar. The next

PA went international with Canadian affiliate, Communicare, Inc.

**1978**

DIMENSIONAL SALES TRAINING-I®, DIMENSIONAL MANAGEMENT TRAINING-I®, and DIMENSIONAL APPRAISAL TRAINING-I® launched

**1980 – 81**

Dimensional Training System® branded

**1981**

People Skills International became a PA affiliate

**1984**

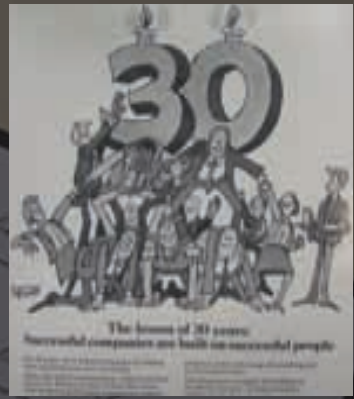
First one-day training programs introduced

**1986**

Early seminars took place over a week and used audiotape for reviewing role-play practices.

Psychological Associates  
THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY PARTY  
1958 — 1988

Please join us  
Saturday, December 10, 7:00 P.M.  
Cocktails and Dinner  
Westwood Country Club  
11801 Conroy Road  
R.S.V.P. Meredith 802-8300



year, another one-day program was launched to teach interpersonal skills for those working below mid-level management, DIMENSIONAL PEOPLE SKILLS (DPS)<sup>®</sup>. In 1988, PA began a one-day sales training program, SUCCESSFUL SALES CALLS<sup>®</sup> (SSC).

As the 1980s progressed, several new seminars were added to PA's sales offerings: SKILLS PLUS<sup>®</sup>, a video-based training program, KEY ACCOUNT STRATEGIES<sup>®</sup>, and DIMENSIONAL SALES NEGOTIATING<sup>®</sup>.

PA's Dimensional<sup>®</sup> principles were very applicable in the 1980s, when American business became interested in Japanese quality circles and group cohesiveness. The result was DIMENSIONAL TEAM BUILDING<sup>®</sup>, a short diagnostic teamwork program for intact teams. Later, PA developed the 13-module DIMENSIONAL TEAMWORK SKILLS<sup>®</sup>.

PA also designed a team workshop for senior-level teams, DIMENSIONAL MANAGEMENT TRAINING-III: TEAM GOALS AND ACTION PLANNING<sup>®</sup>. Significantly, it evolved from a training program to become a consulting program. If DMT-I and -II featured one-to-one skills, DMT-III focused on one-to-many skills. The high-level executives who participated wanted more than facilitation from PA. They wanted PA's opinions and advice, which led to PA assuming a coaching role for senior executives. This function also produced some of PA's best

work over the years, helping many firms develop their vision, mission, and values — the entire system of their organizations.

By the end of the 1980s, a rather large industry had developed around business training, in part because of PA's pioneering programs. Companies were examining the qualities that managers needed to truly become leaders in their organizations. Fortunately, the Dimensional<sup>®</sup> aspects of PA's training programs were ideal for providing a practical approach to defining and developing the skills needed for leadership. In 1989, after a year and a half of development, PA revised its DMT-II management program. The newly named LEADERSHIP THROUGH PEOPLE SKILLS<sup>®</sup> emphasized applying management skills to leadership. It made more extensive use of video technology and became PA's flagship program.

On the 25th anniversary of PA's first training program, the American Society for Training and Development presented Psychological Associates with the Sales and Marketing Professional Contribution Award for its leadership and pioneering work in sales training. The ASTD stated, "Psychological Associates helped move the field forward to a more professional status by demonstrating that the behavioral sciences could have a significant impact on teaching people how to sell and influence others more effectively."

By 1971, over 10,000 people had taken a Dimensional Training<sup>®</sup> seminar.



## reaching to the top

**A**lthough testing and consulting had always been a part of the services that PA offered to businesses, it had not been pursued as vigorously as training. For several decades, there was no consulting division at all. An outside psychologist handled all client testing, and at one point, PA almost sold this part of the business. Emphasis had been placed on Dimensional Training® programs, which were very popular in the 1970s and 80s. More training was developed to fill market needs, and custom programs were created to serve as solutions for clients' specific development needs.

In the area of assessment, PA's efforts were still scattered and dependent on individual client requests. Assessment was only being used as data for recruiting and development purposes. That changed beginning in 1987 when Dr. Bill Beane, a trainer and then director of sales at PA, recommended hiring Dr. Ann Beatty, who was teaching at Southern Illinois University, as a part-time psychologist. The company had decided to establish a consulting division and actively grow this segment of the business.

About this time, one of PA's new national clients wanted testing in addition to coaching. The client was also interested in succession consulting, which took testing to a new level. PA developed a number of survey and feedback instruments, such as 360° feedback and customer audits.

SKILLS PLUS®, KEY ACCOUNT STRATEGIES®, DIMENSIONAL SALES NEGOTIATING® introduced Team seminars instituted

**1980s**

Consulting division formally began

**1987**

LEADERSHIP THROUGH PEOPLE SKILLS® launched

**1989**

25th anniversary of PA training recognized by the ASTD

**1990**

In his book, *Superselling*, TV host and pitchman Ed McMahon says this, "I searched for ways to improve my understanding of buyer emotions wherever I could . . . however, not until I came across a book called *Effective Selling Through Psychology*, did I find much help. That book startled me with its insights and understanding into what makes people buy."

# Skills

llina Different Customers Differently



Individual feedback and attitude & climate survey tools were developed under the leadership of Dr. Beatty, Ann Buzzotta, and Dr. Melinda Bremley. Today, these feedback instruments are known as The Proficient Executive®, Co-Worker Feedback™, and Dimensional® Sales and Management Feedback. Of course, all of these had the stamp of PA's behavioral approach and utilized the Dimensional Model.

The idea of building a department from the ground up appealed to Dr. Beatty. It quickly became apparent that the right person was in the right role. Consulting would start playing a major part at PA.

Specifically, Dr. Beatty was given a free hand to turn the piecemeal approach to testing, surveying, and providing assessments for clients into integrated processes that would provide more extensive and comprehensive solutions. Applying a positive and energetic style, she built a department that developed proprietary components of consulting and assessment, which could work together to provide greater value to clients. Eventually, this allowed PA to create markets in new areas: executive development, executive appraisals, and succession planning.

Just as it had brought innovation to training, PA developed a number of distinctive tools to make its consulting efforts more effective. To enhance 360° feedback, which was becoming

standard in the field, PA added the concept of executives meeting with their direct reports for a guided feedback session. This became a very enlightening and popular tool for executives to gain insights about improving their business style.

Another innovation was the Executive Profile Report, which evolved from PA's thorough executive assessments by gathering comprehensive, standardized data for client use to evaluate talent for promotion, succession planning, etc. However, one of PA's clients, The May Company, insisted that the lengthy reports also include a short summary of the results for greater practicality in a fast-paced environment.

PA took this concept a step further and developed a one-page report that quantified all the information gathered. It even included an inventory of all the areas of the company in which the executive had worked. In this way, businesspeople now had an objective, practical reference that resembled the kinds of visual display and metrics they were used to seeing in business reports. The EPR has been a major differentiator in PA's assessment solutions.

PA provided significant input for another innovation in succession planning that has been adopted by many large companies: the organizational room. Working with Emerson, Brown Shoe, and The May Company, PA helped develop the concept of a talent management

PA began hiring full-time trainers for its staff in the 1970s. Some of the Master Trainers who were facilitators for many PA programs include: Jim Arnold, Ed Boncek, Mike Cristiani, Alan Gerstein, Pam Hager, Roger Heape, Mike Hyatt, Dean Karraker, Steve Knight, Kathy Lass, Bill Liccione, John Miller, Les Muckerman, Bob Rust, and Dennis Wissler.



## full-service solutions

nerve center — a room dedicated to continuous evaluation and tracking of managerial talent for these firms. This has been a tremendous help in making hiring and promotion decisions in large, complex organizations.

Over the years, PA has added other services that allow the company to provide seamless consultation. These include executive coaching, talent management, performance management, succession planning, change management, and team building.

*P*A built a strong consulting division team that was instrumental in its successful growth. Soon after the team began, another psychologist, Dr. Tony Montebello, came on board. He helped develop many custom tools and programs for clients. In time, he performed almost every aspect of consulting and training, becoming an invaluable contributor. Dr. Montebello was masterful at designing comprehensive solutions. His crossover knowledge helped PA put into place the many pieces that might be needed to help a client change a corporate culture, from first-line supervisors up to the CEO. His untimely death in 2007 saddened the entire organization and the many clients who became his friends.

In 1989, Dr. Claire Bramlet joined with Dr. Bremley to become a key member of the consulting team. Dr. Bramlet started building

Surveys & Feedback Department  
opened  
**1992**

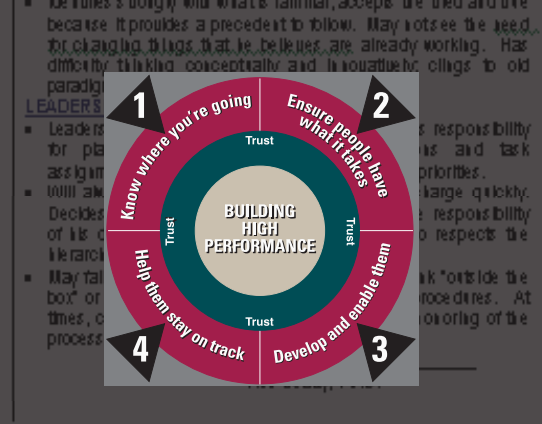
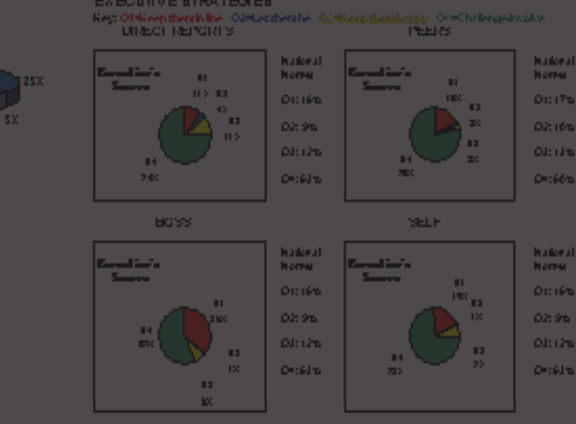
The Proficient Executive® Survey  
created  
**1994**

High-Performance Model  
introduced  
**1995**

*Making Common Sense  
Common Practice* published  
**1996**

First Web site launched  
**1997**

The largest single sale of Dimensional® materials was 7,000 sets of DIMENSIONAL® SELLING™, totaling \$1,649,000 to a British firm. Longtime account executives have included Bill Beane, Conrad Damsgaard, Rick Ginie, Chris Hawkins, Mike Hyatt, Gene Keeven, Sheldon Kushner, Joe LaMantia, John Lena, and Don Weiss.



the assessment area, particularly when clients asked for these services among their senior management. Adding to PA's previous work, Dr. Bremley and her colleagues developed a variety of survey instruments. Dr. Bremley, Connie Voelker, and Del Descher began PA's Surveys & Feedback Department in 1992.

Over time, the breadth of services of the consulting division helped PA to carry out the tradition of engaging clients at the top levels of their organizations. Approaching prospects at this level allowed PA to continue its business philosophy of offering developmental solutions to meet business needs, rather than merely offering piecemeal or ready-made "products."

**B**y 1995, both the training and consulting divisions of Psychological Associates were enjoying success. While components from both areas had routinely been combined to provide a holistic solution to meet a client's unique business needs, PA's total range of services was not integrated.

A landmark step was taken toward that end when PA published *Making Common Sense Common Practice*. The company introduced the High-Performance Model as a template to help organizations reach their full performance

potential. The four components that build high performance are:

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

Trust is the cohesive factor that holds these elements together.

Applying this model, PA could now position all of its training and consulting services in a coherent way. The model gave PA's consultants, program designers, account executives, and clients a comprehensive perspective for analyzing an organization's needs and providing a custom solution. Internally, this model became a basis for integrating the two major divisions of PA toward supporting a single purpose: offering behavioral science solutions to accelerate individual and organizational performance.

This new purpose allowed everyone in both divisions of PA to see clearly how their own and everyone else's contributions fit into the overall mission and goals of the company. One tool that helped position PA both internally and to the public was the introduction of its first Web site in 1997.

One of PA's original versions of 360° feedback consisted of placing 300 adjectives describing someone's behavior in the appropriate quadrants of the Dimensional® Model.



## our fifth decade

*A*s the new millennium arrived, Psychological Associates was in its fifth decade, which proved to be its busiest and provided some of its biggest challenges and accomplishments.

On the management side, a new generation of the LEADERSHIP THROUGH PEOPLE SKILLS® seminar was launched after several years of research led by Ann Buzzotta, head of Research & Development. The program was more contemporary in look and content. The seminar's viewpoint was more relevant, reflecting changes taking place in the structure and power relationships within business organizations in the new century.

In 2000, PA introduced DIMENSIONAL® SELLING™ as a relationship-based selling program that incorporated the Internet as a tool for salespeople. Then, in 2005, after two years of research, PA introduced SELLING TO THE POWER OF Q<sup>4</sup>™, a fully-integrated sales system. It featured PA's first use of blended learning, which incorporated e-Learning for the core Dimensional® concepts with a shortened interactive workshop schedule. Online surveys of organizational goals, as well as monitoring and coaching tools, also became a part of this comprehensive selling system.

New generation of LEADERSHIP THROUGH PEOPLE SKILLS® developed  
**2003**

McGraw-Hill published PA books  
**2004 – 05**



SPQ<sup>4</sup> Sales System rolled out  
**2005**

Dr. Beatty originally had planned to work in “the real world” for a year and then go back to teaching; after one month, she decided to stay at PA.



In an agreement with McGraw-Hill, PA published new editions of its books, *Leadership Through People Skills* and *Dimensional Selling*. Jerome T. Loeb, retired chairman of the board of The May Company, co-authored a new PA publication, *Why Can't We Get Anything Done Around Here?: The Smart Manager's Guide to Executing the Work That Gets Results*, along with Dr. Lefton.

In 2004, PA began a period of the most extensive testing and assessment in its history. A major client had undergone an acquisition, and the head of the company determined that its 500 managers from the top down should undergo assessment testing, feedback, and coaching, as well as attend a customized leadership workshop, all within a seven-month period. Once again, PA showed its ability to adapt quickly to client needs and to customize its many services to provide a business solution, in this case, to help obviate or resolve any people issues stemming from a large acquisition.

Another opportunity for expansion is being evaluated for possible growth — the health care industry. As medical institutions are faced with a growing need for better interpersonal skills among their staffs, Psychological Associates is well-positioned to provide solutions. Dr. Cindy Lefton, a psychologist and ER nurse, with the assistance of Linda Shea, a retired nurse manager, is developing and marketing one-day

workshops for health care professionals, CRITICAL COLLABORATION™.

While the integration of the two divisions of Psychological Associates began in the 1990s with the development of its High-Performance Model, the company made a significant shift toward unifying its direction by naming Dr. Beatty as its President in 2007. The founders of the company took this step to signal to clients, management, and staff that they wanted to ensure a dynamic, vibrant future by bringing a singleness of purpose to the company. Naming Dr. Beatty as President of PA took a large step in that direction.

The future looks promising as PA continues to meet the needs of a changing business landscape. PA has developed a process for providing a total solution approach to clients' human development needs. In line with the High-Performance Model, the company is defining and honing additional approaches to improving teamwork and succession planning, as well as working toward better individual performance. Through the use of webinars and other innovative technologies and delivery systems, PA is also finding new ways to adapt to change to better serve clients.

As the two founders have said, the history of Psychological Associates has been “an incredible journey.” A small, clinical psychologists' practice has grown into a distinguished institution in its field. PA will continue to strategically partner

At one time, PA's testing center was several small basement offices in the Delta Dental Building at 8220 Delmar in University City.



*just the beginning*

with its clients, helping them outperform their competition by applying proven behavioral science solutions to its clients' greatest asset—their people.

How will PA fulfill its vision to be the leader in the “people” part of business? By continuing to distinguish itself as the high-performance solution provider, by maintaining high-touch customer relationships, and by promoting Q4 team management and culture in a collaborative work environment.

PA may be 50, but in many ways, it's just getting started.

CRITICAL COLLABORATION™  
launched  
**2005**

Dr. Ann Beatty named PA  
president  
**2007**

The Proficient Executive® survey is available in 11 languages. Other outstanding Ph.D. consultants have also included Dr. Tom Brooks, Dr. Mark Rieke, and Dr. Hal Guterman.



**PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATES**

*The Performance Consultants®*

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[www.psychologicalassociates.com](http://www.psychologicalassociates.com)

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