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About Presenters:

Simon Easton and Darren Van Laar have been teaching at the University of Portsmouth since 1990. Both have worked with organisations as consultants for many years, with clients ranging from IBM to UK Universities, the NHS and the BBC. For the last 10 years or so we have worked to explore models and tools for the evaluation of quality of working life. As part of this work, we have developed the Work Related Quality of Life Scale (WRQoL), which is used by organisations and individuals to assess quality of working life. The scale has been the subject of published articles, and is being used by researchers in more than 100 countries, having been translated into various languages. We hope that this research and the contributions from colleagues at the JIVA conference will help ensure that the WRQoL accurately assesses and reflects the key features affecting work experience in different cultures.

Title of Paper: **Quality of Working Life – what, how and why**

Abstract:

What is Quality of working life?

Whilst there has, for many years, been much interest in assessing and intervening to tackle job satisfaction or stress at work, the greater context in which these key work experience concepts exist has been little explored. Stress at work is often taken in isolation, wherein it is assessed on the basis that attention to an individual's stress management skills or the sources of stress in isolation will prove to be of value. Similarly, job satisfaction is frequently assessed on its own with a view to identifying action that can be taken that will enhance an individual's experience at work.



This paper argues that stress at work and job satisfaction need to be considered within the broader context, but that the bigger picture, or overall quality of working life, remain relatively unexplored and unexplained. Where quality of working life has been explored, writers differ in their views on its core constituents.

In this paper, it is argued that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts as regards quality of working life, and, therefore, that failure to attend to the bigger picture may lead to the failure of interventions which tackle only one aspect. A clearer understanding of the inter-relationship of the various facets of quality of working life offers opportunity for improved analysis of cause and effect in the workplace.

This paper will explore the proposed constituents of the concept of Quality of working life, and describe development of a measure, the Work-Related Quality of Life scale (WRQoL), which has been developed in the UK through a partnership of University of Portsmouth and the university spinout company, QoWL Ltd. The WRQoL scale has been translated into several languages, and has been used across the globe.

Lastly this paper will discuss the relevance of considering quality of working life to counsellors and employers, and individuals as they make career choices.

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