

...with George Sik

Consultant Psychologist at *eras ltd*

One book that you think all psychologists should read

The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin by David Nobbs. If there was one book that made me fascinated by the psychology of the workplace (and not necessarily in a good way), that was the one.

One inspiration

Professor Peter Saville did so much to popularise the use of assessment in the workplace and was always such an innovator.

One alternative career path you might have chosen

I very nearly became a BBC producer so I probably would have been sacked following the Hutton Inquiry.

One moment that changed the course of your career

Realising I was kidding myself about wanting to pursue clinical psychology, having worked on a number of summer jobs in psychiatric hospitals in Devon. It's for braver people than me.

One great thing that psychology has achieved

I don't think there is any programme on television now with the slightest level of human interest where psychology doesn't crop up, either implicitly or explicitly. This was certainly not the case 30 years ago. I think that is a huge achievement.

One challenge you think psychology faces

In an era where so much misinformation, urban mythology and superstition abounds, we need to get the scientific message out there without sounding shrill.

One thing that you would change about psychology

Despite the efforts of a few of us, we still tend to take ourselves far too seriously. We can be rather a gloomy bunch.

One regret

When drinking with Paul Gascoigne, not realising how dependent on it he had become and not offering any

help. Oh, and not making the book which Pat Nevin and I wrote (*In Ma Head, Son*) a bit funnier. I think we fell victim to taking ourselves a little seriously!

One nugget of advice for aspiring psychologists

Just follow your dreams. It's such a rich discipline that you can study (and become an expert) on just about anything.

One problem that psychology should deal with

Communication, communication, communication. However good we get at it, we could still be much, much better.

One proud moment

My colleague Matt Goff and I did an episode of Channel 4's *Football Stories* about penalty shoot-outs in 2001. Loads of my heroes took part. Even Sven did it – for no fee! They just wanted to talk about the subject.

One cultural recommendation

Channel 4's *Shameless*. The characters are so psychologically rich and the comedy-drama so wonderfully integrated. Some say that if Shakespeare were writing today, he'd be doing *EastEnders*. I'm not sure, but I reckon Dickens would be writing for *Shameless*. Its

creator, Paul Abbott, has a psychology degree naturally!

One hero from psychology

The late Professor Brian Foss at the late Bedford College, London – a warm, gentle champion of psychology in all its variations.

One thing that 'organised psychology' could do better

There's way too much bureaucracy – but then, it's only the bureaucrats who enjoy doing all the hard work!

One hope for the future

That we are consulted more on



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the serious issues facing the world, rather than just helping to make politicians look better.

One more thought

I still relish the fact that, in one survey, NASA astronauts put occupational psychologists as the thing they hated most, second only to rectal thermometers. A fine, humbling observation!

resource

Sik, G. (1996). *I think I'll manage: Football managers reveal the tricks of their trade*. Headline Book Publishing.

'They now use this as a core text in training sports agents in Portland, Oregon. You've got to laugh.'

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