



*“Legacy is not leaving something **for** people.
It is leaving something **in** people” – Peter Strople*

Deon left something *in* people!

It is an honour for me to share with you some of what Deon left *in* people.

When I read some of the messages left on the remembrance page, more than once Deon was referred to as the “gentle giant”. And that he was, not only *physically*, but especially in his *being*. I will share with you **three of the qualities** that made Deon a very special human being.

Firstly, Deon was passionate about Assessment Centres! Some of his accomplishments from the perspective of the ACSG are as follows:

The ACSG activities:

1. Deon attended the annual ACSG conferences from 1994 and became a member of the committee in 2002. Deon was the Chairman of the study group 2006 – 2007. Under his leadership, he breathed new life and interest in the ACSG, turning the conference attendance around from double to triple digits.
2. Future committees have benefitted from the actions he took as chairman to put the ACSG on the world map again, actions such as working policies and “traditions”.
3. His extensive networks and relationship building have attracted top international AC experts to be keynote speakers. Some of them are: Marise Born; George Thornton; Deborah Rupp; Filip Lievens; Sandra Hartog; Deniz Ones (it took him 9 years to get her to SA).
4. Deon initiated the revision of the 4th, as well as the 5th editions of the *Best practice guidelines for the use of the assessment centre method in South Africa*.
5. He initiated the conceptualisation of the *Code of Ethics for Assessment Centres in South Africa*. This is a first in the field of ACs. The process of producing this inclusive document took 3 years.
6. Deon regularly presented papers at the annual ACSG conference and actively participated in conference activities, as example: he was part of the task team that compiled the vignettes used during the interactive ethics session this year at the conference.
7. He recently finished a chapter about the history of ACs in SA, as well as the history of the ACSG for the soon to be published second edition of the South African AC book.

Deon also walked the extra mile for the ACSG:

8. Deon was always willing to assist the ACSG and make a plan wherever he can, even on very short notice. As example, when a sponsor for this year’s conference did not honour their commitment, Deon tried to access funds for the ACSG.
9. He also willingly participated in the strategic planning sessions that the ACSG committee held.

But his passion for ACs extended beyond ACSG activities –

Other AC activities:

1. Deon established during 2008 the AC Research Focus Area at the University of Stellenbosch. The aim of the Research Focus Area is to provide original, interesting, and rigorous research aimed at a broader scientific understanding of ACs within both the South African context and the broader international arena.
2. He established and developed the University of Pretoria's own in-house assessment centre facility where students receive their training and where face-to-face ACs can be conducted.
3. He included ACs as part of the IO Psychology masters' curriculum in the Advanced Assessment Module.
4. He supervised various South African studies on ACs.
5. And the list continues....

Deon definitely left a gap in the ACSG, as well as the field of ACs.

In 2010 Deon received honorary membership with the ACSG for his contribution and services towards the ACSG. During 2018 the ACSG further recognised his contributions by presenting to him a special award *in Recognition for his Significant Contributions to the Science and Practice of Assessment Centres in South Africa*.

A **Second** quality that Deon will be remembered for is that he always had a camera in his hands, capturing the *moment in time*. Most, if not all of his conference presentations included photographs that he took.

In addition he always encouraged people to "tell their assessment story". As Eugene de Bruin discovered, Deon was the unofficial curator of old psychometric tests and instruments that he housed in his laboratory at the University. It was important for Deon to keep the "*memory links*" so that the current and future generations will remember and learn.

Thirdly, Deon will be remembered for being a true friend. He freely shared his time by meeting with you and sharing his knowledge and wisdom. He was really interested in other people and "nudged" them from time-to-time to embark on specific journeys.

He went out of his way to keep contact with people, as example, when Herman Spangenberg (one of the founders of the ACSG) was still active at the University, Deon eagerly learnt from him, but now that Herman is retired, Deon still went out of his way when he was in the Cape Town area to have "*coffee and carrot cake*" with Herman.

I want to conclude: We are truly deeply in-debt with Deon for introducing so many people to ACs. We have always, and will continue to draw inspiration from Deon's passion for ACs and the energy he put towards growing the ethical practice and science of ACs.

Yes, Deon left a gap in the AC fraternity. The ACSG, myself, and I am sure that others as well, will be reminded of Deon's *being* and what he left *within* us all, every time we attend the annual ACSG conference, as well as an AC.

Deon's sudden passing away reminded me "that the trouble is you think you have time" (Budha), but that is not always true. If there is something you want and need to do, do it now. I need and want to say to Deon right now: "*Deon, thank you for being a wonderful human being and inspiring us to further the science and practice of ethical ACs!*"

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