

Organizational Behaviour and Management

Study Questions: The purpose of the questions below is to guide your reading and thinking about the material prior to your arrival in class. Your instructor will assume that you have a basic understanding of these issues before you come to class, and will use class time to highlight more difficult concepts, introduce additional material and conduct application exercises. If, after doing your reading, there is something that you do not understand, or feel needs further elaboration, please raise your questions during the class.

Introduction

- What is OB?
- What are the challenges for OB in the 21st century?
- How does OB make sense of behaviour?
- What does it mean to say that OB takes a contingency approach?

Skills for the New Workplace

- What is the “Competing Values Framework”?
- What kinds of skills does the Competing Values Framework suggest are useful for individuals to have?
- How do these skills link up with the activities and needs of today's organizations?

Perception and Personality

- What is perception?
- What factors affect our perception?
- What does attribution theory tell us?
- What are the shortcuts and biases people use in judging others?
- What is the self-fulfilling prophecy?
- What is personality? What are its determinants?
- Describe the Big Five Model of personality.
- What major personality attributes most influence OB?
- What are emotions? How do they affect the workplace?
- What is emotional labour?
- What is emotional intelligence?

Values and Attitudes

- What is the difference between a value and an attitude?
- Describe the GLOBE framework for assessing cultural values.
- Explain why gen-xers and baby boomers might not get along in the workplace.
- What are the implications of Canada's multicultural society on the workplace? Illustrate this from your knowledge of aboriginal values, francophone values and east and southeast Asian values.
- What is job satisfaction?
- What factors affect job satisfaction?
- How does satisfaction affect performance and productivity?
- What is organizational commitment and how can it be increased?
- What is cultural intelligence and how does it help us understand people's reactions to experiencing different cultures?

Group Effectiveness

- What is the difference between a team and a group?
- What do roles and norms have to do with teams?
- What are the stages of group development?
- What implications can be drawn from the punctuated equilibrium model?
- What are the different roles required for effective group and team functioning? What functions are involved in each role?

Motivation

- What is motivation?
- What are the basic elements of Herzberg's theory of motivation?
- What is expectancy theory?
- What is MBO? How does it differ from goal setting theory?
- What are the basic points of equity theory?
- How might a person respond when he or she perceives an inequity in his or her wages?
- What are the similarities and differences among needs theories (e.g., Maslow, Herzberg), equity theory and expectancy theory? How relevant are each to the problems of performance and satisfaction?
- How can we use cognitive evaluation theory to help us design a motivation program?
- What is the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation? How can we increase intrinsic motivation?

Incentives

- What are some employee recognition programs and what kind of effects do they have?
- Describe the different variable pay programs.
- Do motivation theories apply uniformly across cultures? Why or why not?
- What does it mean to say that organizations sometimes engage in folly when they design their reward system?
- Do you think rewards can ever be eliminated? Why or why not?

Team Building

- What are the different kinds of teams?
- What are the factors that create effective teams?
- How do you develop trust on teams?
- What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of diversity on teams?

Communication

- Explain the process by which communication occurs.
- What are the major barriers to communication?
- How do networks affect communication?

- What is a grapevine and how is it used in communication?
- Does nonverbal communication really make a difference?
- Does silence have any place in communication?
- Do men and women communicate differently?
- How can one improve cross-cultural communication?
- How does one engage in active listening?

Conflict and Negotiation

- What is conflict? What is the difference between functional and dysfunctional conflict?
- What are the conflict-management strategies?
- What can individuals do to manage conflict?
- How can one resolve personality conflicts?
- How can third parties be used in conflict resolution?
- What is negotiation?
- Describe the different bargaining strategies.
- Describe the negotiation process.
- Do men and women negotiate differently?
- Are there cultural differences in negotiation?

Organizational Culture

- What is organizational culture?
- What are the characteristics of culture?
- What are the functions of culture?
- Describe differences between dominant cultures, subcultures, strong cultures, weak cultures, national cultures and organizational cultures.
- How does an organization create and sustain an organizational culture?
- What are some potential downsides of organizational culture?
- How can you change organizational culture?

Organizational Change

- What can be changed in an organization?
- What is Lewin's Three-Step Model of Change?
- What is Kotter's Eight-Step Plan for Implementing Change?
- What is action research?
- What is appreciative inquiry?
- What causes resistance to change?
- How can you overcome resistance to change in an organization?
- How can organizations stimulate innovation?
- How is a learning organization created?

Organizational Structure

- What is organizational structure? Define and describe elements of structure.
- Describe ways that organizational structure might affect behaviour and organizational outcomes.
- What is the difference between a mechanistic and an organic organization? Relate these terms to some traditional organization designs.
- Describe the new designs that Canadian organizations are taking.
- What are the factors that affect organizational structure?

Job Design

- What are job rotation, job enlargement and job enrichment?
- Describe the job characteristics model.
- How can the job characteristics model (JCM) be used to inform managers about redesigning jobs?
- What impact do unions have on job design?
- Describe some of the new flexible arrangements that are occurring in Canadian workplaces. What do you see as the pros and cons of these arrangements?

Leadership

- What are the main differences among trait, behavioural and contingency (situational) leadership theories? Describe each of the main theories of leadership.
- What is the Managerial Grid?
- What is the Path-Goal Model of leadership?
- Are there substitutes for leadership?
- What does it mean to be an effective follower?
- What is transformational or charismatic leadership?
- What is moral leadership?
- Do men and women lead differently?
- How do you lead online?

Power and Politics

- What is power?
- What are the major bases of power and how effective are they?
- How does dependency relate to power?
- What kinds of influence tactics can one use?
- What is empowerment? Can it work?
- What is workplace bullying?
- Why is sexual harassment a power issue?
- What is politics?
- What types of political activity are there?
- What is impression management? How can it be used?

Decision-Making and Creativity

- What are the steps involved in decision making?
- What are different ways that decisions are really made?
- Describe and give examples of judgment shortcuts that happen in decision-making.
- What are some of the constraints on decision-making?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of group decision-making?
- What is the Leader-Participation Model?
- What are group think and group shift?
- What are techniques groups can use to make decisions and what are their consequences?
- What does it mean to be creative? Can just anyone be creative?
- How is creativity improved?
- What are some of the barriers to creativity?

Ethical Decision-Making

- What criteria can be used to make an ethical decision? How do these differ?
- What factors affect one's ability to make an ethical decision?
- What are the stages of moral development? How do these affect ethical behaviour?
- How are Canadian organizations responding to the demand to be more ethical?
- What ethical challenges does one face in working internationally?