

CONTEMPORARY ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

From Ideas to Action

ELSBACH | KAYES | KAYES



Contemporary Organizational Behavior

From Ideas to Action

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Preface

Contemporary context... essential OB concepts... learning put into action

Overview

Contemporary Organizational Behavior: From Ideas to Action was built on three simple ideas:

1. Build a text around a few key ideas for each topic (rather than an extensive list of terms).
2. Invite recognized Organizational Behavior (OB) experts and thought leaders to write original contributions about how their ideas relate to contemporary organizations. These contributions include, for example, a description of how an OB concept applies to organizations or how it provides a more robust explanation of a concept. Another example of a contribution is relating a stream of research to a key OB idea or an author offering insights on how they teach a particular OB concept in their own class.
3. Create breathtaking case studies and experiential exercises that help students apply the concepts to their own experience with the goal of improving their own understanding of organizational behavior.

With these ideas in mind, *Contemporary Organizational Behavior* provides the first organizational behavior textbook designed specifically for today's learner and instructor. This is not a typical textbook, rather than traditional chapters, the content is broken into three sections: Topics, Cases, and Experiential Exercises. Each Topic contains a short, engaging summary of the central concepts plus two to four authoritative readings from topic experts. The Cases section includes eight real-world case studies from contemporary organizations. The Experiential Exercises section includes 38 exercises that bring concepts to life. Whether undergraduate or graduate students, each section can be tailored to the unique learning needs of each classroom.

Key Features

- Covers 14 key organizational behavior topics.
- Each topic includes a Topic Summary written by the textbook authors and two to four articles authored by an expert on that topic. Rather than having the entire book authored by one scholar (as in traditional texts), students have the opportunity to read the latest thinking in OB in the words of an expert on the topic. The expert contribution section provides students with direct access to the best minds across the full variety of topics in Organizational Behavior.
- Perfect for professors seeking to supplement lectures but who still want theory; also perfect for a 'topical' readings course.
- Can be customized or used as a traditional text complete with case studies, exercises, and online support material.

- The expert contribution section provides students direct access to the best minds and the latest thinking in Organizational Behavior.
- Demonstrates the relevance of research by combining an evidence-based approach to learning with more traditional theories.

This text addresses a critical challenge in management education. Learners enjoy understanding the relevance of ideas *and* seeing the practical implications of ideas. They like to learn, but learning is often outcome oriented and needs to be relevant to present circumstances. Students want to understand the connection among concepts, personal experience, reflection, and action. By putting concepts, theories, and research in a contemporary context, the book shows how students can put abstract ideas into action in an organization.

The text is designed for students interested in moving beyond memorization and repetition to critical thinking and application. *Contemporary Organizational Behavior* stands in contrast to many texts. Most traditional texts focus on knowledge acquisition in the form of learning new terms and concepts. This book encourages students to move beyond acquisition of knowledge to applying the concepts. Students must engage in critical thinking, application, and relating concepts to their direct experience. Students are introduced to core OB terms and topics and then asked to engage in interactive exercises that include individual work, teamwork, and class discussion questions. Learning is also applied through case studies and conversations.

The text addresses a common concern expressed by many faculty. Faculty seek relevance without sacrificing expertise or rigor. The content of the book takes students deeper into a topic by offering several readings, which reflect different levels of difficulty. The book helps learners understand the relevance of theory and research for contemporary organizations.

How to Use this Book

Modular Approach

- The text is organized into three sections:
 - Topic Summaries and Expert Contributions—brief overviews of key theory, research, and terms on a given topic are accompanied by original works written by experts in Organizational Behavior that put theory, research, and concepts into a contemporary context.
 - Case Studies—engaging cases written by author Kim Elsbach and other experts.
 - Experiential Exercises—a collection of easy to facilitate exercises to use in class to get your students acclimated to working in groups.
- Adaptable to different levels of experience.
- The unique format allows the instructor two options:
 - The instructor can follow a pre-existing template of topics, or
 - The instructor can create a unique custom text by mixing and matching topic summaries and readings with the case studies and experiential exercises that are just right for your students' level of experience.
- A matrix of case studies and exercises matched to topics provides guidance and suggestions on how to fully utilize the text. The matrices are located in the Preface and in the *Instructor's Manual*. This allows each topic section to engage in the learning cycle: experiencing through exercises, reflecting on individual experience, drawing on theory, and applying through case studies.

How Our Text Helps Students Learn

We designed this text based on the experiential learning model. Key features of the book are linked to the four processes of experiential learning.

Experiential Exercises

Experiential exercises engage students in activities that ignite thinking, spark connections between concepts and experience, and make learning more exciting. Experiential exercises also create new experiences that can serve as the basis for collective reflective.

Experiential exercises can take the form of reflective exercises. Reflective exercises encourage students to take a step back and reflect on prior experiences. The exercises then encourage students to bring experience from outside the classroom and apply these experiences to class concepts. By drawing on experiences from work, social settings, and other direct experiences, students make connections between their own experiences and class concepts.

Topic Summaries and Spotlight on Research

Topic Summaries and **Spotlight on Research** features encourage conceptual learning. The text encourages abstract thinking through topic summaries that introduce key terms, theories, and models. Each topic summary is introduced by a conceptual overview that introduces the topic and integrates key ideas into an overarching framework. Theories, terms, and models no longer serve as simply abstract ideas. Instead, these abstract notions help students frame their experiences in new ways, provide new insights that may lead to personal and professional development, and encourage students to look at situations more holistically.

The **Spotlight on Research** feature helps students understand how evidence-based research in the field of organizational behavior can help them learn. Spotlight on Research highlights an interesting research study and shows students how this research can inform practice. Students develop an appreciation for the value of evidence-based research and see how they can use evidence-based research to support their own thinking and opinions.

Cases, OB at Work, and Expert Contributions

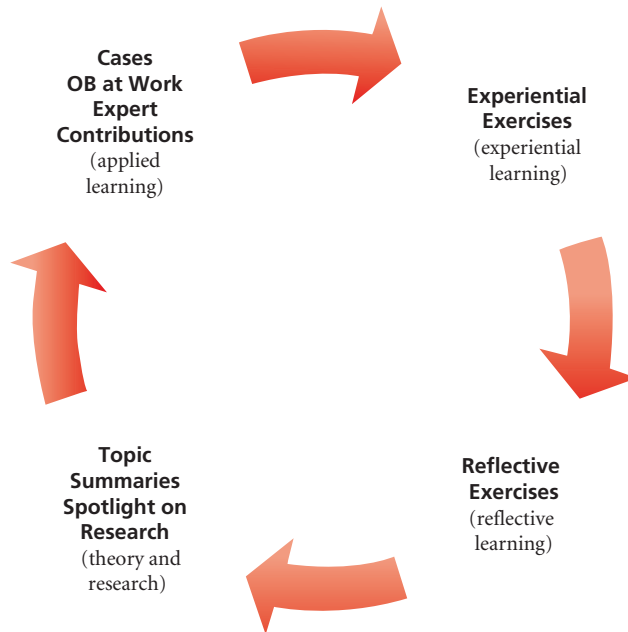
Cases, features such as **OB at Work**, and **Expert Contributions** help students apply learning in new ways. Students can begin to place organizational behavior concepts in context and move the study of organizational behavior from ideas to action.

Cases illustrate concepts and allow students the opportunity to exercise judgment and to improve their understanding of the challenges associated with applying organizational behavior concepts to organizational problems. When cases are used in the classroom, students can gain insight into the perspective of others and begin to understand how context plays a role in applying concepts. Importantly, cases serve as an integrative tool where students can apply concepts that they have learned across different chapters.

OB at Work illustrates how professionals apply organizational behavior concepts in their own careers and workplaces. Each OB at Work segment features an individual and explains how they have turned to OB concepts to help them solve an organizational problem, improve a process, or make sense of a work related situation.

Expert Contributions apply concepts discussed in the topic summary. This unique feature provides students valuable insights into how to apply the latest thinking in OB.

Elements of the Text Mapped into the Experiential Learning Cycle



Organization of the Text

Contemporary Organizational Behavior: From Ideas to Action is organized into topic sections, rather than traditional chapters. Each topic section contains a short, engaging summary of the central concepts, and two to four authoritative readings from topic experts. Professors may also assign a real-world case study from a contemporary organization and/or experiential exercises that bring topic concepts to life. This provides the basis for understanding both the underlying theory that explains organizational behavior and how this theory is applied in a contemporary context.

Topic Summary—Each topic summary provides students with a succinct summary of a particular topic in organizational behavior. Each of these topics in organizational behavior could be a separate book! We have consolidated the thinking on this topic and framed it in a way to show you the connection among important ideas. Features in the topic summary include:

Learning Objectives—The learning objectives for each topic are listed in the beginning of the topic summary and are matched within the text. Students can refer to the learning objectives as you study the topic summary.

Key Terms—Key terms are provided at the beginning of each topic summary and are bolded to stand out. After you read the topic summary, students can refer to the terms listed to check their comprehension of the material that they learned. Students can take notes and write down any questions they have to bring up in class discussions or to refer to the course instructor.

OB at Work—Real experiences by workplace professionals are highlighted in this feature. This helps students see the ideas of organizational behavior put into action.

Spotlight on Research—Organizational behavior ideas are based on research that scholars have conducted and published. Oftentimes, scholars will conduct research based on a question that they have about life in organizations. We provide students with an overview of a contemporary research study and discussion questions to frame their thinking.

Expert Contributions—We asked leading scholars in organizational behavior that specialize in various topics to contribute a reading around one or more of their ideas. These ideas have been published in books, peer reviewed journal outlets, and presented at conferences, and are often based on years of research, thinking, and scholarly conversation. They wrote the readings specifically for *Contemporary Organizational Behavior*.

Instructor Resources

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Our Team

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– *Kim Elsbach*

– *Anna Kayes*

– *Chris Kayes*

MATRIX OF CASE STUDIES FOR USE WITH TOPIC SECTIONS

CASE TITLE	Introduction to Organizational Behavior	Individual Characteristics	Learning	Perception	Leadership	Motivation
The Case of Apple iPhone 4					X	X
"We Are Global or We Are Nothing": Conflict and Cover-Up at ColequarterMaine						X
EMERGENCY! We Need a Better Compensation System						X
Face Time at TechPoint Software, Inc.			X	X	X	
Whatever Happened to One of the "100 Best Companies to Work For"? A Case Study of Hewlett-Packard	X	X		X	X	X
NASCAR's Drive for Diversity: Can They Reach the Finish Line?			X			X
Perceptions of Leaders Following Public Failures: A Tale of Two Coaches		X		X	X	
Conflict in Santa's Workshop: Learning to Be a Team Player at ToyKing		X				X

MATRIX OF EXERCISES FOR USE WITH TOPIC SECTIONS

EXERCISE TITLE	Introduction to Organizational Behavior	Individual Characteristics	Learning	Perception	Leadership	Motivation
Big Five Celebrity Spotlight		X				
Creating My Brand					X	
My Expat Assignment			X			
How Leaders Effect You					X	X
My Best and Worst Learning Experiences	X		X	X		X
Developing Your Career—Leadership Development in Action	X			X	X	
Development While In College		X	X			
Facts and Opinions		X		X		
Being Positive		X	X			

	Persuasion, Influence, and Impression Management	Decision Making	Groups and Teams	Conflict and Negotiation	Diversity and Communication	Culture	Change, Innovation, and Stress	Corporate Social Responsibility, Ethics, and Sustainability
	X	X		X		X	X	
	X		X		X		X	X
		X	X	X		X	X	X
		X		X		X	X	
	X				X	X		
		X	X	X	X	X		
	X							X
			X	X	X			X

	Persuasion, Influence, and Impression Management	Decision Making	Groups and Teams	Conflict and Negotiation	Diversity and Communication	Culture	Change, Innovation, and Stress	Corporate Social Responsibility, Ethics, and Sustainability
	X							X
					X	X		
					X			
				X				
		X						
	X				X			

(Continued on next page)

MATRIX OF EXERCISES FOR USE WITH TOPIC SECTIONS Continued

EXERCISE TITLE	Introduction to Organizational Behavior	Individual Characteristics	Learning	Perception	Leadership	Motivation
Force Field Analysis						
Bias and Decision Making				X		
Well-Being at Work						
What Stresses You Out?						X
Laughter Is the Best Medicine		X				
Building My Network—Individual	X	X				
Writing a Team Contract						
Design Your Technology						X
Team Performance Evaluation				X		
Overcoming Resistance						
Employment Branding	X			X		X
OD Techniques at Work						X
A Clash of Cultures						
What’s Your University’s Culture?						
Find the Artifacts						
Back-to-Back Change						
Social Media Dilemma						
Develop Your Professional Code	X					
Communication Breakdown						
Diversity Rocks		X				
You Can’t Handle The Truth				X		
The Ethics of the Climb		X				
Mindmapping	X					
Could I Be a Whistleblower?		X				X
Sustainability Practice at Work						
Who Do I Fire?						
What Are My Values?		X				X
Team Survival Simulation						
Federal Intelligence Simulation In Instructor’s Manual					X	

	Persuasion, Influence, and Impression Management	Decision Making	Groups and Teams	Conflict and Negotiation	Diversity and Communication	Culture	Change, Innovation, and Stress	Corporate Social Responsibility, Ethics, and Sustainability
		X					X	
		X						
						X	X	
							X	
							X	
	X			X	X			
			X		X	X		
							X	
		X	X					
							X	
	X				X		X	
					X		X	
						X		
	X							X
						X		X
							X	
		X		X				
								X
		X	X					
		X	X	X	X			

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Section I

Topic Summaries and
Expert Contributions



Topic Summaries and
Expert Contributions

1 Introduction to Organizational Behavior

Topic Summary Learning Objectives

1. Describe organizational behavior and its importance.
2. Define the three levels of organizational behavior and the four organizational behavior processes.
3. Describe and provide examples of different types of organizations.
4. Present the skills needed to be effective in contemporary organizations and describe the three learning activities associated with gaining these skills.
5. Apply concepts of organizational behavior to organizations.

Key Terms

applied, p. 7	learning activities, p. 9	positive organizational outcomes, p. 7
characteristics of contemporary organizations, p. 8	levels of organizational behavior, p. 3	practice-based and developmental learning, p. 9
individual processes, p. 4	negative organizational outcomes, p. 7	qualitative, p. 6
interdisciplinary study, p. 6	organization, p. 5	quantitative, p. 6
interpersonal processes, p. 4	organizational behavior, p. 3	situational approach, p. 8
interpretive-based learning, p. 9	organizational processes, p. 4	types of contemporary organizations, p. 5
leading and leadership processes, p. 4	performance-based learning, p. 9	universal approach, p. 8

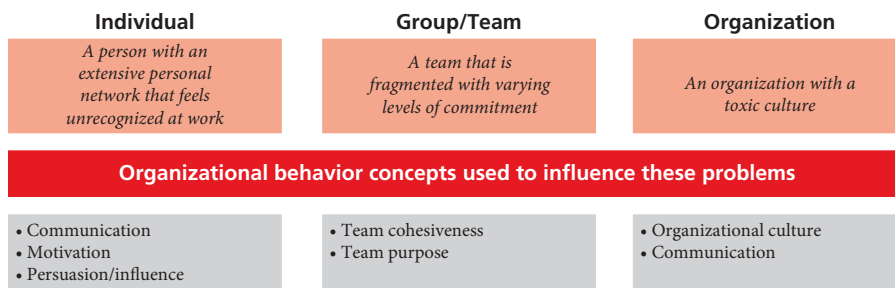
Introduction to Contemporary Organizational Behavior

Organizational behavior (OB) is the study of people and what people think, feel, and do within organizations. People participate in organizations for many different reasons, but in general, organizations facilitate the achievement of goals that could not be achieved by an individual working independently. Working in an organization that is unpleasant can lead to negative consequences on health, well-being, creativity and productivity.¹ On the other hand, many organizational processes can lead to improvements in how people experience organizational life. Most people would rather work in organizations where there is civility, creativity, recognition, and other positive behaviors. Improving how organizations function, building positive organizational environments, and changing negative behavior requires understanding of the highly complex and interrelated processes of organizational behavior.

Figure 1.1 considers three practical challenges faced in organizations and how organizational behavior principles can help to resolve these challenges. For example:

- An employee has an extensive personal network, but still feels unrecognized at work. Developing influence skills may help this employee gain recognition and better leverage her network.
- A team faces a simple, but time critical project, but team members feel that the team is fragmented and not all the members of the team are committed to the project. The team can take time to build cohesion and develop a common purpose to overcome the team's fragmentation.
- An organization has a toxic culture where individuals act in ways that are uncivil and hostile. Increasing communication, improving interpersonal skills, and establishing a culture where positive interactions are rewarded, can help to change the organization's culture.

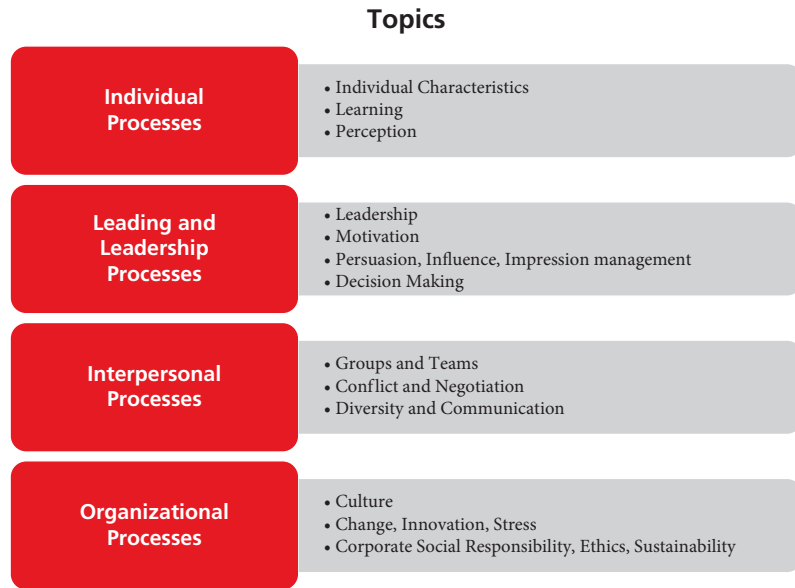
The three problems outlined here correspond to the **three levels of organizational behavior**. Behavior occurs at three levels—individual, team or group, and organization. In the first example, the employee may rely on individual level organizational behavior processes such as communication, persuasion, and influence. In the second example, teams can receive a boost from team training or a specialized team intervention aimed at clarifying the team's purpose. Finally, an organization with a



1 Describe organizational behavior and its importance.

Figure 1.1
Challenges at Work

Figure 1.2 Topics in Contemporary Organizational Behavior



2 Define the three levels of organizational behavior and the four organizational behavior processes.

toxic culture can change the tone at the organizational level, promoting warmth and civility across various divisions of an organization.²

Contemporary Organizational Behavior introduces key organizational behavior terms and provides a deeper look into organizational processes.³ There are four dynamic organizational processes that shed light on life in contemporary organizations. **Individual processes** describe individual differences in characteristics, learning, and perception. **Leading and leadership processes** describe the factors that impact differences in leadership, motivation, persuasion, influence, impression management, and decision making. **Interpersonal processes** refer to the pattern of interactions among individuals that includes groups and teams, negotiation, and communication and diversity. **Organizational processes** include the ingrained patterns of acting and interacting at the organizational level and cover topics of culture, change, innovation, stress, corporate social responsibility, ethics, and sustainability.

The study of contemporary organizational behavior provides a better understanding of how these organizational processes can improve outcomes for individuals, groups, and organizations by highlighting three critical components. First, a contemporary approach integrates the best and most recent evidence-based research and puts this research into the context of your personal life, work, and participation in organizations. Second, a contemporary approach presents long standing theories and ideas about organizations and shows how these theories and ideas can be helpful in making sense of experiences in organizations. Third, contemporary organizational behavior re-emphasizes the practical nature of organizational behavior as an applied field of study. Organizational behavior does more than explain and describe life in organizations, it is a field of study directed towards change and improvement of organizations and the people in organizations.

What Is an Organization?

An **organization** is where people interact and coordinate in order to achieve a purpose. All organizations share one attribute: organizations require people interacting with one another. However, many different **types of organizations** exist. In fact, researchers have tried for decades to find a definitive classification to explain the various types of organizations, but as soon as a complete list of all types of organizations seems to be identified, a new type of organization emerges. An organization can be a company directed towards making profits or an informal group of students that regularly meet about safety on campus. Even a religious congregation constitutes a type of organization. Essentially, organizations are varied, are formed for different lengths of time and for different purposes. Table 1.1 outlines several types of contemporary organizations.⁴ The study of organizational behavior looks at both the similarities and the differences among people and their interactions in organizations.⁵

3 Describe and provide examples of different types of organizations.



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Table 1.1 Types of Contemporary Organizations

Type of Contemporary Organization	Description	Example
Community of practice	Group of people who share an interest in a topic and interact together on the topic	Associations, international development, education
Hybrid	Form of organization that combines two or more forms. May consist of a team structure embedded in a formal hierarchical structure.	Technology firm, some corporations
Network	An organization with a shared responsibility, equal status among members, and shaped more by the activities of its members than by its hierarchy	Technology firms, craft organizations
Bureaucratic	An organization with specialized roles, and a command and control structure with formal hierarchy	U.S. government agency, armed forces, some corporations
Professional	A public or private organization that consists of people with strong professional norms and similar professions	Healthcare, law, and higher education
Representative democratic	An organization based on the principles of employee autonomy, participation, and even profit-sharing or shared ownership	Credit unions, food-coop

What Is Organizational Behavior?

A Field of Study

Organizational behavior emerged as a distinct field of study in the 1940s. By 1971, organizational behavior had its own division in the prestigious academic organization, The Academy of Management.⁶ Research and new ideas have kept pace with the corresponding changes in the workplace and the field of organizational behavior continues to refine its scope. When new issues emerge such as diversity or corporate social responsibility, so too has the study of organizational behavior sought to better understand these issues by drawing on a variety of fields of study and by encompassing complimentary forms of research.

Interdisciplinary

Organizational behavior helps us understand organizations from many different perspectives. For example, economics provides a popular way to understand organizations as a function of supply and demand in a free market. Economics has been highly influential in our perceptions of how organizations function. A closely related approach to understanding organizations comes from the financial perspective, which seeks to understand organizations from the perspective of cash flows, debt, and other financial considerations. In a somewhat related approach, an accounting perspective describes organizations as a series of accounting processes and financial controls and costs. While fields of study such as marketing and strategy largely view organizations as a function of external markets, competitive advantages, and products and services.

Each approach offers insights into how an organization functions and the purpose of the organization; yet, each of these approaches remains incomplete without a comprehensive understanding brought about by the study of organizational behavior. Organizational behavior is an **interdisciplinary study**, which means that it draws from different disciplines in order to understand organizations from multiple perspectives and viewpoints. As an interdisciplinary study, organizational behavior draws from psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, strategy, management, and even the natural sciences. Early criticisms of organizational behavior included that as a field it borrowed too heavily from other disciplines and did not contribute its own research. The contemporary study of organizational behavior, however, contributes unique insights that are theoretical grounded, based on research, and applied in organizations.

Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches

The distinction between qualitative and quantitative approaches to research is important in the study of organizations. **Qualitative** approaches explore situations and seek a deeper understanding of a situation through the use of detailed methods such as focus groups, interviews, and observation. Qualitative approaches provide deeper and richer understanding of a particular case or situation but this understanding is not necessarily applicable to other situations or to a different context. **Quantitative** approaches, on the other hand, try to predict results and identify factors that are universal. Quantitative approaches rely on surveys and other large-scale data collection techniques. One question to ask yourself as you learn about organizational behavior is whether or not you think

certain ideas, studies, or concepts can be applied across all organizations or whether they can only be applied in certain contexts and under certain situations.

Applied

Organizational behavior is an **applied** discipline because it seeks to improve organizations and to make positive impacts on people while solving practical problems that people face in the workplace. It seeks to answer questions, solve problems, and help organizations achieve goals. Although there is agreement that certain outcomes are important, such as job satisfaction, work performance, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and effectiveness, no single outcome is universally accepted. Some have argued that different types of organizations should strive for different outcomes. For example, universities should strive to improve the education of students. In contrast, businesses might strive to increase shareholder value through increased revenue growth while a mission driven not-for-profit organization might try to accomplish its mission. Others have argued that organizations should focus on multiple outcomes rather than a single outcome.

Some of the **positive organizational outcomes** that organizations seek to achieve include effectiveness, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, reduced absenteeism, and low turnover intention. For example, organizational behavior researchers offer a connection among interpersonal processes such as support, commitment, and performance. This connection occurs in the workplace for employees as well as in universities for students.⁷ If you were to apply organizational behavior principles to your university to achieve positive outcomes, you might encourage a culture of student support that leads to student commitment and ultimately improves student performance in class.⁸

Negative organizational outcomes describe a full range of undesirable behaviors including unethical behavior, sabotage, absenteeism, and incivility. These types of behaviors are what organizational behavior seeks to understand, solve, or prevent.⁹ Some

How can organizational behavior help you?

- ✓ Learn skills that employers deem critical for the contemporary workplace.
- ✓ Improve your understanding of how organizations function.
- ✓ Identify ways to motivate others.
- ✓ Improve understanding of human behavior.
- ✓ Evaluate and execute different forms of decision making.
- ✓ Garner insights into how you fit into the larger organization.
- ✓ Understand how an organization can help with greater social good and be profitable.
- ✓ Navigate the ethical and performance-based challenges of contemporary organizations.
- ✓ Develop yourself as a person and leader.
- ✓ Improve your overall well being at work and beyond.
- ✓ Understand ways that you contribute to your organization.
- ✓ Solve problems.
- ✓ Match your preferences to learning organizational behavior.

students have asked why employees do bad things, when these bad things result in trillions of dollars of costs annually for organizations and society. Some organizational behavior researchers have argued that simple managerial changes, such as implementing an ethics policy, often fail to prevent bad behavior because many problems faced by organizations involve complex individual processes like emotion and learning.¹⁰ A more complete understanding of unethical behavior at work should encourage you to consider emotions of guilt and shame and how individuals form values. A contemporary approach to organizational behavior focuses on understanding organizations as a set of complex processes that lead to multiple outcomes.

Understanding the Contemporary Organization

Contemporary organizations present many challenges. The rapid pace of change, the complexity of information, and multiple goals place ever increasing demands on organizations. Organizations require continued adaptation in order to function effectively in this environment. How people view the nature of work, how work is accomplished, and how to improve work continues to evolve.¹¹ Contemporary organizations, despite their many differences, share a few common **characteristics**.^{12, 13} These include:

- Pressure to achieve more complex goals
- Emphasis on measurement and data driven decisions
- Greater competition across the organization
- Diminished value on long-term relationships with employees
- Action orientation
- Multicultural membership
- Coordination of work across distance and time
- Unpredictable and ever-changing environment
- Necessity of individual *and* team performance

Even though many people would agree that these characteristics are present in their organization, people continue to disagree about how to respond to these challenges. Some believe that there is always one best way to respond and behave to problems or situations, this is called the **universal approach**. People who take the universal approach believe that one idea or set of tools applies to any situation. The universal approach was popular early in the evolution of the field of organizational behavior. A more contemporary understanding of organizational behavior involves the **situational approach**. The situational approach suggests that problems or situations need to be evaluated in a particular context in order to find the best tool or ideas to respond. An understanding of context improves the ability to understand, describe, and influence behavior in organizations. Once the situation or context for the behavior is understood, then the tools that are necessary to respond effectively can be determined.

As you read and learn about organizational behavior, you may find that some of the ideas or research presented do not support your personal experiences. One reason that your experiences may not match what you are reading about is that organizational behavior often seeks to explain general rules or principles rather than describe specific

experiences. This means that concepts and research findings often reflect broader sets of experiences, beyond the experience of a single individual. As you learn new ideas and concepts, you may find yourself questioning your own assumptions and ideas about behavior in the workplace. Understanding organizational behavior through one's own experience is a good starting place, but should be complimented with systematic study and research.

Who Benefits from Organizational Behavior?

All types of organizational members benefit from understanding organizational behavior. Some careers, like human resources, management, and consulting specifically draw on organizational behavior principles. However, knowledge, skills, and principles of organizational behavior can be applied in any career field. Organizational behavior topics and principles are embedded in university curriculum in business schools, medical schools, law schools, engineering schools, and schools of education, to name a few. Nearly all organizations, including the *Fortune* 500 companies, rely on organizational behavior principles for training curriculum for leadership development programs, management decision making, and designing organizational processes.

How Can Organizational Behavior Help You?

A contemporary approach to organizational behavior provides a comprehensive overview of essential organizational behavior concepts and helps you to apply these concepts in practice. Learning and applying organizational behavior concepts is achieved through several different **learning activities**. First, you will learn basic concepts, terms, and theories. A basic understanding of the language associated with organizations facilitates your performance as a student. This is called **performance-based learning** because the outcome of performance-based learning is to recall and demonstrate basic knowledge.

Corresponding to each topic summary are in-depth readings by experts. These expert readings help you to integrate concepts and differentiate among and across ideas, also termed **interpretive-based learning**. Interpretive learning improves your understanding of concepts and ideas by comparing and contrasting them. You should begin to see how the concepts could be applied across different contexts as you develop a deeper understanding of the concepts. Understanding the basic strengths and weaknesses of various concepts is essential to interpretive learning.¹⁴

Cases studies and exercises further deepen your learning as you learn to apply the concepts in your own life and work. Cases and exercises provide you with the opportunity to experience the concepts firsthand and to interact with others around these concepts. Application of the concepts leads to **practice-based and developmental learning**. Practice-based learning will help you solve behavioral-based problems in the workplace, better understand people's behavior, influence, and apply the concepts in order to meet the challenges of today's changing workplace. Figure 1.3 shows the progressive nature of these learning activities.

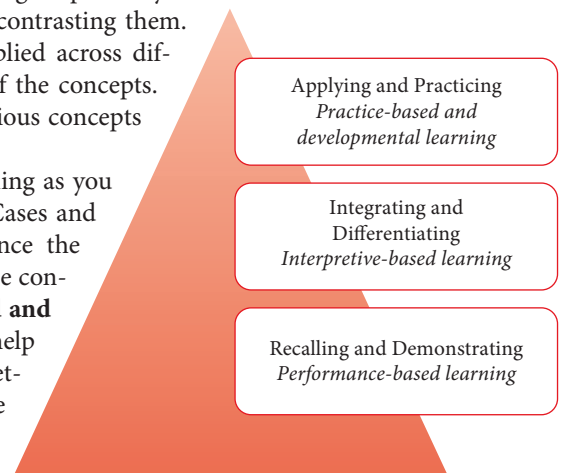


Figure 1.3 Learning Activities