

Fundamentals of Organizational Behaviour



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Sixth Edition

Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior

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Preface

Welcome to the sixth and updated edition of *Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior*. This book is designed for courses in organizational behavior and management that focus on the application of organizational behavior knowledge to achieve enhanced productivity and satisfaction in the workplace. Organizational behavior is about human behavior on the job. Knowledge of organizational behavior is, therefore, an important source from which any manager or corporate professional may draw. The same information that can drive a manager to excel can also assist individual organizational contributors in becoming more adaptive and effective. Nonmanagerial professionals, technology workers, sales representatives, and service providers benefit from the insight and analysis that organizational behavior provides, as do managers and prospective managers. All are welcome under the umbrella of organizational behavior.

Organizational behavior, because of its key contributions in driving workforce productivity, is a standard part of the curriculum in schools and colleges of business, management, and public administration. The case for the relevance of organizational behavior was stated recently by Bob Funk, the chairman, CEO, and founder of Express Employment Professionals, one of the nation's largest job agencies. Funk observes that getting ahead in today's world starts with skills. Yet hard skills and experience are only part of the equation, and not the important half. "So many people do not realize how important soft skills (essentially interpersonal skills) are to unlocking job opportunity," he says.*

As a result of interest in the field, research and writing about the field proliferates. To provide just an overview of this vast amount of information, many introductory textbooks are quite lengthy, easily filling 800 pages or more. To soften the impact of such encyclopedic approaches to the study of organizational behavior, many of these books also lavishly layer figures and photographs onto their extended narratives. Many of the new, briefer textbooks are simply condensed versions of the longer books.

Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior takes a briefer, more focused, and more applied approach to learning about the field. Instead of trying to dazzle with a baffling array of concepts, research findings, theories, and news clippings, this book concentrates on only the most useful ideas. It blends clear and thoughtful exposition of traditional topics, such as motivation, with topics of more recent origin, such as creativity, virtual teams, knowledge management, diversity, and cultural intelligence.

Although each chapter packs a lot of information, chapters consistently emphasize the essential and the practical. A major strategy was to de-emphasize elaborate theories and findings that are no longer the subject of active research, practice, or training programs. However, we did not permit our concern for brevity to strip the text down to a sterile outline devoid of human interest, examples, and useful applications. Most of the brief textbooks on organizational behavior sacrifice cases, self-quizzes, discussion questions, and in-action inserts. *Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior*, however, injects all of these elements into its pages and still stays concise.

The size and scope of this book are well suited to college courses that supplement a core textbook with journal articles, major projects, specialty textbooks, online information, or other instructional media. In addition, the comprehensiveness of *Fundamentals of*

*Quoted in William McGurn, "Bring Back the Work Ethic," *The Wall Street Journal*, September 5, 2017, p. A13.

Organizational Behavior, combined with its brevity, makes it suitable for workplace organizational training programs about human behavior. The student who masters this textbook will not only acquire an overview of and appreciation for organizational behavior research, literature, theory, and opinion, but will also develop a feel for managing and influencing others through the application of systematic knowledge about human behavior.

THE FEATURES

In addition to summarizing and synthesizing relevant information about essential organizational behavior topics and providing concrete examples of theories in action, *Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior* incorporates many useful features to make the material more accessible, collaborative, and incisive. It also works hard to be technologically relevant, such as by describing how information technology is used to enhance group decision making, how social media influence networking in organizations, and how artificial intelligence factors into decision making.

- *Learning Objectives* introduce the major themes of each chapter and provide a framework for study.
- *Boldfaced key terms* are defined in the margins, listed at the end of each chapter, and reinforced in an end-of-book glossary.
- *Opening vignettes* explore real organizational issues, highlighting the stake all types of organizations have in using human capital well.
- *Organizational Behavior in Action* boxes describe the actions of managers and professionals in dealing effectively with the human aspects of management, making visible the connection between theory and practice.
- *Self-Assessments and Skill-Development Exercises* support self-directed learning while driving the connections among research, theory, and practice down to the personal level. They not only provide a point of departure for students in understanding and valuing their own individual attitudes and behaviors, but they also serve to create an ongoing dialogue, as each assessment and exercise can be returned to many times over the course of a semester. The Self-Assessments and Skill-Development Exercises have been well-accepted features of the previous five editions.
- *Implications for Managerial Practice* sections, located near the end of each chapter, set off several smart suggestions for applying organizational behavior information in a managerial context.
- *Summaries of Key Points*, located at the end of each chapter, integrate all key topics and concepts into several cogent paragraphs and link them with the chapter's stated learning objectives.
- *Key Terms and Phrases* provide a useful review of each chapter's terminology.
- *Discussion Questions and Activities*, located at the end of each chapter, are suitable for individual or group analysis. Included are collaboration questions aimed at fostering group activity.
- *Case Problems*, located at the end of each chapter, illustrate major themes of the chapter and are suitable for individual or group analysis. Case Problems are uniquely designed to complement this textbook, and include relevant follow-up discussion questions.

THE FRAMEWORK

Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior is a blend of description, skill development, insight, and prescription. Divided into four parts, it moves from the micro to the macro, beginning with a brief introduction to the discipline. It then progresses to an exploration

of the individual, to a discussion of groups and intergroup dynamics, and to an examination of organizational systems.

As just noted, Part 1 provides an introduction to organizational behavior. Chapter 1 focuses on the nature and scope of organizational behavior and provides the foundation for what is to come.

Part 2 includes six chapters that deal with the individual in the organization. Chapter 2 describes fundamental aspects of understanding individuals in terms of individual differences, mental ability, and personality. Chapter 3 describes individuals from the standpoint of learning, perception, and values. Chapter 4 describes attitudes, job satisfaction, and ethics as they relate to behavior in organizations. Chapter 5 is about individual decision making and creativity. Chapter 6 presents basic concepts of motivation, and Chapter 7 discusses techniques for enhancing motivation.

Part 3, about groups and intergroup relations, contains six chapters. Chapter 8 is about interpersonal communication, and Chapter 9 covers group dynamics, including the characteristics of an effective work group. Chapter 10 is devoted to teams and teamwork. Chapter 11 deals with leadership, a cornerstone topic in organizational behavior and management. Chapter 12 extends the study of leadership by describing power, politics, and influence. Chapter 13 describes the nature and management of conflict and stress. (This chapter deals in part with interpersonal phenomena and in part with individual phenomena.)

Part 4, about the organizational system and the global environment, contains four chapters covering macro issues in organizational behavior. Chapter 14 deals with organization structure and design. Chapter 15 is about organizational culture and knowledge management. Chapter 16 is about organizational change and innovation, but it also deals with the individual profiting from change. Chapter 17 covers cultural diversity and cross-cultural organizational behavior.

CHANGES IN THE SIXTH EDITION

The sixth edition updates the fifth edition as the knowledge base of organizational behavior continues to evolve. Fifteen of the seventeen chapter-opening vignettes and Organizational Behavior in Action boxes are new. Fifteen of the seventeen case problems are new, and new research findings can be found in every chapter. We have also selectively eliminated concepts that are essentially new names and labels for existing concepts. In several instances, we have eliminated the descriptions of research and focused on the conclusion of the research. We have reduced the number of technical terms, particularly where recent terms are variations of useful terms that already exist. Four new self-assessment quizzes and one new skill-development exercise are added to the book. Major additions and new or enhanced topical coverage are listed here, chapter by chapter:

Chapter 1: The Nature and Scope of Organizational Behavior

The history of organizational behavior includes a mention of artificial intelligence. A section on “The New Age Workplace” is added to the history of organizational behavior.

Chapter 2: Individual Differences, Mental Ability, and Personality

A self-assessment quiz about narcissism is added to the chapter. A brief section is now included about how performance is aided by having the optimum amount of a given personality trait. Information is presented about competencies associated with emotional intelligence.

Chapter 3: Learning, Perception, and Values

The link between modeling and social cognitive theory is added. An implication for managerial practice is added about not stereotyping workers who are talented in one aspect of work.

Chapter 4: Attitudes, Job Satisfaction, and Ethics

A key approach to enhancing ethical and socially responsible behavior is added: focus on the triple bottom line of profit, people, and the planet. Information is added about a meta-analysis of the positive consequences of ethical leadership on organizational performance.

Chapter 5: Individual Decision Making and Creativity

The classical/behavioral decision-making model is replaced by simply a decision-making model. Decision biases are added to the influences on decision making. Information is provided about how artificial intelligence influences managerial decision making.

Chapter 6: Foundation Concepts of Motivation

A discussion of grit as part of intrinsic motivation is added to the chapter. A self-assessment quiz about grit is also provided.

Chapter 7: Motivational Methods and Programs

A brief section is added about how having a purpose or cause contributes to meaningful work. Information is also provided about how a sense of purpose can be found in performing mundane or routine tasks. Information is added about how using personal strengths and performing tasks of interest contribute to job crafting.

Chapter 8: Interpersonal Communication

Additional information is presented about how the human touch can enhance the benefits of computer-mediated communication. A new point is added to overcoming cross-cultural communication barriers by recognizing cultural differences in behavior during meetings.

Chapter 9: Group Dynamics

Psychological safety is added as a characteristic of work group effectiveness. Another new section describes the problems of excessive collaboration including workflow bottlenecks and burnout.

Chapter 10: Teams and Teamwork

A brief summary is presented about how encouraging trust in a virtual team enhances collaboration. The role of prosocial motivation in building teamwork is explained.

Chapter 11: Leadership in Organizations

A self-assessment quiz about strategic thinking is added to the section about cognitive skills. A section is added on mindfulness as a leadership behavior. Crisis leadership is presented as a form of contingency leadership. We eliminate the section about the path-goal theory and substitutes for leadership to help reduce the complexity of the chapter.

Chapter 12: Power, Politics, and Influence

The *hubris syndrome* is presented as an explanation of how too much power can corrupt a leader. Bringing forth solutions rather than problems is added as an ethical political tactic.

Chapter 13: Conflict and Stress

More extensive information is presented about sexual harassment because of heightened interest in the topic. Abusive supervision is highlighted as a contributor to conflict. A self-assessment quiz is included about a person's approach to negotiation. The negotiation tactic of "use facts more than threats" is added. Another stressor is presented, *nomophobia*, referring to not having a smartphone accessible. More information is presented about organizational wellness programs.

Chapter 14: Organization Structure and Design

Information is presented about how organizational silos can be dysfunctional. Figure 14-3 is revised, showing the new product organizational structure at Caterpillar. A skill-development exercise is added about choosing an organization structure for your own company.

Chapter 15: Organizational Culture and Knowledge Management

Orientation toward serving customers and joy and happiness are added as dimensions of organizational culture. Two new consequences of organizational culture are added: emotional and physical safety of workers, and organizational health.

Chapter 16: Organizational Change and Innovation

A key addition is an influence model of the change process in organizations. A new tactic for overcoming resistance to change is added: leaders must change also. Artificial intelligence is added to the discussion of how information technology has changed organizations. The sections on linkage analysis and the process consultation are deleted because of their waning use. An eighth behavioral principle of innovation is added—imposing some constraints on innovation.

Chapter 17: Cultural Diversity and Cross-Cultural Organizational Behavior

Avoiding cultural gaffes is added to the section about the advantages of cultural diversity. Information is presented about SAP as a multicultural organization. A seventh cross-cultural negotiating tactic is added, related to integrative versus distributed outcomes. Recruitment of minority group members is added as a corporate diversity initiative, as is anti-bias training.

ONLINE AND IN PRINT

STUDENT OPTIONS: PRINT AND ONLINE VERSIONS

This sixth edition of *Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior* is available in multiple versions: online, in PDF, and in print as either a paperback or loose-leaf text. The content of each version is identical.

The most affordable version is the online book, with upgrade options including the online version bundled with a print version. What is nice about the print version is that it offers you the freedom of being unplugged—away from your computer. The people at Academic Media Solutions recognize that it is difficult to read from a screen at length and that most of us read much faster from a piece of paper. The print options are particularly useful when you have extended print passages to read.

The online edition allows you to take full advantage of embedded digital features, including search and notes. Use the search feature to locate and jump to discussions anywhere in the book. Use the notes feature to add personal comments or annotations. You can move out of the book to follow Web links. You can navigate within and between chapters using a clickable table of contents. These features allow you to work at your own pace and in your own style, as you read and surf your way through the material. (See “Harnessing the Online Version” for more tips on working with the online version.)

HARNESSING THE ONLINE VERSION

The online version of *Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior* offers the following features to facilitate learning and to make using the book an easy, enjoyable experience:

- *Easy-to-navigate/clickable table of contents*—You can surf through the book quickly by clicking on chapter headings, or first- or second-level section headings. And the Table of Contents can be accessed from anywhere in the book.

- *Key terms search*—Type in a term, and a search engine will return every instance of that term in the book; then jump directly to the selection of your choice with one click.
- *Notes and highlighting*—The online version includes study apps such as notes and highlighting. Each of these apps can be found in the tools icon embedded in the Academic Media Solutions/Textbook Media’s online eBook reading platform (www.academicmediasolutions.com).
- *Upgrades*—The online version includes the ability to purchase additional study apps and functionality that enhance the learning experience.

INSTRUCTOR SUPPLEMENTS

In addition to its student-friendly features and pedagogy, the variety of student formats available, and the uniquely affordable pricing options that are designed to provide students with a flexibility that fits any budget and/or learning style, *Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior*, 6e, comes with the following teaching and learning aids:

- *Test Item File*—This provides an extensive set of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions for every chapter for creating original quizzes and exams.
- *Instructor’s Manual*—This is a condensed version of the book offering assistance in preparing lectures, identifying learning objectives, developing essay exams and assignments, and constructing course syllabi.
- *PowerPoint Presentations*—Key points in each chapter are illustrated in a set of PowerPoint files designed to assist with instruction.
- *Online Video Labs with Student Worksheets*—A collection of high-quality, dynamic, and sometimes humorous video segments (contemporary and classic) produced by a variety of media, academic, and entertainment sources, accessed via the web. Organized by chapter, the video segments illustrate key topics/ issues discussed in the chapters. Each video segment is accompanied by a student worksheet that consists of a series of discussion questions that helps students connect the themes presented in the video segment with key topics discussed in the specific chapter.

STUDENT SUPPLEMENTS AND UPGRADES (ADDITIONAL PURCHASE REQUIRED)

- *Lecture Guide*—This printable lecture guide is designed for student use and is available as an in-class resource or study tool. Note: Instructors can request the PowerPoint version of these slides either to use as developed or to customize.
- *Quizlet Study Set*—Quizlet is an easy-to-use online learning tool built from all the key terms from the textbook. Students can turbo charge their studying via digital flashcards and other types of study apps, including tests and games. Students are able to listen to audio, as well as create their own flashcards. Quizlet is a cross-platform application and can be used on a desktop, tablet, or smartphone.
- *Study Guide*—A printable version of the online study guide is available via downloadable PDF chapters for easy self-printing and review.

Acknowledgments

The final topical content and organization of this text were heavily influenced by the results of a survey of professors who expressed interest in using a shorter, more concise textbook. Instructors from 60 colleges provided their opinions on what subjects form the foundation of their courses. They also provided feedback on the types of pedagogical activities and features that provide real value to the introductory organizational behavior course. My writing also benefited from the suggestions of numerous reviewers, some of whom, for reasons of confidentiality, must remain anonymous. Grateful acknowledgment is made to

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Professor DuBrin is an established author of textbooks, scholarly books, and trade titles. He also has written for professional journals and magazines. He has written textbooks on leadership, the principles of management, political behavior in organizations, industrial psychology, and human relations. His scholarly books include the subjects of crisis leadership, impression management, narcissism, and the proactive personality. His trade titles cover many current issues, including coaching and mentoring, team play, office politics, coping with adversity, and tolerating ambiguity.

The Nature and Scope of Organizational Behavior

CHAPTER

1

Chapter Outline

- The Meaning and Research Methods of Organizational Behavior
- How You Can Benefit from Studying Organizational Behavior
- A Brief History of Organizational Behavior
- Skill Development in Organizational Behavior
- A Framework for Studying Organizational Behavior
- Implications for Managerial Practice



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Learning Objectives

After reading and studying this chapter and doing the exercises, you should be able to:

1. Explain what organizational behavior means.
2. Summarize the research methods of organizational behavior.
3. Identify the potential advantages of organizational-behavior knowledge.
4. Explain key events in the history of organizational behavior.
5. Understand how a person develops organizational-behavior skills.

Based in Fort Worth, Texas, the Starr Conspiracy is a marketing and advertising agency whose primary clients are enterprise software and services companies. Starr believes that it is changing the way marketing is done. The agency sees itself as the driving force behind the disruptors, the innovators, and the attention grabbers. Another self-descriptor is, “We are the agency of the future, and we explore beyond what currently exists—at an unmatched velocity.”

Staff members at Starr have been collaborating closely on projects for four years. If you peek into the glass-walled conference rooms, notes chief executive Brett Starr, you will see people who would never sit together in a coffeehouse. These people are artists, marketers, data analysts, and software engineers. Yet Starr management saw a need for improvement in how well staff members collaborate and how smoothly they work together.

Starr engaged the services of a workplace behavior consultant to build self-directed teams responsible for coordinating their own work on client projects. Teams participate in face-to-face meetings with managers almost daily to give status reports or request support. Before these self-directed groups were formed, individual staff members were frequently interrupted by different managers with questions about projects, including a few that they were not ready to discuss at the time.

The consultant also trained Starr’s 68 staff members to understand each other’s communication and learning styles. For example, the top sales executive spoke so fast that other people could not process what he was saying. The executive had to learn to slow down so that the information he presented could be useful to others. An agency co-owner had to learn to listen more and give fewer presentations.

Starr employees say their projects and designs have become more creative and broader in scope, attributed to better cooperation and collaboration. Starr Art Director Nancy Crabb says, “Working across so many disciplines at once, we’re able to tackle problems that I never would have tried previously.”¹

The story just presented illustrates how a company might make systematic use of knowledge of human behavior, including two relevant techniques to enhance the functioning of an organization. (The two techniques are self-directed teams and learning each other’s communication and learning styles.) The purpose of this book is to present systematic knowledge about people and organizations that can be used to enhance individual and organizational effectiveness. Managers and potential managers are the most likely to apply this information. Yet the same information is important for other workers, including corporate professionals, sales representatives, customer service specialists, and technical specialists.

In the modern organization, workers at every level do some of the work that was formerly the sole domain of managers. Team members, for example, are often expected to motivate and train each other. One reason organizations get by with fewer managers than previously is that workers themselves are now expected to manage themselves to some extent. Self-management of this type includes the team scheduling its own work and making recommendations for quality improvement.

In this chapter we introduce organizational behavior from several perspectives. We will explain the meaning of the term, see why organizational behavior is useful, and take a brief glance at its history including current developments. After describing how to develop skills in organizational behavior, we present a framework for understanding the field. An important goal in studying organizational behavior is to be able to make sense of any organization in which you are placed, so that, for example, you might be able to answer the question: What is going on here from a human standpoint?

The Meaning and Research Methods of Organizational Behavior

A starting point in understanding the potential contribution of organizational behavior is to know the meaning of the term. It is also important to be familiar with how information about organizational behavior is acquired.

The Meaning of Organizational Behavior

Organizational behavior (OB) is the study of human behavior in the workplace, of the interaction between people and the organization, and of the organization itself.² The major goals of organizational behavior are to explain, predict, and control behavior.

Explanation refers to describing the underlying reasons or process by which phenomena occur. For example, an understanding of leadership theory would explain why one person is a more effective leader than another. The same theory would help predict which people (e.g., those having charismatic qualities) are likely to be effective as leaders. Leadership theory could also be useful in controlling (or influencing) people. One leadership theory, for example, contends that group members are more likely to be satisfied and productive when the leader establishes good relationships with them.

Data Collection and Research Methods in Organizational Behavior

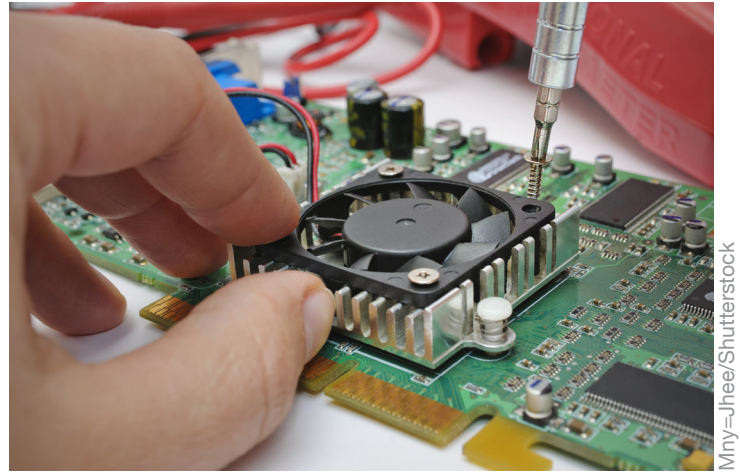
To explain, predict, and control behavior, organizational-behavior specialists must collect information systematically and conduct research. The purpose of collecting data is to conduct research.

Methods of Data Collection

Three frequently used methods of collecting data in organizational behavior are surveys, interviews, and direct observation of behavior. The *survey questionnaire* used by a specialist in organizational behavior is prepared rigorously. Before preparing a final questionnaire, a scientist collects relevant facts and generates hypotheses (educated guesses) about important issues to explore. The questionnaire is carefully designed to measure relevant issues about the topic being surveyed. For example, participants in a study might be asked to evaluate their supervisor in various dimensions such as giving clear instructions and showing compassion. Among the surveys included in this textbook is the self-quiz about conscientiousness in Chapter 2.

Research about human behavior in the workplace relies heavily on the *interview* as a method of data collection. Even when a questionnaire is the primary method of data collection, interviews are usually used to obtain ideas for survey questions. Interviews are also helpful in uncovering explanations about phenomena and furnishing leads for further inquiry. Another advantage of interviews is that a skilled interviewer can probe for additional information. One disadvantage of the interview method is that skilled interviewers are required.

Naturalistic observations refer to researchers placing themselves in the work environment to collect much information about organizational behavior. Systematic observations



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People engaged in highly technical work can also benefit from knowledge of organizational behavior because they too have frequent interactions with people and have to be creative.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 1

Explain what organizational behavior means.

organizational behavior (OB)

The study of human behavior in the workplace, the interaction between people and the organization, and the organization itself.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 2

Summarize the research methods of organizational behavior.



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Direct observation of people is one method of data collection.

are then made about the phenomena under study. One concern about this method is that the people under observation may perform atypically when they know they are being observed. A variation of systematic observation is *participant observation*. The observer becomes a member of the group about which he or she collects information. For example, to study stress experienced by customer service representatives, a researcher might work temporarily in a customer service center.

Research Methods

Four widely used research methods of organizational behavior are case studies, laboratory experiments, field experiments (or studies), and meta-analyses.

Case information is usually collected by an observer recording impressions in his or her mind or on a notepad or tablet computer. People have a tendency to attend to information specifically related to their own interests or needs. Despite this subjective element in the case method, cases provide a wealth of information that can be used to explain what is happening in a given situation.

An *experiment* is the most rigorous research method. The essence of conducting an experiment is making sure that the variable being modified (the independent variable) influences the results. The independent variable (e.g., a motivational technique) is thought to influence the dependent variable (e.g., productivity). The dependent variable is also known as the *criterion* (or *measure*).

A major characteristic of the *laboratory experiment* is that the conditions are supposedly under the experimenter's control. For example, to study the effects of stress on problem-solving ability, a group of people might be brought into a room. The stressor the experimenter introduces is an electronic beeping noise. In a field setting, however, assuming the experiment was permitted, the experimenter might be unaware of what other stressors the subjects faced at that time. A key concern about laboratory experiments, therefore, is that their results might not apply to the outside world.

Field experiments (or *studies*) attempt to apply the experimental method to real-life situations. Variables can be controlled more readily in the laboratory than in the field, but information obtained in the field is often more relevant. An example of a field experiment would be investigating whether giving employees more power would have an effect on their motivation to produce a great quantity of work. The independent variable would be empowerment, while the dependent variable would be quantity of work.

A widely used approach to reaching conclusions about behavior is to combine the results of a large number of studies. A **meta-analysis** is a quantitative or statistical review of the literature on a particular subject and is also an examination of a range of studies for the purpose of reaching a combined result or best estimate. A meta-analysis is therefore a review of studies, combining their quantitative information. You can also view meta-analysis as a quantitative review of the literature on a particular subject. For example, a researcher might want to combine the results of 100 different studies about the job-performance consequences of group decision making before reaching a conclusion. Many of the research findings presented throughout this book are based on meta-analysis rather than on the results of a single study. Meta-analysis continues to gain in frequency of use, as reflected in the many published research studies based on the technique.

An important use of meta-analysis in organizational behavior is to understand how certain factors, referred to as *moderator variables*, influence the results of studies.³ For example, in the experiment mentioned previously about stress and problem-solving ability, a moderator variable might be the amount of stress a study participant faces in personal life. Individuals who enter the experiment already stressed might be influenced more negatively by the electronic beeping noise.

Meta-analysis gives the impression of being scientific and reliable because so much information is assimilated, using sophisticated statistical tools. One might argue, however, that it is better to perform one rigorous study than to analyze many poorly conducted studies. A meta-analysis often consists of combining some carefully executed studies with a few of poor quality.

meta-analysis A quantitative or statistical review of the literature on a particular subject; an examination of a range of studies for the purpose of reaching a combined result or best estimate.

Quantitative versus Qualitative Research Methods

Another way to classify research methods is determining whether they are quantitative or qualitative.⁴ Quantitative research involves collecting data, such as customer-satisfaction survey responses and production records. The data are then subject to a variety of statistical techniques including correlational analysis, regression analysis, and analysis of variance. Recording the results of experiments and meta-analysis are also examples of quantitative research methods.

Qualitative research involves the researcher interacting with the source of the data, such as talking to workers and even taking videos and still photos. Interviews and participant observations are qualitative research methods. Naturalistic observation (observing people in natural settings) is frequently used as a method of qualitative research. Recognize, however, that qualitative research closely resembles quantitative research when the data from the qualitative observations are coded. For example, while interviewing workers about their job satisfaction, every response that contains a certain topic might be assigned a code. To illustrate, when workers mention the topic of “consideration for my feelings,” the response category of “consideration” would receive one entry. The entries would be tallied to yield a quantitative result. Many of the most important insights and theories in organizational behavior stem from qualitative research, such as uncovering what motivates people, and how organizations profit or learn from their experiences.

When management professors were asked to express their understanding of the difference between quantitative and qualitative research, one of the valuable insights that emerged was: “Quantitative research is about careful preparation and faithful execution of the plan laid out in the beginning; qualitative research is about exploring ideas.”⁵ Assume that a researcher wanted to study the conditions under which workers in a non-profit organization are creative. Using a quantitative research method, he or she would prepare a lengthy questionnaire about organizational conditions related to creativity, and then administer the questionnaire to a large group of staff members in a few nonprofit organizations. Using a qualitative method, she might visit a few nonprofit agencies, and talk to workers about their creative problem solving.

How You Can Benefit from Studying Organizational Behavior

Studying organizational behavior can enhance your effectiveness as a manager or professional. Yet the benefits from studying organizational behavior are not as immediately apparent as those derived from the study of functional fields such as accounting, marketing, purchasing, and information technology. Such fields constitute the *content* of managerial and professional work. Organizational behavior, in contrast, relates to the *process* of conducting such work. An exception may be seen with organizational-behavior specialists whose content, or functional knowledge, deals with organizational-behavior concepts and methods.

Visualize a woman industrial health specialist who has extremely limited interpersonal skills in communicating, motivating, and resolving conflict. She will have a difficult time applying her technical expertise to organizational problems. She will therefore fail in serving her clients because she lacks the ability to use effective interpersonal processes. In contrast, if the same health specialist had strong interpersonal skills, she could do a better job of serving her clients. (She would probably also hold onto her job longer.)

Studying and learning about organizational behavior offers four key advantages: (1) interpersonal skill development, (2) personal growth, (3) enhancement of organizational and individual effectiveness, and (4) sharpening and refinement of common sense.

Interpersonal Skill Development

Interpersonal skills remain of major importance in the modern workplace. These skills generally refer to getting along with people in a variety of ways such as motivating them,

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 3

Identify the potential advantages of organizational-behavior knowledge.



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Interpersonal skills are useful for people who wear a hard hat to work.

complimenting them, and being able to resolve conflict. People with good interpersonal skills are considered more rewarding to deal with.

Anil Singhal, the founder of NetScout Systems, a company that assists business firms and government agencies in managing their information technology networks, has helped many young employees make the transition to midcareer success. He believes that “primary skills” can take you only so far in your career. Singhal says that those talents by which you earned your college degree and first made your professional reputation can drive success for the first 10 years of a career. After that period, “secondary skills”—interpersonal skills such as the ability to interact well with coworkers—become key to continued success.⁶

More support for the key role of interpersonal skills in attaining career success stems from the observations of three economists. The trio found that high-paying occupations, including software engineer, financial advisor, and medical professional, require high-level interpersonal skills such as collaboration, empathy, and managing others.⁷

A major reason that interpersonal skill development is a key to success is that difficulty with interpersonal skills is a major reason behind career derailment. As Teddy Roosevelt said, “The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is to know how to get along with people.”⁸

The distinction between *soft* skills and *hard* skills is relevant for understanding the importance of interpersonal skill development, as well as the development of other skills, in organizational behavior. Soft skills are generally interpersonal skills such as motivating others, communicating, and adapting to people of different cultures. Hard skills are generally technical skills, such as information technology and job design. Some skills, such as those involved with decision making, have a mixture of soft and hard components. To make good decisions you have to be creative and imaginative (perhaps a soft skill), yet you also have to weigh evidence carefully (most likely a hard skill).

Personal Growth through Insight into Human Behavior

As explained by Robert P. Vecchio, an important reason for studying organizational behavior is the personal fulfillment gained from understanding others.⁹ Understanding fellow human beings can also lead to enhanced self-knowledge and self-insight. For example, while studying what motivates others, you may gain an understanding of what motivates you. Participating in the experiential exercises and self-assessments included in this textbook provides another vehicle for personal growth. A case in point is the study of motivation in Chapter 6. You will be invited to take a self-quiz about the meaningfulness of work to you. Taking the test and reviewing the results will give insight into the types of attitudes and behaviors you need to make your work more meaningful.

Personal growth through understanding others and self-insight is meritorious in and of itself, and it also has practical applications. Managerial and professional positions require sharp insights into the minds of others for tasks such as selecting people for jobs and assignments, communicating, and motivating. Sales representatives who can size up the needs of prospects and customers have a competitive advantage. Another value of understanding others and self-insight is that they contribute to continuous learning because the needs of others change over time, and so might your needs. For example, the recent prosperity and labor shortages have prompted many workers to demand exciting and meaningful work and worry less about job security.

Enhancement of Organizational and Individual Effectiveness

A major benefit from studying organizational behavior is that it provides information that can be applied to organizational problems. An important goal of organizational behavior is to improve **organizational effectiveness**—the extent to which an organization is productive and satisfies the demands of its interested parties. Each chapter of this book contains information that is applied directly or indirectly by many orga-

organizational effectiveness

The extent to which an organization is productive and satisfies the demands of its interested parties.

nizations. One visible example is the widespread use of teams in the workplace. Certainly, organizational-behavior specialists did not invent teams. We suspect even prehistoric people organized some of their hunting forays by teams. Nevertheless, the conclusions of organizational-behavior researchers facilitated the shift to teams in organizations.

Why does paying more attention to the human element improve business performance? One explanation Jeffrey Pfeffer offers is that people work harder when they have greater control over their work environment and when they are encouraged by peer pressure from teammates. Even more advantage comes from people working in a smarter way. People-oriented management practices enable workers to use their wisdom and to receive appropriate training. Another contribution to improved performance stems from eliminating positions that focus primarily on watching and controlling workers.¹⁰ Much of organizational behavior deals with people-oriented management practices. Many of these practices will be described in later chapters.

Understanding organizational behavior also improves organizational effectiveness because it uncovers factors that contribute to or hinder effective performance. Among these many factors are employee motivation, personality factors, and communication barriers. Furthermore, an advanced understanding of people is a major contributor to managerial success. This is especially true because so much of a manager's job involves accomplishing tasks through people.

Organizational behavior also contributes insights and skills that can enhance individual effectiveness. If a person develops knowledge about subjects such as improved interpersonal communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork, he or she will become more effective. A specific example is that knowledge about organizational behavior can contribute to high performance. Executive coach Lisa Parker observes that managers sometimes neglect to give encouragement and recognition to good performers because these workers are already performing well. Yet if these same solid performers were given more encouragement, coaching in the form of advice, and recognition, they will often develop into superstars (very high performers).¹¹

A frequent problem noted about managers is that they supervise too closely, or micromanage, the work of subordinates. One result is that employees can feel insecure and offended when their manager takes over a project that was assigned to them. If a present or future manager studies organizational behavior, he or she might become more aware of the problems of micromanagement, and then monitor his or her behavior to prevent micromanaging.¹²

The “Organizational Behavior in Action” box illustrates how a manager might use organizational-behavior knowledge in the form of paying attention to the human element to improve organizational effectiveness.

Sharpening and Refining Common Sense

A manager commented after reading through several chapters of an organizational-behavior textbook, “Why should I study this field? It’s just common sense. My job involves dealing with people, and you can’t learn that through a book.” Many other students of organizational behavior share the sentiments expressed by this manager. However logical such an opinion might sound, common sense is not an adequate substitute for knowledge about organizational behavior. This knowledge sharpens and enlarges the domain of common sense. It markedly reduces the amount of time necessary to acquire important behavioral knowledge and skills, much as law school reduces the amount of time that a person in a previous era would have had to spend as a law apprentice.



Individual effectiveness can be enhanced through studying organizational behavior.

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