

# Chapter 1

## Introduction to Organizational Behavior

### Chapter Overview

PPT 1.1

This chapter introduces the concept of organizational behavior. The focus of the text is that coupling individual understanding of behavior gained through experience with that gained through systematic OB analysis will help managers become more effective.

Many of the important challenges being faced by today's managers are described, as are the three levels of OB study. The outline of the text is described in relation to these three levels.

### Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, the student should be able to:

PPT 1.2

1. Define organizational behavior (OB).
2. Show the value of the systematic study of OB.
3. Identify the major behavioral science disciplines that contribute to OB.
4. Demonstrate why few absolutes apply to OB.
5. Identify the challenges and opportunities managers have in applying OB concepts.
6. Identify the three levels of analysis in OB.

### Suggested Lecture Outline

#### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Managers most often describe people problems as their most frequent and troublesome problems. They talk about:
  1. Bosses' poor communication skills,
  2. Employees' employee resistance to a company's reorganization and similar concerns.
- B. Until the late 1980s, business school curricula emphasized the technical aspects of management, focusing on economics, accounting, finance, and quantitative techniques.
  1. Course work in human behavior and people skills received relatively less attention.
  2. During the past three decades, however, business faculty have come to realize the role that understanding human behavior plays in determining a manager's effectiveness, and required courses on people skills have been added to many curricula.
- C. Developing managers' interpersonal skills also helps organizations attract and keep high-performing employees.
  1. Regardless of labor market conditions, outstanding employees are always in short supply.

2. Companies known as good places to work have a big advantage.
3. A recent survey of hundreds of workplaces, and over 200,000 respondents, showed the social relationships among co-workers and supervisors were strongly related to overall job satisfaction.
  - a. Positive social relationships also were associated with lower stress at work and lower intentions to quit.
  - b. Having managers with good interpersonal skills is likely to make the workplace more pleasant, which in turn makes it easier to hire and keep qualified people.
  - c. Creating a pleasant workplace also appears to make good economic sense. Companies with reputations as good places to work (such as the “100 Best Companies to Work for in America”) have been found to generate superior financial performance.
4. We have come to understand that in today’s competitive and demanding workplace, managers can’t succeed on their technical skills alone.
  - a. They also have to have good people skills.
  - b. This book has been written to help both managers and potential managers develop those people skills.

## II. ENTER ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

- A. We’ve made the case for the importance of people skills. But neither this book nor the discipline on which it is based is called “people skills.”
- B. The term that is widely used to describe the discipline is organizational behavior.
  1. **Organizational Behavior** (OB) studies the influence that individuals, groups, and structure have on behavior within organizations. The chief goal of OB is to apply that knowledge toward improving an organization’s effectiveness. PPT 1.3
  2. OB studies three determinants of behavior in organizations:
    - a. individuals PPT 1.4
    - b. groups
    - c. structure
  3. OB applies the knowledge gained from this study to make organizations work more effectively.
  4. This text will focus on:
    - a. motivation
    - b. leader behavior and power
    - c. interpersonal communication
    - d. group structure and processes
    - e. attitude development and perception
    - f. change processes
    - g. conflict and negotiation
    - h. work design

## III. COMPLEMENTING INTUITION WITH SYSTEMATIC STUDY

- A. People develop intuitive understandings of the behaviors of other people through experience. This experiential, common sense method of “reading” human behavior can often lead to erroneous predictions.
- B. You can improve your predictive ability by taking the systematic approach to the study of human behavior. PPT 1.5

- C. The fundamental assumption of the systematic approach is that human behavior is not random. There are fundamental consistencies that underlie the behavior of all individuals, and these fundamental consistencies can be identified and then modified to reflect individual differences.

1. **Systematic study** of behavior means: examining relationships, attempting to attribute causes and effects, and basing our conclusions on scientific evidence- that is, on data gathered under controlled conditions and measured and interpreted in a reasonably rigorous manner.

PPT 1.6

2. **Evidence-based Management (EBM)**: This complementary approach to systematic study involves basing managerial decisions on the best available scientific evidence. Managers must become more scientific about how they think about managerial problems and not rely on instinct.

PPT 1.7

3. **Intuition**: your “gut feelings” about “what makes others tick.” This natural ability to guess how people will react is most accurate when coupled with systemic thinking and evidence-based management.

- D. Our goal is to teach you how to use the systematic study of OB to enhance your intuitive understanding of behavior and improve your accuracy in explaining and predicting behavior in the workplace.

#### IV. DISCIPLINES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE OB FIELD

- A. Organizational behavior is an applied behavioral science built on contributions from a number of behavioral disciplines, mainly psychology and social psychology, sociology, and anthropology.

PPT 1.8

1. Psychology’s contributions have been mainly at the individual or micro level of analysis, while the other disciplines have contributed to our understanding of macro concepts such as group processes and organization.
2. Exhibit 1-1 is an overview of the major contributions to the study of organizational behavior.

- B. **Psychology**: seeks to measure, explain, and sometimes change behavior of humans and other animals.

Exhibit 1.1

1. Those who have contributed and continue to add to the knowledge of OB are
  - a. learning theorists
  - b. personality theorists
  - c. counseling psychologists
  - d. industrial and organizational psychologists.
    - 1) Early industrial/organizational psychologists studied the problems of fatigue, boredom, and other working conditions that could impede efficient work performance.
    - 2) More recently, their contributions have expanded to include learning, perception, personality, emotions, training, leadership effectiveness, needs and motivational forces, job satisfaction, decision-making processes, performance appraisals, attitude measurement, employee-selection techniques, work design, and job stress.

- C. **Social psychology**: generally considered a branch of psychology; blends concepts from both psychology and sociology to focus on peoples’ influence on one another.

1. One major study area is change—how to implement it and how to reduce barriers to its acceptance.
  2. Social psychologists also contribute to measuring, understanding, and changing attitudes; identifying communication patterns; and building trust.
  3. Finally, they have made important contributions to our study of group behavior, power, and conflict.
- D. **Sociology**: studies people in relation to their social environment or culture.
1. While psychology focuses on the individual, **sociology** studies people in relation to their social environment or culture.
    - a. Sociologists have contributed to OB through their study of group behavior in organizations, particularly formal and complex organizations.
    - b. Perhaps most important, sociologists have studied organizational culture, formal organization theory and structure, organizational technology, communications, power, and conflict.
- E. **Anthropology**: the study of societies to learn about human beings and their activities.
1. Anthropologists' work on cultures and environments has helped us understand differences in fundamental values, attitudes, and behavior between people in different countries and within different organizations.
  2. Much of our current understanding of organizational culture, organizational environments, and differences among national cultures is a result of the work of anthropologists or those using their methods.
- V. THERE ARE FEW ABSOLUTES IN OB
- A. Laws in the physical sciences—chemistry, astronomy, physics—are consistent and apply in a wide range of situations.
1. They allow scientists to generalize about the pull of gravity or to be confident about sending astronauts into space to repair satellites.
  2. Human beings are complex, and few, if any, simple and universal principles explain organizational behavior.
    - a. Because we are not alike, our ability to make simple, accurate, and sweeping generalizations is limited.
    - b. Two people often act very differently in the same situation, and the same person's behavior changes in different situations.
    - c. Not everyone is motivated by money, and people may behave differently at a religious service than they do at a party.
- B. That doesn't mean that we can't offer reasonably accurate explanations of human behavior or make valid predictions. It does mean that OB concepts must reflect situational, or contingency, conditions.
1. We can say x leads to y, but only under conditions specified in z—the **contingency variables**.
  2. The science of OB was developed by applying general concepts to a particular situation, person, or group.
  3. For example, OB scholars would avoid stating that everyone likes complex and challenging work (the general concept), because not everyone wants a challenging job.
    - a. Some people prefer routine to varied, or simple over complex.

PPT 1.9

- b. A job attractive to one person may not be to another; its appeal is contingent upon the person who holds it.
- C. As you proceed through this book, you'll encounter a wealth of research-based theories about how people behave in organizations.
  - 1. But don't expect to find a lot of straightforward cause-and-effect relationships. There aren't many!
  - 2. Organizational behavior theories mirror the subject matter with which they deal, and people are complex and complicated.

## VI. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR OB

- A. Understanding organizational behavior has never been more important for managers. PPT 1.10
- B. Take a quick look at the dramatic changes in organizations.
  - 1. The typical employee is getting older.
  - 2. More women and people of color are in the workplace; corporate downsizing and the heavy use of temporary workers are severing the bonds of loyalty that tied many employees to their employers.
  - 3. Global competition requires employees to become more flexible and cope with rapid change. The global recession has brought to the forefront the challenges of working with and managing people during uncertain times.

### C. Responding to Economic Pressures

- 1. When the U.S. economy plunged into a deep and prolonged recession in 2008, virtually all other large economies around the world followed suit. Layoffs and job losses were widespread, and those who survived the ax were often asked to accept pay cuts.
  - 2. During difficult economic times, effective management is often at a premium.
  - 3. Anybody can run a company when business is booming because the difference between good and bad management reflects the difference between making a lot of money and making a lot more money.
  - 4. When times are bad, though, managers are on the front lines with employees who must be fired, who are asked to make do with less, and who worry about their futures.
  - 5. The difference between good and bad management can be the difference between profit and loss or, ultimately, between survival and failure.
  - 6. Managing employees well when times are tough is just as hard as when times are good—if not more so.
  - 7. But the OB approaches sometimes differ. In good times, understanding how to reward, satisfy, and retain employees is at a premium. In bad times, issues like stress, decision-making, and coping come to the fore.

PPT 1.11

- D. **Responding to Globalization.** There are many challenges faced by managers that can benefit by the use of OB concepts, including:

PPT 1.12

- 1. Increased foreign assignments. Managers increasingly find themselves working overseas dealing with a workforce that may hold different needs, aspirations, and attitudes.
  - 2. Working with people from different cultures. Even if the manager stays in the domestic environment, the workers that the manager deals with may come from different cultures and backgrounds. Motivational techniques and managerial styles may have to be modified to remain effective.

3. Overseeing movement of jobs to countries with low-cost labor. Outsourcing tasks and jobs to low-labor-cost countries may make economic sense, but such decisions are not without local ramifications.
  - a. Managers must be able to deal with unions, government, and the public, who see outsourcing as a threat to their livelihood.
  - b. Balancing the needs of the company with the needs of the community is at the heart of a firm's concerns over social responsibility.

**B. Managing Workforce Diversity.**

1. One of the most important challenges for organizations is adapting to people who are different. We describe this challenge as workforce diversity. PPT 1.13
  - a. Whereas globalization focuses on differences among people from different countries, workforce diversity addresses differences among people within given countries.
2. **Workforce diversity** acknowledges a workforce of women and men; many racial and ethnic groups; individuals with a variety of physical or psychological abilities; and people who differ in age and sexual orientation.
  - a. Managing this diversity is a global concern. Most European countries have experienced dramatic growth in immigration from the Middle East; Argentina and Venezuela host a significant number of migrants from other South American countries; and nations from India to Iraq to Indonesia find great cultural diversity within their borders.
3. The most significant change in the U.S. labor force during the last half of the twentieth century was the rapid increase in the number of female workers.
  - a. In 1950, for instance, only 29.6 percent of the workforce was female. By 2008, it was 46.5 percent.
  - b. The first half of the twenty-first century will be notable for changes in racial and ethnic composition and an aging baby boom generation. By 2050, Hispanics will grow from today's 11 percent of the workforce to 24 percent, blacks will increase from 12 to 14 percent, and Asians will increase from 5 to 11 percent. Meanwhile, in the near term the labor force will be aging. The 55-and-older age group, currently 13 percent of the labor force, will increase to 20 percent by 2014.
4. Though we have more to say about workforce diversity in a later chapter, suffice it to say here that it presents great opportunities and poses challenging questions for managers and employees in all countries. PPT 1.14
5. Exhibit 1-2 shows the major categories of Workforce Diversity. Exhibit 1.2

**C. Improving Customer Service.** The majority of the workforce in developed nations works in service jobs. PPT 1.15

1. These jobs require substantial interaction with the organization's customers: poor service experiences can lead to organizational failure.
2. Managers must create customer-responsive cultures whose members are:
  - a. Friendly and courteous
  - b. Accessible
  - c. Knowledgeable

- d. Prompt in responding to customer needs
- e. Willing to do, what is necessary to please the customer

**D. Improving People Skills.**

1. As you proceed through the chapters of this book, we'll present relevant concepts and theories that can help you explain and predict the behavior of people at work.
2. In addition, you'll gain insights into specific people skills that you can use on the job.
3. For instance, you'll learn ways to design motivating jobs, techniques for improving your listening skills, and how to create more effective teams.

**E. Stimulating Innovation and Change.** Montgomery Ward, Woolworth, Smith Corona, TWA, Bethlehem Steel, and WorldCom all went bust.

PPT 1.16

1. Today's successful organizations must foster innovation and master the art of change, or they'll become candidates for extinction.
  - a. Victory will go to the organizations that maintain their flexibility, continually improve their quality, and beat their competition to the marketplace with a constant stream of innovative products and services.
  - b. Domino's single-handedly brought on the demise of small pizza parlors whose managers thought they could continue doing what they had been doing for years.
  - c. Amazon.com is putting a lot of independent bookstores out of business as it proves you can successfully sell books (and most anything else) from a Web site.
  - d. After years of lackluster performance, Boeing realized it needed to change its business model. The result was its 787 Dreamliner and a return to being the world's largest airplane manufacturer.
2. An organization's employees can be the impetus for innovation and change, or they can be a major stumbling block.
  - a. The challenge for managers is to stimulate their employees' creativity and tolerance for change.
  - b. The field of OB provides a wealth of ideas and techniques to aid in realizing these goals.

**F. Coping with "Temporariness."**

1. Globalization, expanded capacity, and advances in technology have required organizations to be fast and flexible if they are to survive. The result is that most managers and employees today work in a climate best characterized as "temporary."
2. Workers must continually update their knowledge and skills to perform new job requirements.
  - a. Production employees at companies such as Caterpillar, Ford, and Alcoa now need to operate computerized production equipment. That was not part of their job descriptions 20 years ago. In the past, employees were assigned to a specific work group, gaining a considerable amount of security working with the same people day in and day out.
3. That predictability has been replaced by temporary work groups, with members from different departments, and the increased use of employee rotation to fill constantly changing work assignments.

PPT 1.17



4. Finally, organizations themselves are in a state of flux. They continually reorganize their various divisions, sell off poorly performing businesses, downsize operations, subcontract noncritical services and operations to other organizations, and replace permanent employees with temporary workers.
5. Today's managers and employees must learn to cope with temporariness, flexibility, spontaneity, and unpredictability.
  - a. The study of OB can help you better understand a work world of continual change, overcome resistance to change, and create an organizational culture that thrives on change.

#### **G. Working in Networked Organizations**

PPT 1.18

1. Networked organizations allow people to communicate and work together even though they may be thousands of miles apart.
  - a. Independent contractors can telecommute via computer to workplaces around the globe and change employers as the demand for their services changes.
  - b. Software programmers, graphic designers, systems analysts, technical writers, photo researchers, book and media editors, and medical transcribers are just a few examples of people who can work from home or other non-office locations.
2. The manager's job is different in a networked organization.
  - a. Motivating and leading people and making collaborative decisions online requires different techniques than when individuals are physically present in a single location.
  - b. As more employees do their jobs by linking to others through networks, managers must develop new skills. OB can provide valuable insights to help with honing those skills.

#### **H. Helping Employees Balance Work-Life Conflicts.**

PPT 1.19

1. The typical employee in the 1960s or 1970s showed up at a specified workplace Monday through Friday and worked for clearly defined 8- or 9-hour chunks of time.
  - a. That's no longer true for a large segment of today's workforce. Employees are increasingly complaining that the line between work and non-work time has become blurred, creating personal conflicts and stress.
  - b. At the same time, today's workplace presents opportunities for workers to create and structure their roles.
2. How do work-life conflicts come about?
  - a. First, the creation of global organizations means the world never sleeps.
    - 1) The need to consult with colleagues or customers eight or ten time zones away means many employees of global firms are "on call" 24 hours a day.
  - b. Second, communication technology allows many technical and professional employees to do their work at home, in their cars, or on the beach in Tahiti—but it also means many feel like they never really get away from the office.
  - c. Third, organizations are asking employees to put in longer hours. Over a recent 10-year period, the average U.S. workweek increased from 43 to 47 hours; and the number of people working 50 or more hours a week jumped from 24 to 37 percent.



- d. Finally, the rise of the dual-career couple makes it difficult for married employees to find time to fulfill commitments to home, spouse, children, parents, and friends.
    - 1) Millions of single-parent households and employees with dependent parents have even more significant challenges in balancing work and family responsibilities.
  - 3. Employees increasingly recognize that work infringes on their personal lives, and they're not happy about it.
    - a. Recent studies suggest employees want jobs that give them flexibility in their work schedules so they can better manage work-life conflicts.
    - b. In fact, balancing work and life demands now surpasses job security as an employee priority.
    - c. The next generation of employees is likely to show similar concerns.
    - d. Most college and university students say attaining a balance between personal life and work is a primary career goal; they want "a life" as well as a job.
    - e. Organizations that don't help their people achieve work-life balance will find it increasingly difficult to attract and retain the most capable and motivated employees.
  - 4. As you'll see in later chapters, the field of OB offers a number of suggestions to guide managers in designing workplaces and jobs that can help employees deal with work-life conflicts.
- I. **Improving Ethical Behavior.**
- PPT 1.20
- 1. In an organizational world characterized by cutbacks, expectations of increasing productivity, and tough competition, it's not surprising many employees feel pressured to cut corners, break rules, and engage in other questionable practices.
  - 2. Increasingly they face **ethical dilemmas** and **ethical choices**, in which they are required to identify right and wrong conduct.
    - a. What constitutes good ethical behavior has never been clearly defined, and, in recent years, the line differentiating right from wrong has blurred.
    - b. Employees see people all around them engaging in unethical practices—elected officials pad expense accounts or take bribes; corporate executives inflate profits so they can cash in lucrative stock options; and university administrators look the other way when winning coaches encourage scholarship athletes to take easy courses.
      - 1) When caught, these people give excuses such as "Everyone does it" or "You have to seize every advantage nowadays."
      - 2) Determining the ethically correct way to behave is especially difficult in a global economy because different cultures have different perspectives on certain ethical issues.
      - 3) Fair treatment of employees in an economic downturn varies considerably across cultures, for instance
  - 3. Managers and their organizations are responding to the problem of unethical behavior in a number of ways.
    - a. They're writing and distributing codes of ethics to guide employees through ethical dilemmas.
    - b. They're offering seminars, workshops, and other training programs to try to

improve ethical behaviors.

- c. They're providing in-house advisors who can be contacted, in many cases anonymously, for assistance in dealing with ethical issues, and they're creating protection mechanisms for employees who reveal internal unethical practices
4. Today's manager must create an ethically healthy climate for his or her employees, where they can do their work productively with minimal ambiguity about what right and wrong behaviors are.
  - a. Companies that promote a strong ethical mission, encourage employees to behave with integrity, and provide strong ethical leadership can influence employee decisions to behave ethically.
  - b. In upcoming chapters, we'll discuss the actions managers can take to create an ethically healthy climate and help employees sort through ethically ambiguous situations.

## VII. THE PLAN OF THIS BOOK

This book will follow the three levels of OB analysis, building from the individual to the organizational perspectives. Each level builds upon the levels before it.

**A. Three Levels of Analysis.** OB can be examined at three levels, each with its own unique perspective.

1. Individual level. Examines foundations of individual behavior: personality, values, perception, decision-making, motivation, emotions, and moods (Chapters 2–7).
2. Group level. Group behavior is more than the sum of the behaviors of the individuals within it; additionally, individuals act differently when in groups. The next section of the text (Chapters 8–13) explores group behavior by providing basic group concepts and examining what makes teams effective: communication, decision-making, leadership, power, politics, conflict, and negotiation.
3. Organization system level. Organizational behavior, while composed of both individual and group behaviors, is more than the sum of its parts. Chapters 14–16 describe how an organization's structure and culture affects individual behavior. The text finishes with change techniques in organizational settings.

Exhibit 1.3

PPT 1.21

## VIII. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGERS

**A.** Managers need to develop their interpersonal, or people, skills to be effective in their jobs.

PPT 1.22

1. Organizational behavior (OB) investigates the impact that individuals, groups, and structure have on behavior within an organization, and it applies that knowledge to make organizations work more effectively.
2. Specifically, OB focuses on how to improve productivity; reduce absenteeism, turnover, and deviant workplace behavior; and increase organizational citizenship behavior and job satisfaction.

**B.** Here are a few specific implications for managers:

1. Some generalizations provide valid insights into human behavior, but many are erroneous. Organizational behavior uses systematic study to improve predictions of behavior over intuition alone.
2. But because people are different, we need to look at OB in a contingency framework, using situational variables to explain cause-and-effect relationships.
3. Organizational behavior offers specific insights to improve a manager's people

skills.

4. It helps managers to see the value of workforce diversity and practices that may need to be changed in different countries.
5. It can improve quality and employee productivity by showing managers how to empower their people, design and implement change programs, improve customer service, and help employees balance work-life conflicts.
6. It provides suggestions for helping managers meet chronic labor shortages.
7. It can help managers cope in a world of temporariness and learn how to stimulate innovation.
8. Finally, OB can guide managers in creating an ethically healthy work climate.

#### IX. Marginal Notes

- A. "OB's goal is to understand and predict human behavior in organizations."
- B. "There are several social science disciplines that contribute to OB, but none are more important than psychology."
- C. "It is more important than ever to learn OB concepts."

PPT 1.23

#### Discussion Questions

1. Define organizational behavior (OB). How can learning OB help you in your daily life?  
**Answer:** OB is the study of the influence that individuals, groups, and structure have on behavior within organizations. The chief goal of OB is to apply that knowledge toward improving an organization's effectiveness.  
The second question will vary depending on the student, but there should be a direct link between life situations and the areas covered by OB. Students should give some indication that by having a systematic understanding of behavior, rather than just an individual experiential understanding of behavior, a better outcome would be achieved.
2. Why has the study of OB become a standard component of business school programs?  
**Answer:** Business schools have come to realize, as have most managers, that learning just the technical aspects of management is insufficient for long-term managerial success. The important factors for this long-term managerial success are gaining an understanding of human behavior and developing increased communication skills.
3. How does the systematic study of OB help managers be more effective?  
**Answer:** Most people learn human behavior through their own individual observations. This method of learning always contains the potential for error. By coupling this individual learning with the systematic scientific study of OB and Evidence-based Management, managers benefit from the experiences and study of thousands of social scientists, rather than just relying on their own limited experiences. This broader base of understanding is more likely to help the manager make much better decisions and influence people more effectively.
4. What behavioral sciences contribute to our understanding of OB? Select one of these behavioral sciences and describe how it helps managers.  
**Answer:** Psychology, social psychology, sociology, and anthropology are the behavioral sciences that contribute to our understanding of OB.

The answers of the second question will vary depending on the students. The answer should tie the primary learning areas of one of the behavioral sciences (see below) to typical managerial problems. Ensure that the student indicates that knowing more about OB will make managers more effective through either (1) a greater ability to understand and influence other people, (2) a better design of organizations and jobs, or (3) a better understanding of group behavior.

Psychology: individual (micro) focus, in the areas of learning, perception, personality, emotions, training, leadership effectiveness, needs, motivation, job satisfaction, decision-making, performance appraisals, attitude measurements, employee selection, work design, and job stress.

Social Psychology: individual and group (macro) focus, in the areas of change, measuring and changing attitudes, communications patterns, building trust, group behavior, power, and conflict.

Sociology: group and organizational (macro) focus, in the areas of group behavior, organizational culture, organizational theory and structure, communications, power, and conflict.

Anthropology: group and organizational (macro) focus, in the areas of values, attitudes, behaviors between organizations and countries. Anthropology also studies organizational culture and environment.

5. Select one of the OB concepts given in the chapter and apply it to a situation in your work or school life. How did this concept help with the situation or if it was not applied, how could it have helped in the outcome?

**Answer:** The answers will vary depending on the student. Ensure that the student clearly ties the situation to an OB concept and indicates understanding of the concept by explaining how the concept would help the situation.

6. Taken from a managerial point of view, what do you think is the major OB challenge facing businesses today?

**Answer:** This may again vary depending on the particular viewpoint and experience of the student, but it should be one of the following. The best answers based on the text are (1) managing diversity or (2) responding to globalization. Other acceptable answers are: (3) improving customer service, (5) improving people skills, (6) stimulating innovation and change, (7) coping with “temporariness,” (8) Working in networked organizations (9) helping employees balance work-life conflicts or (10) improving ethical behavior. Ensure that the student provides a good rationale for the answer.

7. Compare and contrast the three levels of OB analysis.

**Answer:** The three levels are individual, group, and organizational systems. Common aspects: the study of human behavior including decision-making, emotion, perception, and motivation. Unique aspects for each level deal primarily with the focus of the research activity: person, group, or larger grouping (such as society, organization, or country). It should be noted however that each successive level builds on the theories and findings of the lower levels.

## Exercises

1. Self-analysis. What do you hope to gain from the study of OB? How well do you think you currently understand human behavior in organizations? Have you ever been surprised by the actions or reactions of another person? Why? Describe what

- actually happened and what you were expecting to happen. What do you think may have caused the difference?
2. Web Crawling. Using an Internet search engine of your choice, find an article in either the popular press or a professional journal that relates to OB. Describe the key points of the article and detail how OB was used or should have been used in the situation.
  3. Current Event. In a small group (four or fewer people per group), discuss a current event that was influenced by, or could have been positively influenced by a clear understanding of OB. Prepare a ten-minute group presentation that concisely describes the current event and what the team believes to be the impact of OB. Discuss the team's results with the class.
  4. Three-Minute Elevator Introduction. Have students introduce themselves by giving their name, and any other information you deem appropriate, and by offering one short one- to three-minute story about an experience they had with an organization. Give students several minutes to think about their story, keep time, and stop students who go too long. Tell them to imagine that they are new employees and introducing themselves to co-workers met in an elevator.
  5. Experiences with Managers. Divide the class into groups of three, and have them discuss their experiences with managers. They may discuss items such as their last performance appraisal, a job interview, or a customer service issue. Use this as a starting point to discuss the importance of "people" in an organizational context.
  6. Where Do You Want to Work? Lead a class discussion on what makes good organizations and what makes bad organizations. Create two lists on the board (good and bad) and write the ideas as the students brainstorm them. Once the class has given 10-20 answers on each list, stop them, and start grouping their responses into relevant key ideas. Point out how these key ideas are the primary topics of OB studies.
  7. Learn From Experience. If you have older adult students, have them share their experiences regarding how the workplace used to look. Examine such issues as the demographic make-up of the organization, and the attitudes of workers towards management. Emphasize how new the field of OB is, based upon these anecdotes.
  8. Analyzing Your Organization (Cumulative Project). This is an on-going activity that will help the student better understand his or her organization, or, if the student is not currently working, the organization for which he or she would like to work. This cumulative "hands-on" project will build on the concepts of each chapter. The point of the exercise is to take the OB theories and concepts and apply them to real organizations.

There are many ways you can use this project. For example, it could serve as homework to be turned in each week, or a project to be built upon each week and turned in at the end of the class as a term paper/project. You could also use the exercise as a class discussion item, selecting students to do short discussion starter presentations several times per term. Still another use is to have them summarize their findings in small groups, and have each group report a summary to the class. Most of these activities will involve interviewing someone who has knowledge of the topic. While interviewing someone in the subject organization is preferable, you may wish to allow students to interview outside experts to gain a greater understanding of the concepts.

Use the questions provided after each chapter of the Instructor Manual as a guideline, but be sure to adapt them to the student's needs. It is desirable for

students to obtain written approval from their manager or supervisor early on in the process. Because OB deals with potentially sensitive issues, it is best if the students detail the project to the relevant parties early on in the process. You may choose to have the written approval as part of the first deliverables in this project.

**Suggested Assignments:**

1. Have the students discuss your course syllabus including a description of the project with their supervisor (or the person who will be their primary contact in cases where the student is not working for the organization to be studied in the Analyzing Your Organization, No. 8 above). Submit the written approval.
  2. Have the students briefly describe their chosen organization, discussing what goods or services are produced, how many employees it has, what the structure looks like, and a general overview of how the organization of study is managed. Ensure students include their relationship to the organization (they are employees, job seekers, or simply interested parties).
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