Instructor's Manual to Accompany

Canadian Organizational Behaviour 10/e

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Chapter 1:

Introduction to the Field of Organizational Behaviour

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1 Introduction to the Field of Organizational Behaviour

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, students should be able to:

1-1 Define organizational behaviour and organizations, and discuss the importance of this field of inquiry.

1-2 Debate the organizational opportunities and challenges of technological change, globalization, emerging employment relationships, and workforce diversity.

1-3 Discuss the anchors on which organizational behaviour knowledge is based.

1-4 Compare and contrast the four perspectives of organizational effectiveness.

CHAPTER GLOSSARY

corporate social responsibility (CSR) — organizational activities intended to benefit society and the environment beyond the firm's immediate financial interests or legal obligations

deep-level diversity — differences in the psychological characteristics of employees, including personalities, beliefs, values, and attitudes

ethics – the study of moral principles or values that determine whether actions are right or wrong and outcomes are good or bad

evidence-based management — the practice of making decisions and taking actions based on research evidence

globalization — economic, social, and cultural connectivity with people in other parts of the world

high performance work practices (HPWP) — a perspective that holds that effective organizations incorporate several workplace practices that leverage the potential of human capital

human capital — the stock of knowledge, skills, and abilities among employees that provide economic value to the organization

intellectual capital — a company's stock of knowledge, including human capital, structural capital and relationship capital

learning orientation — beliefs and norms that support the acquisition, sharing, and use of knowledge as well as work conditions that nurture these learning processes

open systems — a perspective that holds that organizations depend on the external environment for resources, affect that environment through their output, and consist of internal subsystems that transform inputs into outputs

organizational behaviour (OB) — the study of what people think, feel, and do in and around organizations

organizational effectiveness — a broad concept represented by several perspectives, including the organization's fit with the external environment, internal subsystems configuration for high-performance, emphasis on organizational learning, and ability to satisfy the needs of key stakeholders

organizational learning — a perspective that holds that organizational effectiveness depends on the organization's capacity to acquire, share, use, and store valuable knowledge organizations — croups of people who work interdependently toward some purpose

relationship capital — the value derived from an organization’s relationships with customers, suppliers, and others

stakeholders — individuals, organizations, or other entities who affect, or are affected by, the organization’s objectives and actions

structural capital — knowledge embedded in an organization’s systems and structures.

surface-level diversity — the observable demographic or physiological differences in people, such as their race, ethnicity, gender, age, and physical disabilities

telecommuting — an arrangement whereby, supported by information technology, employees work from home one or more work days per month rather than commute to the office

values — relatively stable, evaluative beliefs that guide a person’s preferences for outcomes or courses of action in a variety of situations

work-life balance — the degree to which a person minimizes conflict between work and nonwork demands

CHAPTER SUMMARY BY LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1-1 Define organizational behaviour and organizations, and discuss the importance of this field of inquiry.

Organizational behaviour is the study of what people think, feel, and do in and around organizations. Organizations are groups of people who work interdependently toward some purpose. OB theories help us to (a) comprehend and predict work events, (b) adopt more accurate personal theories, and (c) influence organizational events. OB knowledge is for everyone, not just managers. OB theories and practices are highly beneficial for an organization’s survival and success.

1-2 Debate the organizational opportunities and challenges of technological change, globalization, emerging employment relationships, and increasing workforce diversity.

Technological change has improved efficiency, interactivity, and wellbeing, but it has also been a disruptive force in organizations. Information technology has altered communication patterns and power dynamics at work, and has had effects on our nonwork time, attention span, and techno-stress. Globalization, which refers to various forms of connectivity with people in other parts of the world, has become more intense than ever before because information technology and transportation systems. It has brought more complexity and new ways of working to the workplace, requires additional knowledge and skills. It may be an influence on work intensification, reduced job security, and lessening work–life balance.

An emerging employment relationship trend is the blurring of work and nonwork time, and the associated call for more work–life balance (minimizing conflict between work and nonwork demands). Another employment trend is telecommuting, whereby employees work from home one or more work days per month rather than commute to the office. Telecommuting potentially benefits employees and employers, but there are also disadvantages and its effectiveness depends on the employee, job, and organization. An organization's workforce has both surface-level diversity (observable demographic and other overt differences in people) and deep-level diversity (differences in personalities, beliefs, values, and attitudes). Diversity may improve creativity and decision making, and provide better awareness and response to diverse communities. However, diversity also poses challenges, such as dysfunctional conflict and slower team development.

1-3 Discuss the anchors on which organizational behaviour knowledge is based.

The multidisciplinary anchor states that the field should develop from knowledge in other disciplines (e.g., psychology, sociology, economics), not just from its own isolated research base. The systematic research anchor states that OB knowledge should be based on systematic research, consistent with evidence-based management. The contingency anchor states that OB theories generally need to consider that there will be different consequences in different situations. The multiple levels of analysis anchor states that OB topics may be viewed from the individual, team, and organization levels of analysis.

1-4 Compare and contrast the four perspectives of organizational effectiveness.

The open systems perspective views organizations as complex organisms that "live" within an external environment, depend on it for resources, then use organizational subsystems to transform those resources into outputs, which are returned to the environment. Organizations receive feedback to maintain a good "fit" with that environment. Fit occurs by adapting to the environment, influencing the environment, or moving to a more favourable environment. Effective transformation processes are efficient, adaptable, and innovative. The organizational learning perspective states that organizations are effective when they find ways to acquire, share, use, and store knowledge. Intellectual capital consists of human capital, structural capital, and relationship capital. Knowledge is retained in the organizational memory; companies also selectively unlearn.

The high-performance work practices (HPWP) perspective identifies a bundle of systems and structures to leverage workforce potential. The most widely identified HPWPs are employee involvement, job autonomy, developing employee competencies, and performance-/skill-based rewards. HPWPs improve organizational effectiveness by building human capital, increasing adaptability, and strengthening employee motivation and attitudes. The stakeholder perspective states that organizations are more effective when they understand, manage, and satisfy stakeholder needs and expectations. Leaders manage the interests of diverse stakeholders by relying on their personal and organizational values for guidance. Ethics and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are natural variations of values-based organizations. CSR consists of organizational activities intended to benefit society and the environment beyond the firm's immediate financial interests or legal obligations.

LECTURE OUTLINE

Slide 1: Introduction to the Field of Organizational Behaviour

Slide 2: Shopify

Ottawa-based Shopify is a rapidly growing technology success story due to its focus on teamwork, employee motivation, organizational culture, and other effective organizational behaviour practices.

Slide 3: Organizational Behaviour and Organizations

Organizational behaviour (OB)

- Studies what people think, feel, and do in and around organizations

Organizations

- Groups of people who work interdependently toward some purpose
- Collective entities
- Collective sense of purpose

Slide 4: Importance of OB

OB helps people in all jobs (not just for "management.")

1. Comprehend and predict workplace events
    - Fulfills need to understand environment, reduces anxiety
    - Anticipate future events — get along better, goal achievement
2. Adopt more accurate personal theories
    - OB isn't all common sense.
    - Some common sense knowledge is inaccurate.
    - Personal theories need correction or refinement.
3. Influence organizational events
    - Helps us to work successfully with others, perform our jobs better
    - Employers identify OB knowledge and skills as most important.

OB is vital to the organization's survival and success.

- Predicts firm's performance
- Predicts hospital quality
- OB concepts are positive screens in investment decisions

Contemporary Developments Facing Organizations

Slide 5: Technological Change

Long history as a disruptive force in organizations (waterwheels, cotton gins, steam engines, microprocessors, etc.)

Effects of technological change

- Higher productivity, but also usually displaces employees and makes entire occupations obsolete
- Alter relationships and patterns of behaviour with coworkers, clients, etc
- Improve health and wellbeing

Effects of information technology (email, social media, etc)

- Potential benefits — may give employees a stronger voice through direct communication with executives and broader distribution of their opinions
- Potential problems — less work = nonwork separation, longer hours, reducing their attention spans at work, and increasing techno-stress
- Information technology may eventually change the form of organizations — organizations as networks rather than places to work

Slide 6: Globalization

Economic, social, and cultural connectivity with people in other parts of the world

- Actively participate in other countries and cultures
- Increased globalization due to improved information technology and transportation systems

Effects of Globalization on Organizations

- Expands markets, lower costs, increases knowledge
- Effects on teamwork, diversity, cultural values, leadership, etc.
- Increases competitive pressures, work intensification and requires additional knowledge and skills e.g. global mindset

Slide 7: Emerging Employment Relationships

Employment relationship has been altered by technology, globalization, and other factors — longer hours, less work-life separation.

Work-life balance

- Degree of conflict between work and nonwork demands

Remote work — performing the job away from the employer's physical workplace

- Working at client sites (e.g. repair technicians)
- Telecommuting (teleworking) – working at home rather than commuting to the office

Slide 8: Telecommuting Benefits and Problems

Telecommuting benefits

- Better work-life balance — but requires sufficient work space and privacy at home — undermined by increased family responsibilities on telecommuting days
- Valued work benefit — factor in lower turnover
- Higher productivity — due to lower stress, transferring some commuting time to work time, ability to work when weather prevents office work
- Better for the environment — less pollution, road use
- Lower real estate costs for company

Telecommuting disadvantages

- Less connection with coworkers, more social isolation in general
- Less informal communication that helps career (word-of-mouth information about promotional opportunities)
- Lower team cohesion and a weaker organizational culture

Benefits of remote work depend on (contingencies):

- Employee characteristics — higher self-motivation, self-organization, need for autonomy, skill with information technology, and fulfill their social needs outside work
- Jobs characteristics — tasks don't use workplace resources, the work is performed independently from coworkers, task performance is measurable
- Organizational characteristics — rewarding employees for performance not office presence (face time), actions to maintain team cohesion and psychological connectedness with the organization — limit telecommuting days, have special meetings/events, video communication

Slide 9: Increasing Workforce Diversity

Surface-level diversity

- Observable demographic or physiological differences in people (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, age, physical capabilities)
- Increasing surface-level diversity in many countries

Deep-level diversity

- Differences in the psychological characteristics of employees (e.g. personalities, beliefs, values, and attitudes)
- Example: Differences across age cohorts (e.g. Gen-X, Gen-Y)
- Some deep-level diversity is associated with surface-level diversity (e.g. gender differences in values, attitudes, personality, etc.)

Consequences of diversity – opportunities and challenges

- Teams with high informational diversity (different knowledge and skills) — more creativity, better decisions in complex situations
- Easier to recognize and address community needs
- Diverse teams usually take longer to perform effectively together
- Higher risk of dysfunctional conflict — less information sharing and morale
- Surface-level and some deep-level diversities are moral/legal imperatives

Slide 10: Organizational Behaviour Anchors (1 of 2)

1. Systematic research anchor
    - OB knowledge should be based on systematic research.
    - Forming research questions, collecting data, and testing hypotheses

Evidence-based management

- Making decisions and taking actions on research evidence
- Scientific method, not fads and personal beliefs that are untested

Why decision makers don’t apply evidence-based management

- Bombarded with popular press and nonresearched sources
- OB knowledge is generic — difficult to see relevance to specific situations
- Fads are heavily marketed, so they seem convincing.
- Perceptual errors bias decision maker toward popular and personal theories and to ignore contrary evidence.

2. Multidisciplinary anchor
   - Many OB concepts adopted from other disciplines
     - ➡ e.g. psychology (individual, interpersonal behaviour); sociology (team dynamics, power); communications; marketing; information systems, etc.
   - OB develops its own theories, but also scans other fields.

Slide 11: Organizational Behaviour Anchors (2 of 2)

3. Contingency anchor
   - A particular action may have different consequences in different situations – no single solution is best all the time.
   - Need to understand and diagnose the situation and select the strategy most appropriate under those conditions
4. Multiple levels of analysis anchor
   - Individual – includes characteristics and behaviours as well as thought processes e.g. motivation, perception, and values
   - Team (including interpersonal) – looks at the way people interact e.g. team dynamics, decisions, power
   - Organizational – how people structure their working relationships and how organizations interact with their environment
   - OB topics usually relevant at all three levels of analysis

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Slide 12: Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness is considered the ultimate dependent variable in OB
- OB theories ultimately try to improve the organization's effectiveness.

Goal attainment: Discredit view of effectiveness — how well organization achieves its stated objectives
- Problem 1: Setting easy goals might produce lower outcomes than competitors or potential.
- Problem 2: Goals might aim the organization in the wrong direction.

Organizational effectiveness best described as a composite of four perspectives
- Open systems: (a) good fit with external environment and (b) efficient/adaptable transformation processes
- Organizational learning: effectively acquire, share, use, store knowledge

- High-performance work practices: develop human capital for more efficient and adaptive internal subsystems
- Stakeholder: satisfy the needs of key stakeholders with values, ethics, and social responsibility

Organizational effectiveness integrates all four perspectives

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Slide 13: Open Systems Perspective (1 of 2)

Organizations are complex systems that "live" within (and depend upon) the external environment

Effective organizations

- Maintain a close "fit" with those changing conditions
- Transform inputs to outputs efficiently and flexibly

Open systems perspective is the foundation on which the other three effectiveness perspectives are built

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Slide 14: Open Systems Perspective (2 of 2, with model)

External environment – organizations depend on the external environment for resources (e.g. raw materials, job applicants, financial resources, etc.)

- Affect the environment through their outputs
- Place demands on how the organization should operate e.g. laws

Internal subsystems – transform outputs into inputs

- E.g. departments, teams, informal groups, information systems, and technological processes
- Transformation processes are effective through: efficiency, adaptability, innovativeness
- Coordination — critical for effective transformation in complex systems

Organization–Environment Fit

To maintain a good "fit" with the environment, effective organizations

1. Adapt to the environment — adaptive firms have a "dynamic capability"
2. Influence the environment — marketing, lobbying, exclusive agreements
3. Move to a more favourable environment

Internal Subsystems Effectiveness – defines effectiveness on how well the organization transforms inputs to outputs

- Organizational efficiency (productivity)
- Coordination is vital in the relationship among internal subsystems

Slide 15: Organizational Learning Perspective

An organization's effectiveness depends on capacity to acquire, share, use, and store valuable knowledge

Need to consider both stock and flow of knowledge

- Stock of knowledge: intellectual capital
- Flow of knowledge: processes of acquiring, sharing, using, and storing knowledge

Slide 16: Intellectual Capital

Human capital

- Knowledge, skills, and abilities that employees carry around in their heads
- Company's competitive advantage because:
  - ➡ Employees are essential for the organization's survival and success
  - ➡ Employee talents are difficult to find or copy
  - ➡ Employee talents are difficult to replace them with technology

Structural capital

- Knowledge captured and retained in an organization's systems and structures, e.g. documentation, finished products

Relationship capital

- Value from organization's relationships with customers, suppliers, others who provide added mutual value for the organization

Slide 17: Organizational Learning Processes

1. Acquiring Knowledge

Bringing knowledge in from the external environment as well as through discovery

Occurs through:

- Individual learning from external environment — training from external sources, observing and reporting environmental change
- Environmental scanning — actively monitoring consumer trends
- Hire skilled staff and buy complementary businesses (grafting)
- Experimentation — new ideas through discovery

2. Sharing Knowledge

Distributing knowledge to others across the organization

Occurs through:

- Structured and informal communication
- Various forms of in-house learning
- Intranets

3. Using Knowledge

Applying knowledge in ways that add value

Knowledge use increase when

- Employees have a mental map of where knowledge is located
- Employees have sufficient prerequisite knowledge
- Employees have sufficient autonomy to try out new knowledge
- Work norms support organizational learning (learning orientation culture)

4. Storing Knowledge — organizational memory

The storage and preservation of intellectual capital

Retain intellectual capital by:

- Keeping knowledgeable employees
- Systematically transferring knowledge to other employees
- Transferring human capital to structural capital

Organizational unlearning – successful companies also unlearn by

- Changing routines and patterns of behaviour
- Removing knowledge that no longer adds value

Slide 18: High-Performance Work Practices (HPWPs)

Effective organizations incorporate several workplace practices that enhance human capital

Four HPWPs recognized in most studies:

1. Employee involvement
2. Job autonomy
   - ➡ Involvement and autonomy strengthen employee motivation, improve decision making, organizational responsiveness, and commitment to change – together often take the form of self-directed teams

3. Competence development
   - ➡ Recruit and select people with relevant skills, knowledge, values and other personal characteristics
   - ➡ Invest in employee training and development
4. Performance/skill-based rewards
   - ➡ Link performance and skill development to financial and nonfinancial rewards valued by employees

Note: These individually improve human capital, but best when bundled together

HPWPs improve organizational effectiveness by:

- Developing employee skills and knowledge (human capital), which directly improve individual behaviour and performance
- Adapting better to rapidly changing environments — employees are better at performing diverse tasks in unfamiliar situations
- Strengthening employee motivation and positive attitudes toward the employer through reciprocity of employer's investment in employees

HPWP limitations

- Provides an incomplete picture of organizational effectiveness
- Gaps are mostly filled by the stakeholder perspective

Slide 19: Corporate Social Responsibility at MTN

At MTN Group, Africa's largest mobile (cell) phone company, employees help the community and environment through the company's award-winning "21 Days of Y'ello Care" program. For example, MTN employees recently installed solar panels with batteries to generate off-grid electricity for lighting at rural schools.

Slide 20: Stakeholder Perspective

Stakeholders: any entity who affects or is affected by the organization's objectives and actions e.g. employees, shareholders, suppliers, unions, government, etc.

Organizations are more effective when they understand, manage, and satisfy stakeholder needs and expectations

Personalizes the open-systems perspective

- Identifies specific people and social entities in the environment
- Stakeholder relations are dynamic i.e. can be negotiated, managed

Challenges with understanding, managing, and satisfying stakeholder interests

- Stakeholders have conflicting interests
- Firms have limited resources to satisfy all stakeholders

Stakeholder priorities depend on:

- Stakeholder's power and urgency for action
- Stakeholder's legitimate claim to organizational resources
- How executives perceive the organization's environment
- Organization's culture
- Personal values of the corporate board and CEO

Slide 21: Stakeholders: Values and Ethics

Personal values influence how corporate boards and CEOs allocate organizational resources

Values

- Relatively stable, evaluative beliefs that guide our preferences for outcomes or courses of action in various situations
- Shared values – similar values held by groups of people

Ethics

- Study of moral principles/values, determine whether actions are right/wrong and outcomes are good or bad
- Rely on ethical values to determine "the right thing to do"

Slide 22: Stakeholders and CSR

Stakeholder perspective includes corporate social responsibility (CSR)

- Benefit society and the environment beyond the firm's immediate financial interests or legal obligations
- Organization's contract with society—serve stakeholders beyond shareholders and customers

Triple-bottom-line philosophy

- Economic – survive and be profitable
- Society – maintain or improve conditions
- Environment – become "greener"

Slide 23: Integrative Model of OB

Individual inputs and processes influence individual outcomes which have a direct effect on the organization's effectiveness

Team inputs influence team processes which then affect team performance and other outcomes

Team processes and outcomes affect individual processes and outcomes

Organizational inputs and processes have macro-level influence on both teams and individuals

SOLUTIONS TO CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

1. **A friend suggests that organizational behaviour courses are useful only to people who will enter management careers. Discuss the accuracy of your friend's statement.**

   This chapter begins by saying that this book is about people working in organizations. Undoubtedly, many individuals will specialize in a distinct field of study and enter careers other than management. However, they too will be members in work organizations. As such, the three main reasons for studying organizational behaviour (understanding, predicting, influencing) will benefit them as well. You may think of this technical knowledge/ skills as providing "what" you need to know and be able to do to be successful in your chosen field. On the other hand, OB knowledge benefits everyone by addressing the people issues needed to apply technical knowledge and skills. Knowledge of OB provides valuable knowledge of "how" to address these people issues when applying accounting, marketing, engineering and other ideas in organizational settings. Ultimately, an individual's career success is largely determined by his or her ability to understand and apply concepts in motivation, communication, team dynamics and other OB topics.

2. **A young college or university student from Canada is interested in doing international business across China, India, Brazil, and Russia. Discuss how the knowledge of OB can be useful to the student.**

   The study of OB is for anyone who works in an organization. If a student from Canada is interested in doing international business across the emerging economies, Brazil, Russia, China and India, s/he will need to work as an individual, in groups and teams or in an organization with those from the other countries. In either case, s/he needs to understand how people think, feel, and do in and around organizations. The study of OB looks at employee behaviour, decisions, perceptions and emotional responses at multiple levels, individual, teams and organizations; as well as how organizations interact with the external environment. Thus, knowledge acquired by study of OB can provide the student an understanding of these aspects of organizations and behaviour and thus help in getting things done while doing international business.

3. **Look through the list of chapters in this textbook, and discuss how globalization could influence each organizational behaviour topic.**

   This is an open-ended question which could be used as an exercise activity with subsequent class discussion. The main objective is to help students understand how globalization has profound implications for behaviour in organizations.

   Here are some of the topics linked to globalization. Students will certainly identify others:

- Teams
- Employee motivation
- Perception
- Values
- Communication
- Stress
- Communicating in organizational settings
- Interpersonal conflict
- Leadership
- Organizational change

4. **What does *evidence-based management* mean? Describe situations you have heard about in which companies have practiced evidence-based management, as well as situations in which companies have relied on fads that lacked sufficient evidence of their worth.**

   There are two parts to this question. The first requires students to define "evidence-based management." The second part asks students to provide an example of fads that lacked evidence, but which companies relied on in the past. Answers to the second part will vary based on individual student experiences.

   A sample answer to the first part of the question "evidence-based management" may include the following:

   Evidence-based management is the idea that management decisions and initiatives should be based on the systematic research anchor to ensure effective implantation. In other words, we should manage the workplace based on sound evidence gathered as a result of systematic research. This involves using knowledge flowing from the process of forming research questions, systematically collecting data, and testing hypotheses against those data. Applying evidence-based management would prevent corporate leaders from embracing fads and relying on their pet beliefs before finding out if they actually work.

5. **"Organizational theories should follow the contingency approach." Comment on the accuracy of this statement.**

   OB theories must be simple, yet accurate. Although simplicity calls for universal theories, accuracy usually requires the contingency approach because most human behaviour is too complex to understand sufficiently through universal (i.e., one best way) theories. Contingency theories are more refined because they recognize that environmental and personal characteristics moderate most cause-effect relationships. In other words, while it would be preferable to use universal theories for the sake of simplicity, we often must rely on contingency theories to sufficiently understand and predict organizational behaviour.

6. **After hearing a seminar on organizational learning, a mining company executive argues that this perspective is relevant to software and other knowledge businesses, but it ignores the fact that mining companies cannot rely on knowledge alone to stay in business. They also need physical capital (such as extracting and ore-processing equipment) and land (where the minerals are located). In fact, these two may be more important than what employees carry around in their heads. Evaluate the mining executive's comments.**

   Some executives still view land and capital as a company's most valuable assets. They give lip service to the idea that "People are our most valued assets" but still don't understand that land and capital have little value without people. For instance, this mining company would not have found land with ore deposits unless it had the knowledge to find those minerals. It could not operate the equipment to extract and refine the ore unless it had enough knowledge.

   The executive's comment that companies cannot remain in business with only knowledge is incorrect. On the contrary, some of the wealthiest organizations (including many software companies and consulting firms) have few physical assets. Many firms have sold their headquarters and other buildings because their competitive advantage—their source of wealth—is found in knowledge. Mining companies are also outsourcing several aspects of physical assets. Their ships and rail cars are often owned by others. The digging equipment is leased or owned by companies that specialize in drilling. The major oil companies today are mainly in the knowledge business—prospecting for minerals or marketing what others have found and extracted.

   This question also suggests a subtle misunderstanding by the executive about organizational learning. Although much corporate knowledge resides in the brains of its employees (called human capital), it also resides in the organization's systems and structures (known as structural capital).

7. **It is said that the CEO and other corporate leaders are keepers of the organization's memory. Please discuss this.**

   The organization's so called "memory" is knowledge gleaned through the storage and preservation of intellectual capital but it also includes knowledge held by key employees. Some of that knowledge is explicit knowledge that core members can access easily, but some of that knowledge is not easily documented, and is called "tacit" knowledge. We believe that knowledge (widely known or tacit) can be transferred through systems, processes, people—which is tantamount to sharing of best practices. However, when those learnings cease to provide any value proposition to the organization, "unlearning" needs to occur. This is essentially a process whereby people, structures, systems, processes erase the knowledge that no longer is a value add to the firm. So replacing dysfunctional policies (i.e., time clocks for knowledge workers engaged in globally distributed work; removing dress codes and other etiquette formalities are examples of erasing old processes that no longer work in our globalized world.

8. **Corporate social responsibility is one of the hottest issues in corporate boardrooms these days, partly because it is becoming increasingly important to employees and other stakeholders. In your opinion, why have stakeholders given CSR more attention recently? Does abiding by CSR standards potentially cause companies to have conflicting objectives with some stakeholders in some situations?**

These questions are open to speculation and debate. Many will suggest that CSR has become more important because of global warming, loss of habitat, and other highly visible indicators of problems. In addition, a few might argue that increasing wealth allows society to raise the bar on companies by demanding that they contribute more to society. Still others might suggest that globalization has brought developed world companies closer to people in poverty and countries in need of better health standards.

Students may state that corporate scandals have raised CSR as a priority. Other reasons include the preference of stakeholders wanting to be associated with organizations that are deemed socially responsible. This preference has not gone unnoticed in corporate boardrooms. A growing number of companies are equating social responsibility with increased profitability. As a result, they are changing the way they do business. They reason that CSR can be leveraged as a competitive advantage in the market.

Regarding the conflicting objectives, many students would agree. After all, the textbook states that companies can't satisfy all stakeholders because there are limited resources and stakeholders have conflicting goals. But some corporate leaders have suggested that there is less conflict then assumed. They particularly believe that satisfying communities and the environment ultimately satisfies the needs of shareholders and employees.

9. **A common refrain among executives is "People are our most important asset." Relate this statement to any two of the four perspectives of organizational effectiveness presented in this chapter. Does this statement apply better to some perspectives than to others? Why or why not?**

This is an open discussion question because the statement can relate to all four perspectives of organizational effectiveness.

Open systems — This is probably the least focused on employees of the four perspectives. People represent the internal subsystems of organizations, so are vital in that respect. Some employees are also "boundary spanners" in that they link the organization to the external environment.

Organizational learning — This perspective views employees as reasonably important because they hold a large portion of intellectual capital (human capital and possibly some forms of relationship capital). People bring knowledge into the organization and are largely responsible for sharing that knowledge. Knowledge use is also ultimately a human endeavour.

High performance work practices — This is arguably the perspective that views people (employees) as the most critical resource. HPWPs embrace the human capital model; they consider employees as a competitive advantage. HPWPs are practices to leverage or unleash the competitive advantage potential of employees.

Stakeholder — Employees are one type of stakeholder, so the statement applies to this perspective. It recognizes that employees have a vested interest in the organization and its actions.

CASE STUDY: THE FAST FASHION SUCCESS OF ZARA

Case Synopsis

This case describes how Spanish retail fashion juggernaut Zara is successful by applying various organizational effectiveness practices. Fashion changes quickly and unpredictably. Zara adapts to this dynamic and turbulent environment by experimenting with numerous new styles, receiving almost immediate and continuous feedback about which ones are most popular, learning what minor adjustments would make the styles more appealing, and quickly producing and delivering new or revised styles to match current demand.

Suggested Answers to Discussion Questions

1. **Apply open systems perspective to explain how Zara has been effective in the fast fashion business. What does the open systems perspective suggest might pose future risks to Zara's success?**

   Zara success is founded on the idea that it needs to maintain a close fit with the external environment, that is, it needs to quickly create and offer fashion wear that is in demand among its customers worldwide. To maintain a close "fit", companies either adapt to the environment, influence the environment, or move to a more compatible environment. Zara likely influences the environment to some extent through advertising and related means. It might even avoid or abandon some aspects of the fashion industry (e.g. running shoes). But its main strategy is to adapt, namely, to sense environmental changes and alter its products quickly to match those changes.

   The first part of open systems effectiveness is to receive rapid and clear feedback from the environment. This partly occurs by monitoring sales of what it produces. Feedback also occurs by actively seeking information from front-line staff about what customers are saying, including what they would prefer to find among Zara's fashion offerings. For example, a woman's jacket may be popular, but staff might learn that customers would prefer another that style of jacket in other colours. A third way that Zara receives feedback is by offering a wide variety of products, but in small enough batches that the company isn't overwhelmed by inventory. With a wide array of products, the company can sample preferences across an equally broad spectrum of the fashion market. For example, by offering a range of women's slacks — from torn-style jeans and yoga-style leggings to formal attire — Zara can discover how the market is shifting from one range to the next.

   Zara's effectiveness from an open systems perspective also applies an adaptive and efficient transformation process. In practice, this requires close communication and coordination among several subsystems, including sales, design, production, and logistics. Zara designers receive market information quickly because they are located in the same building as the managers who receive continuous feedback from front-line staff in their global region. (Zara even employs fashion models in the central operations building; they model new fashion items as soon as prototypes are made, and Zara is able to quickly photograph the items for marketing purposes.)

   Another key factor in the rapid transformation process is to rely on manufacturers close to Zara's operations centre (located within a few hundred kilometres in Europe or Middle East). These producers cost more than Asian manufacturers, which Zara relies on for more stable products), but they are able to produce sufficient product quickly enough that Zara can have an item in stores less than one month after it has been designed.

   Future Risks
   Students can identify several environmental and internal systems risks to Zara's success. Here are a few examples:

   — Competitors copy or improve on Zara's systems and structures — Zara has been successful because many fashion companies relied on a much slower, less responsive approach to market dynamics. As other firms (such as H&M and Uniglo) adapt Zara's methods, its competitive advantage may disappear. Furthermore, competitors may improve on Zara's transformation process, such as by introducing better technology to design, model, or transmit information to manufacturers.

   — Supply or transportation disruptions — Zara's approach to maintaining a good fit with the external environment depends on a easy supply of inputs (raw materials, skill staff, etc). If shortages occur, Zara may be challenged to adapt as easily to market changes. Similarly, Zara depends on rapid logistics to transport finished products to market. Increasing transportation costs and environmental disruptions (union strikes, national conflicts) can threaten that rapid deployment of new fashion items.

2. Identify other perspectives of organizational effectiveness that explain Zara's success in more detail.

Organizational learning is the other perspective of organizational effectiveness that best explains why Zara has been so successful. Zara introduced several practices to encourage organizational learning:

Knowledge sharing — this is apparent in the continuous and rapid transfer of knowledge form front line staff to region managers, and from those managers to designers. Knowledge sharing is efficient partly because it is baked into the company's culture, but also because of physical close proximity of regional managers to designers. (At Zara's operations aircraft hanger-like operations centre, regional managers sit in a long row of desks and designers are located in sub-centre clusters on either side of those central desks.)

Knowledge use — Several factors enable designers to use the steady stream of incoming knowledge from the regional managers. They know where the knowledge is located (a few metres away at the regional managers' desks). Designers also have considerable autonomy, which is reasonably inferred by the fact that they can produce new designs in a very short time frame (often less than a week) and have those designs actioned for production and delivery in less than one month. In other words, designers are given considerable latitude to be creative and responsive to the incoming knowledge.

CASE STUDY: ANCOL CORP.

Case Synopsis

This case describes the activities of Paul Simard after he became when he became manager at Ancol Ltd.'s plant in Jonquiere, Quebec. To build trust between management and employees, he removed the time clocks that kept track of employee work hours. Although employees appreciated this freedom to work without a time clock, some abused this privilege by showing up late and leaving early. This affected plant productivity. Supervisors spent more time counselling those who had attendance problems and filling out letters of reprimand. The letters, along with supervisors' poor interpersonal skills, worsened relations. Another supervisor was added to cope with the additional work. After nine months, Simard agreed with union officials to reinstate the time clocks. Later, at a meeting of other Ancol managers, Simard learned that a similar situation had occurred at another plant a few years earlier..

[NOTE: This case is a variation of an incident described in R. Daft, *Organizational Theory*, 3rd ed. (St. Paul, MN: West, 1989), pp. 16-17.]

Suggested Answers to Discussion Questions

1. **Discuss the consequences of the time clock removal on Ancol's effectiveness as an organization using any two of the perspectives of organizational effectiveness.**

   Open Systems Perspective: The Ancol case nicely illustrates the problems facing organizations from an open systems perspective. The open systems view states that organizations are comprised of interdependent parts. We certainly see that here with the removal of time clocks. In particular, we see how removing time clocks leads to a string of unexpected consequences. In this case, removing the time clocks resulted in more work for supervisors. It also affected work activities in payroll and, eventually, posed a new set of problems for labour union leaders. Supervisors now had to use disciplinary counselling skills which many of them lacked. Although students might suggest that lack of counselling training is a problem here, notice that there is no mention that it was a problem before. It is possible in a unionized environment with process-oriented technology, that control systems are in place which minimize the need for supervisors to discipline employees. For example, time clocks control employee attendance behaviour or, at least, provide fact-based information. The main point, however, is that one action (removing time clocks) ripples through to other subsystems in the organization, as predicted by the open systems anchor.

   SUGGESTION: Instructors might indicate at the outset of the case that this is a problem of organizations as systems. Student might then be asked to document the interdependencies. Each discussion group is asked to illustrate the events at Ancol from a systems perspective. The results are fascinating. Typically, some groups will diagram the systems model. Their drawing reveals the subsystems in the case, such as employees, supervisors, control systems (time clock), and management. It may also show inputs (such as Paul Simard's entry), outputs (lower productivity), and feedback from the environment (union grievances).

   Other student groups might try to diagram the relationships that affect each other, such as a series of interrelated lines among the subsystems within the organization. A third type of drawing illustrates the cause-effect relationships in a time sequence. This typically starts with the poor relations, then removing the time clock, then initially increasing morale but also increasing absenteeism, and so on. This temporal image should reveal the complexity of events in the case. For example, poor relations was not the only cause of the removed time clocks. Paul Simard's entry to the organization and his knowledge from the seminar also contribute to this action. (Instructors might notice how this is a classic example of garbage can decision making -- a problem, solution, decision maker, and situation collide to form a decision.

   This case also illustrates poor organizational learning. The end of the case describes how Sims attended an operations meeting at Ancol's headquarters in Cincinnati, where he learned that Ancol's plant in Portland, Oregon had a similar experience six or seven years earlier. This illustrates the "silos of knowledge" problem that exists in large organizations. If Sims had known about the earlier incident, he might have avoided the action of removing time locks, or might have taken steps to correct anticipated problems.

Organizational Learning Perspective: This case illustrates the problems facing organizations from an open systems view. The open systems view states that organizations are comprised of interdependent parts. We certainly see that here with the removal of time clocks. In particular, we see how removing time clocks leads to a string of unexpected consequences. In this case, removing the time clocks resulted in more work for supervisors. It also affected work activities in payroll and, eventually, posed a new set of problems for labour union leaders. Supervisors now had to use disciplinary counselling skills which many of them lacked. Although students might suggest that lack of counselling training is a problem here, notice that there is no mention that it was a problem before. It is possible in a unionized environment with process-oriented technology, that control systems are in place which minimize the need for supervisors to discipline employees. For example, time clocks control employee attendance behaviour or, at least, provide fact-based information. The main point, however, is that one action (removing time clocks) ripples through to other subsystems in the organization, as predicted by the open systems anchor.

2. What changes should occur to minimize the likelihood of these problems in the future?

One answer to this question is to help people at Ancol recognize that organizations are open systems with interdependent parts. In other words, they need to be sensitive to the fact that changes in one part of the work unit affects other parts of the work unit, as we saw at this Ancol plant.

The second change is to apply knowledge management practices so that what was previously learned about removing time clocks would be more quickly and readily known throughout the organization. The end of the case describes how Simard attended an operations meeting at Ancol's headquarters, where he learned that another Ancol plant had a similar experience six or seven years earlier. This illustrates the "silos of knowledge" problem that exists in large organizations. If Simard had known about the earlier incident, he might have avoided the action of removing time locks, or might have taken steps to correct anticipated problems. Students should discuss ways that organizations such as Ancol can improve knowledge sharing.

For example, the organization-wide meeting that Simard attended seems to help share knowledge among plant managers, albeit somewhat too late in this case. Alternatively, perhaps the company could leverage the benefits of Intranet technology to help employees and managers share experiences more fully. Even through an integrated e-mail system, Simard could have asked other managers if removing time clocks has been tried before, and with what consequences. Notice that knowledge sharing requires a culture of open communication and information sharing, not just the technology to make this possible.

WEB EXERCISE: DIAGNOSING ORGANIZATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

Purpose

This exercise is designed to help students understand how stakeholders influence organizations as part of the open systems anchor.

Materials

Students need to select a company and, prior to class, retrieve and analyze publicly available information over the past year or two about that company. This may include annual reports, which are usually found on the websites of publicly-traded companies. Where possible, students should also scan full-text newspaper and magazine databases for articles published over the previous year about the company.

Instructions

The instructor may have students work alone or in groups for this activity. Students will select a company and will investigate the relevance and influence of various stakeholder groups on the organization. Stakeholders will be identified from annual reports, newspaper articles, website statements, and other available sources. Stakeholders should be ranked ordered in terms of their perceived importance to the organization. Students should be prepared to present or discuss their organization's rank ordering of stakeholders, including evidence for this rank ordering.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the main reasons certain stakeholders are more important than others for this organization?

2. On the basis of your knowledge of the organization's environmental situation, is this rank order of stakeholders in the organization's best interest, or should other specific stakeholders be given higher priority?

3. What societal groups, if any, are not mentioned as stakeholders by the organization? Does this lack of reference to these unmentioned groups make sense?

Comments for Instructors

In this era of web savvy students, this activity fits nicely into student preferences. It allows students to collect information in ways that they have become familiar, yet requires them to engage in active learning by searching for information and critical thinking by evaluating the information they find.

Most instructors will use this activity as a take-home exercise or assignment. However, for those with in-class computer labs (or wireless internet and student laptops), this can be a fun challenge in a one-hour exercise. As long as students understand the concept of stakeholders and perhaps the instructor has confirmed the availability of annual reports and other valuable information for several companies, the in-class version of this activity can prove to be an exciting challenge for students.

There are several places and ways for students to collect stakeholder information for a specific company. Most of the information can be found on the company's website, but Google and other search engines might assist by identifying relevant articles in newspapers and magazines. In schools where students have access to several full-text databases, the instructor may need to specify whether students should use these sources.

Along with searching and identifying relevant information about stakeholders, this assignment requires students to rank order the importance of these stakeholders. Instructors should expect students to justify their rank ordering, thereby providing a higher-order level of learning in the process.

CLASS EXERCISE: IT ALL MAKES SENSE?

Purpose

This exercise is designed to help students comprehend how organizational behaviour knowledge can help them understand life in organizations.

Instructions

Students are asked to read each of the statements and circle whether the statement is true or false, in their opinion. The class will consider the answers to each question and discuss the implications for studying organizational behaviour. After reviewing these statements, the instructor will provide information about the most appropriate answer. (This exercise may also be conducted as a team activity, whereby students answer these questions in teams rather than alone.)

Comments for Instructors

This exercise addresses the point that common sense isn't always correct. Of course, some students will be counter-intuitive in anticipation that these are "trick" questions. We have included some true statements to complicate the exercise. By reviewing each statement, you can help students to see that organizational behaviour systematically studies these issues and helps us to correct or clarify popular misperceptions.

Here are the ten statements with their correct answers and references to their discussion in the textbook.

1. **A happy worker is a productive worker.**

   TRUE. To be more accurate, the answer is "true, to some extent." This is one of those "truths" that students will probably answer correctly and many OB instructors will answer incorrectly because they rely on old organizational behaviour research. The latest research indicates that job satisfaction has a moderately strong association with job performance (a correlation of around .30). For details, see Chapter 4 on workplace emotions and attitudes.

2. **A decision maker's effectiveness increases with the number of choices or alternatives available to him or her.**

   FALSE. At some point when the number of alternatives increases, the decision maker becomes less efficient and effective in choosing among those alternatives (see Chapter 7). When the number of alternatives is very large, decision makers reduce their motivation to decide such that they avoid thinking about the decision at all! The main reason is that decision makers are able and motivated to process a finite amount of information. As the number of alternatives increases, decision makers are faced with dramatically more information to consider, because each choice has several bits of information about factors to consider. One could argue that having very few choices is also less effective, but this would be true only if the environment offers many choices and the alternatives available to the decision maker are not among the best ones.

3. **Organizations are more effective when they minimize conflict among employees.**

   FALSE. Actually, the correct answer is in a state of flux. The dominant OB research indicates that constructive (task-oriented) conflict is often beneficial (such as in decision making) whereas relationship conflict has negative consequences. But research now concludes that even constructive conflict can be a problem because it generates relationship conflict (i.e. difficult to separate them). We discuss this topic in Chapter 11.

4. **Employees have more power with many close friends than with many acquaintances.**

   FALSE. Social network research reports that people with many "weak ties" (many acquaintances) tend to have more career success and related outcomes in their lives than those with mainly strong ties (close friends). The main reason is that weak ties provide less redundant social capital. Acquaintances gives us unique information (expert power), unique connections and opportunities (referent power), wider visibility, and so forth. Close friends tend to give us information faster and give us more opportunities, but these resources tend to be similar across our close friends. See Chapter 10 for details.

5. **Companies are more successful when they have strong corporate cultures.**

   FALSE. As with so many organizational behaviour concepts, the more precise answer is "it depends." Chapter 14 explains that there is a weak relationship between corporate culture strength and organizational performance. Three reasons are offered. First, a strong culture can be a problem when the values are inconsistent with the organization's environment. Second, a very strong culture can blind employees from seeing other perspectives. Third, a very strong culture suppresses dissenting values that may be important in the future as the environment changes.

6. **Employees perform better without stress.**

   FALSE. As we learn in Chapter 4, some level of stress is essential for life. We need a certain level of stress to energize us. The problem is that we sometimes (or often) experience stress beyond this beneficial level.

7. **The best way to change people and organizations is by pinpointing the source of their current problems.**

   FALSE. This statement refers to the dominant model of problem solving and organizational change, namely, to identify the problem before looking for solutions. In contrast, emerging knowledge suggests that a positive rather than problem-focused approach may be more effective in many or most circumstances. We discuss this first in Chapter 5 under the topic of strengths-based coaching and feedback. Research indicates that focussing on an employee's weaknesses (problems) creates defensiveness to such an extend that its undermines any potential benefits of such a Discussion. In Chapter 15, we introduce the approach to organizational change called appreciative inquiry. According to this model, dwelling on problems can bog down the change process and degenerate into political quagmires. Instead, change agents need to focus the group on its potential and positive elements.

8. **Female leaders involve employees in decisions to a greater degree than do male leaders.**

   TRUE. There is lot of debate about whether men and women lead differently. As we learn at the end of Chapter 12, men and women are mostly similar in their leadership styles. But there is one exception: female leaders involve employees in decisions to a greater degree than do male leaders. Of course, some female leaders are not participative, and some male leaders are very participative. But generally, female leaders are more participative.

9. **The best decisions are made without emotion.**

   FALSE. The truth is, all decisions involve emotion and require emotion. Without emotion, people are unable to recognize problems and opportunities, and are unable to make choices. As explained in Chapter 7 (and noted in Chapters 3, 4, and 5), people form emotionally anchored preferences before they consciously think about the issue. Indeed, our "awareness" of a problem or opportunity is an emotional reaction to sensory information. Although our rational thought process can evaluate information, those conclusions must be processed by our emotional centre(s) in order to make a choice. An important point here is that emotions are an inherent and essential part of human behaviour. This is different from "getting emotional," which occurs when emotions are so strong that they influence our actions without conscious control.

10. **If employees feel they are paid unfairly, then nothing other than changing their pay will reduce their feelings of injustice.**

    FALSE. When it comes to money, people tend to play interesting mind games to avoid feeling overreward inequity. Students will read in Chapter 5 that underpaid (underrewarded) employees might reduce the injustice by working less, taking nonmonetary resources, changing the comparison other, or leaving the field (such as quitting). This question also needs to consider that "injustice" is affected just as much by procedures as by distribution. Thus, injustice might be reduced by allowing appeals, ensuring the decision maker considers all information, ensuring that the underrewarded employees is treated with respect, and ensuring that he/she is given an opportunity to stated his/her views (voice).

SELF-ASSESSMENT 1.1: ARE YOU A GOOD TELECOMMUTER?

Overview and Instructions

Teleworking (also known as telecommuting) has become one of the fastest-growing developments in the workplace. With advanced computer and telecommunications systems, knowledge workers can now perform their work at home or another location away from their usual office. But effective teleworking requires more than technology. Some people are better than others that surviving and succeeding in teleworking arrangements.

This instrument is designed to help you to identify your 'telework disposition', that is, the degree to which your needs, values, and competencies are compatible with teleworking arrangements. This scale does not cover every personal characteristics related to effective teleworking, but it measures three of the most important dispositions. Also, please keep in mind that this scale only considers your personal characteristics. Other factors, such as organizational, family, technological systems support must also be taken into account.

Feedback for the Telecommuting Scale

Some people thrive in teleworking arrangements, whereas others discover that it is neither a satisfying nor productive work environment for them. This scale assesses three personal dispositions that are identified in the literature as characteristics of effective teleworkers: (a) high company alignment, (b) low social needs at work and (c) independent initiative.

Company alignment

Company alignment estimates the extent to which you follow company procedures and have values congruent with company values. The greater the alignment, the more likely that you can abide by company practices while working alone and with direct supervision. While some deviation from company practices may be appropriate, teleworkers need to agree with company values and provide work that is consistent with company expectations most of the time. Scores on this scale range from 4 to 20.

Score	Interpretation
15 to 20 points	High company alignment
9 to 14 points	Moderate company alignment
4 to 8 points	Low company alignment

Low social needs at work

People with a high score on this subscale do not rely on co-workers to satisfy their social needs. Successful teleworkers tend to score higher on this subscale (i.e. have lower social needs at work) because teleworking offers less opportunity for social interaction with co-workers than when working in an office setting each day. Scores on this scale range from 4 to 20.

Score	Interpretation
15 to 20 points	High score (low social need at work)
9 to 14 points	Moderate score (medium social need at work)
4 to 8 points	Low score (high social need at work)

Independent initiative

One of the most important characteristics of successful teleworkers is that they are able to set their own work goals and maintain a productive work schedule without direct supervision. People who score higher on this subscale tend to have a higher degree of independent initiative. Scores on this scale range from 6 to 30.

Score	Interpretation
15 to 20 points	High company alignment
9 to 14 points	Moderate company alignment
4 to 8 points	Low company alignment

Instructor's Manual to Accompany

Canadian Organizational Behaviour 10/e

by Steven L. McShane, Kevin Tasa, and Sandra Steen

Teaching Notes for Additional Cases

Prepared by:
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McGraw-Hill Ryerson

Case Chapter —>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
A Mir Kiss?		●	○					●			●				
Arctic Mining Consultants		●		○	●	○		●				●			
Bridging the Two Worlds: The Organizational Dilemma			●		○		○		●		○	●		○	
Going to the X-Stream	○										○	○	●	●	●
Keeping Suzanne Chalmers			○		●	●				○					
Northwest Canadian Forest Products Limited (Revised)	●		●		○	○					●				
The Regency Grand Hotel		●		●	●	●				○		○		○	○
Simmons Laboratories		●	●	●				○		○	●	○			
Tamarack Industries				○	○			●			●	○			
The Outstanding Faculty Award					●		●							○	
Vêtements Ltée					●									○	

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Field of Organizational Behaviour
Chapter 2: Individual Behaviour, Personality, and Values
Chapter 3: Perceiving Ourselves and Others in Organizations
Chapter 4: Workplace Emotions, Attitudes, and Stress
Chapter 5: Foundations of Employee Motivation
Chapter 6: Applied Performance Practices
Chapter 7: Decision Making and Creativity
Chapter 8: Team Dynamics
Chapter 9: Communicating in Teams and Organizations
Chapter 10: Power and Influence in the Workplace
Chapter 11: Conflict and Negotiation in the Workplace
Chapter 12: Leadership in Organizational Settings
Chapter 13: Designing Organizational Structures
Chapter 14: Organizational Culture
Chapter 15: Organizational Change

A MIR KISS?

These case teaching notes were prepared by Steven L McShane, Curtin Graduate School of Business (Australia) and the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business, University of Victoria (Canada)

Primary Case Topics

Conflict, cross-cultural issues, team dynamics

Case Synopsis

This case describes the actual events in the replica of the Mir space station at Moscow's Institute for Biomedical Problems (IBMP). The Mir replica included four Russian cosmonauts who had already completed half of their 240 days of isolation, and an international crew of three researchers from Japan, Canada, and Austria. The Canadian, Judith LaPierre, was the only female participant. Trouble began when two of the cosmonauts fought on New Year's Eve. Later that evening, the Russian cosmonaut commander tried to kiss LaPierre twice. He tried again the next morning. The researchers were appalled by the behaviour of the cosmonauts and by IBMP's inaction. Japan's researcher quit and was replaced by a Russian researcher. The connection between the cosmonauts and the researchers was permanently sealed soon after. When revealed to the public, IBMP's Russian scientists dismissed the kissing incident by saying that it was one fleeting kiss, a clash of cultures, and a female participant who was too emotional.

Discussion Questions and Suggested Answers

1. **Identify the different conflict episodes that exist in this case? Who was in conflict with whom?**

   Students should be able to identify several conflict episodes and conflicting parties in this case. Lapierre experienced conflict twice with the Russian commander who tried to kiss her. The international researchers experienced conflict with the Russian cosmonauts who were fighting with each other. The Russian cosmonauts who were fighting obviously were in conflict with each other. The international researchers experienced conflict with IBMP because of their inaction. The Japanese space program also experienced conflict with IBMP to the extent that they withdrew from the program. (Although not explicitly stated in the case, LaPierre and her husband experienced conflict with Canada's space agency over its inaction and failure to protest IBMP's response to the incidents.)

2. **What are the sources of conflict for each of these conflict incidents?**

   Different values and beliefs — This seems to be one of the most significant sources of conflict in this case. The participants had different cultures, different genders, and different educational and professional experiences. The Russians seem to view sexual harassment as less important than do people in Canada, Japan, and Austria. Kissing a woman is apparently considered a compliment (at least, Russian men think this way), whereas it is a personal violation in Canada. The cosmonauts had a different view of their fighting and general experience in isolation than did the international researchers.

   Task interdependence — Each of the conflicting parties had some level of interdependence with each other. Typically, this was reciprocal interdependence because their actions affected each other throughout the experiment. The researchers and cosmonauts had high interdependence (until they were sealed off from each other) as they shared space and resources in a small area.

   Ambiguous rules — There seems to be a lack of agreement over proper behaviour. The cosmonaut fight and the sexual harassment incidents clearly violated rules for some people, but weren't viewed as important or clear rules by the cosmonauts or scientists who ran the lab. The participants did not clarify what behaviours are inappropriate (although it is never possible to clarify every behaviour that may result in conflict). IBMP's interpretation of its role differed from what the international researcher's expected of that group.

Communication — Although not overt, these people spoke different languages and communicated through English, which was not anyone's 1st language. Certainly this created the potential for miscommunication as well as reluctance to communicate.

Incompatible goals — This is a relatively minor source of conflict compared to other factors. The researchers seem to have a different set of goals than did the IBMP researchers or the cosmonauts.

Scarce resources — Some students might identify this as a critical source of conflict, but there doesn't seem to be much evidence that anyone lacked resources. There was limited personal space, but no other resource seems to be an issue here.

3. **What conflict management style(s) did Lapierre, the international team, and Gushin use to resolve these conflicts? What style(s) would have worked best in these situations?**

   LaPierre and Gushin (IBMP researcher) mainly relied on the avoiding conflict management style. Gushin denied there was a problem, at least, not a problem with the cosmonaut's behaviour. LaPierre initially was quiet on the kissing incident, although she was more active with the international researchers in complaining about the cosmonauts' behaviour.

   The international researchers developed a forcing style through their letter of complaint, and the Japanese representative left after diplomatically complaining. (Implicitly, the Canadian space agency developed an accommodating style because it did not complain even though LaPierre's husband notified the agency a day or two after the New Year's Eve incident.)

   It is useful to consider the appropriateness of other conflict management styles where rules of behaviour have been violated. For example, it would be silly to apply a compromising style—should the researchers let the cosmonaut kiss LaPierre once each week? Collaborating is strongly recommended in this textbook because conflicts are rarely completely win-lose. In this incident, the parties might agree on a structural solution that would satisfy everyone. They might try to find ways in which each party can behave comfortably without offending others. To some extent, this involves establishing rules of behaviour, a structural solution described below.

4. **What conflict management interventions were applied here? Did they work? What alternative strategies would work best in this situation and in the future?**

   The main strategy tried here was to reduce task interdependence. Specifically, the scientists locked the port between their compartment and the cosmonauts. This seems to have been successful, but it is doubtful that isolating conflicting parties will work in outer space for long periods of time. LaPierre and perhaps the Japanese agency also tried to clarify rules, but without success. Rule clarification can potentially work where the parties can anticipate the types of conflict. However, there are so many potential areas of conflict, that forming rules is usually a reaction more than a proactive conflict management strategy.

   What should be done here? This is a good question for debate. To correct fundamental causes of conflict, the lab should consider more diversity-type cross-cultural training and team building so everyone knows how the others will perceive their actions (e.g., trying to kiss women isn't usually perceived by them as a compliment.).

Active Listening Exercise

by

Mary J. Gander
Winona State University,
Minnesota, U.S.A.

This exercise may be used by current adopters of:
S. L. McShane *Canadian Organizational Behaviour*, 5th ed. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2004); S. L. McShane & M. A. von Glinow, *Organizational Behavior,* 3rd ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005); S. L. McShane & T. Travaglione, *Organisational Behaviour on the Pacific Rim,* 1st ed. (Sydney: McGraw-Hill Australia, 2003)

Active Listening Exercise

By Mary Gander ,Winona State University, U.S.A.

Purpose
This exercise is designed to help you understand the dynamics of active listening in conversations and to develop active listening skills.

Instructions:
For each of the four vignettes presented below, student teams (or students working individually) will compose three statements that demonstrate active listening. Specifically, one statement will indicate that you show empathy for the situation; the second asks for clarification and detail in a nonjudgmental way; the third statement will provide nonevaluative feedback to the speaker. Here are details about each of these three types of responses:

Showing empathy – Acknowledge feelings. Sometimes it sounds like the speaker wants you to agree with him/her but, in reality, they mainly want you to understand how they feel. "Acknowledging feelings" involves taking in their statements, but looking at the "whole message" including body language, tone of voice, and level of arousal, and trying to determine what emotion they are conveying. Then you let them know that you realize they are feeling that emotion by just acknowledging it in a sentence.

Asking for clarification and detail while withholding your judgment and own opinions. This conveys that you are making a good effort to understand and not just trying to push your opinions onto them. To formulate a relevant question in asking for more clarification, you will have to listen carefully to what they say. Frame your question as someone trying to understand in more detail, often asking for a specific example is useful. This also helps the speaker evaluate their own opinions and perspective.

Providing non-evaluative feedback – feeding back the message you heard. This will allow the speaker to determine if he/she really got the message across to you and help prevent troublesome miscommunication. It will also help the speaker become more aware of how he/she is coming across to another person (self-evaluation). Just think about what the speaker is conveying and paraphrase it in your own words, and say it back to the speaker (without judging the correctness or merit of what they said), asking him/her if that is what they meant.

After teams (or individual students) have prepared the three statements for each vignette, the instructor will ask them to present their statements and explain how these statements satisfy the active listening criteria.

VIGNETTE #1
A colleague stops by your desk and says, "I am tired of the lack of leadership around here. The boss is so wishy washy, he can't get tough with some of the slackers around here. They just keep milking the company, living off the rest of us. Why doesn't management do something about these guys? And YOU are always so supportive of the boss; he's not as good as you make him out to be."

> **Develop three statements that respond to the speaker in this vignette by: (a) showing empathy, (b) seek clarification, and (c) provide nonevaluative feedback.**

VIGNETTE #2:
Your co-worker stops by your cubicle, her voice and body language show stress, frustration, and even some fear. You know she has been working hard and has a strong need to get her work done on time and done well. You are trying to concentrate on some work and have had a number of interruptions already. She just abruptly interrupts you and says, "This project is turning out to be a mess, why can't the other three people on my team quit fighting each other?"

> **Develop three statements that respond to the speaker in this vignette by: (a) showing empathy, (b) seek clarification, and (c) provide nonevaluative feedback.**

VIGNETTE #3:
One of your subordinates is working on an important project. He is an engineer who has good technical skills and knowledge and was selected for the project team because of that. He stops by your office and appears to be in quite agitated, his voice is loud and strained and his face has a look of bewilderment. He says, "I'm supposed to be working with four other people from four other departments on this new project, but they never listen to my ideas and seem to hardly know I'm at the meeting!"

> **Develop three statements that respond to the speaker in this vignette by: (a) showing empathy, (b) seek clarification, and (c) provide nonevaluative feedback.**

VIGNETTE #4:
Your subordinate comes into your office in a state of agitation, and asks if she can talk to you. She is polite and sits down. She seems calm and does not have an angry look on her face. However, she says, "It seems like you consistently make up lousy schedules, you are unfair and unrealistic in the kinds of assignments you give certain people, me included. Everyone else is so intimidated they don't complain but I think you need to know that this isn't right and it's got to change."

> **Develop three statements that respond to the speaker in this vignette by: (a) showing empathy, (b) seek clarification, and (c) provide nonevaluative feedback.**

RESTRICTED: Please keep this document secure at all times.
Do not distribute teaching notes to students.

Teaching Notes for Active Listening Exercise

by

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Minnesota, U.S.A.

This exercise may be used by current adopters of:
S. L. McShane *Canadian Organizational Behaviour*, 5th ed. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2004); S. L. McShane & M. A. von Glinow, *Organizational Behavior,* 3rd ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005); S. L. McShane & T. Travaglione, *Organisational Behaviour on the Pacific Rim,* 1st ed. (Sydney: McGraw-Hill Australia, 2003)

Teaching Notes for Active Listening Exercise

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Purpose

This exercise is designed to help students to understand the dynamics of active listening in conversations and to develop active listening skills.

Materials

None

Instructions

For each of the four vignettes presented in this exercise, student teams (or students working individually) will compose three statements that demonstrate active listening. Specifically, one statement will show empathy for the situation; the second asks for clarification and detail in a nonjudgmental way; the third statement will provide nonevaluative feedback to the speaker. Here are details about each of these three types of responses:

Showing empathy – Acknowledge feelings. Sometimes it sounds like the speaker wants you to agree with him/her but, in reality, they mainly want you to understand how they feel. "Acknowledging feelings" involves taking in their statements, but looking at the "whole message" including body language, tone of voice, and level of arousal, and trying to determine what emotion they are conveying. Then you let them know that you realize they are feeling that emotion by just acknowledging it in a sentence.

Asking for clarification and detail while withholding your judgment and own opinions. This conveys that you are making a good effort to understand and not just trying to push your opinions onto them. To formulate a relevant question in asking for more clarification, you will have to listen carefully to what they say. Frame your question as someone trying to understand in more detail, often asking for a specific example is useful. This also helps the speaker to evaluate his/her own opinions and perspective.

Providing non-evaluative feedback – feeding back the message you heard. This will allow the speaker to determine if he/she really got the message across to you and help prevent troublesome miscommunication. It will also help the speaker become more aware of how he/she is coming across to another person (self-evaluation). Just think about what the speaker is conveying and paraphrase it in your own words, and say it back to the speaker (without judging the correctness or merit of what they said), asking him/her if that is what they meant.

After teams (or individual students) have prepared the three statements for each vignette, the instructor will ask them to present their statements and explain how these statements satisfy the active listening criteria.

Comments to Instructors

This exercise is beneficial after a lecture/presentation on the purposes and method of Active Listening as an effective communication and conflict management tool in the work place.

During debriefing, teams may be asked to volunteer their responses, and the class, as a whole, can discuss the sample responses – if they fit the requirements or not, and why. If the response is not fitting, the class may be asked to suggest what might be a more fitting response, and why

One suggestion is to have students earn up to 12 points for completing the exercise in class (one point per response). This motivates them to concentrate on it more and do a more serious job on it. Also, it is a good mechanism for checking attendance in class that day. Less than 12 points may be given to teams who obviously do not put much effort into the exercise, or obviously do not understand some of the principles involved. If many students have difficulty with the exercise, the instructor may consider the possibility they need to review the concepts and principles of Active Listening again.

This exercise can be followed with an out-of-class assignment requiring students to try Active Listening skills in an actual situation in their lives and write up a brief description of the interaction with another person (or persons) and what happened. This strategy of (1) teaching the method, (2) practicing the skills, and (3) applying the method in one's life, tends to be quite effective for most students.

Examples of Effective Answers

Vignette #1

A colleague stops by your desk and says, "I am tired of the lack of leadership around here. The boss is so wishy washy, he can't get tough with some of the slackers around here. They just keep milking the company, living off the rest of us. Why doesn't management do something about these guys? And YOU are always so supportive of the boss; he's not as good as you make him out to be."

(1) Showing Empathy:

"You sound kind of frustrated."

"It sounds like you are feeling kind of taken advantage of"

(2) Asking for clarification:

"Could you help me understand better what you mean by the term 'slackers'?"

"Can you give me an example of when I was too supportive of the Boss?"

(3) Providing nonevaluative feedback:

"You think there are a lot of employees around here who are not doing their share of the work."

"You think I am being too supportive of the boss."

Vignette #2

Your co-worker stops by your cubicle, her voice and body language show stress, frustration, and even some fear. You know she has been working hard and has a strong need to get her work done on time and done well. You are trying to concentrate on some work and have had a number of interruptions already. She just abruptly interrupts you and says, "This project is turning out to be a mess, why can't the other three people on my team quit fighting each other?"

(1) Showing Empathy:

"You seem to be under a lot of stress today."

"The lack of agreement on your team is very frustrating."

(2) Asking for clarification:

"Specifically, what seems to be going wrong with the project?"

"Specifically, what is it your team members disagree about?"

(3) Providing nonevaluative feedback:

"You think the project you are working on is going to be a failure."

"The people on your team are not handling their differences of opinion very productively, is that right?"

Vignette #3

One of your subordinates is working on an important project. He is an engineer who has good technical skills and knowledge and was selected for the project team because of that. He stops by your office and appears to be in quite agitated, his voice is loud and strained and his face has a look of bewilderment. He says, "I'm supposed to be working with four other people from four other departments on this new project, but they never listen to my ideas and seem to hardly know I'm at the meeting!"

(1) Showing Empathy:

"You feel un-listened to and unappreciated."

"You seem frustrated with not being able to get your ideas communicated."

(2) Asking for clarification:

“Could you briefly explain a situation in which they wouldn’t listen?”

“How do you usually go about communicating your ideas at a meeting?”

(3) Providing nonevaluative feedback:

“The four people from different departments, on your project team, don’t seem to be listening to your ideas.”

“Do you mean to say that cross functional communication is a challenging aspect of your project?”

Vignette #4

Your subordinate comes into your office in a state of agitation, and asks if she can talk to you. She is polite and sits down. She seems calm and does not have an angry look on her face. However, she says, “It seems like you consistently make up lousy schedules, you are unfair and unrealistic in the kinds of assignments you give certain people, me included. Everyone else is so intimidated they don’t complain but I think you need to know that this isn’t right and it’s got to change.”

(1) Showing Empathy:

“You are concerned about the fairness and appropriateness of assignments given certain people.”

“You feel the need to speak up for other employees who may be frightened to speak up.”

(2) Asking for clarification:

“Could you help me understand by giving me a couple of specific examples of assignments that were given unfairly or unrealistically?”

“Help me understand, more specifically, how I might be acting that makes employees feel intimidated.”

(3) Providing nonevaluative feedback:

“You believe a lot of employees are intimidated by me.”

“You think the schedules I make up are consistently unfair and unrealistic.”