Human Relations in Organizations
Applications and Skill Building
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Chapter 2

Personality, Stress, Learning, and Perception
As the workplace becomes more diverse, it becomes increasingly important to understand what makes people different in order to work productively as a team.
Personality

- Relatively stable set of traits that aids in explaining and predicting individual behavior
  - i.e., *warm, aggressive, easygoing*
  - i.e., Type A Personality
  - i.e., Type B Personality

- Individuals are all different, yet similar in many ways
Personality Development

- Traits are distinguishing personal characteristics
- Personality development is based on genetics and environmental factors
  - Personality is the sum of genetics and a lifetime of learning
  - Personality traits can be changed, with work
Personality Classification Methods

- **Type A/ Type B**
  - Type A: fast moving, hard driving, time conscious, competitive, impatient, and preoccupied with work
  - Type B: often laid back or easy going

- **Locus of Control**
  - A continuum between an external and an internal belief over who has control over one’s destiny
  - Can be internal or external
Big Five Dimensions of Traits

- Surgency
- Adjustedness
- Open to experience
- Conscientiousness
- Agreeableness
The Big Five Model of Personality (1 of 2)

- **Surgency** – includes leadership and extroversion traits
- **Agreeableness** – includes traits related to getting along with people
- **Adjustment** – includes traits related to emotional stability
The Big Five Model of Personality (2 of 2)

- **Conscientiousness** – includes traits related to achievement
- **Openness to experience** – includes traits related to being willing to change and try new things
Before you interact with another person, ask yourself questions like:

- What type of personality does the other person have?
- How is he or she likely to behave in this situation during our interaction?
- How can I create a win-win situation?
- Is there anything I should or should not do to make this interaction successful?
After you interact with another person, ask yourself questions like:

- Was my assessment of the other person’s personality correct?
- Did the other person behave as I predicted?
- Did I create a win-win situation?
- Did my behavior help the relations, and should I continue with this person?
- Did my behavior hurt the relations, and should I discontinue it with this person?
The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

- Identifies an individual’s personality preferences
- Based on an individual’s four preferences (or inclinations) for certain ways of thinking and behaving
Stress

- **Stress** – is an emotional and/or physical reaction to environmental activities and events

- **Stressors** – situations in which people feel *anxiety*, *tension*, and *pressure*

- How people react to stressors depends on:
  - the circumstances
  - each person’s *physical* and *psychological* characteristics
The Positive Side of Stress

- Some stress helps improve performance by challenging and motivating us
  - Many people perform best under some pressure.
Problems Associated with Too Much Stress

- Too much stress affects:
  - Personal health
  - Morale
  - Productivity
  - Organizational efficiency
  - Absenteeism
  - Medical costs
  - Profitability

- Stress also causes many physical illnesses
Causes of Stress

- Personality type
- Organizational climate
- Management behavior
- Degree of job satisfaction
Signs of Stress

- Disillusionment
- Irritableness
- Headaches
- Body tension
- Exhaustion
- Stomach problems

**Burnout** – the constant lack of interest and motivation to perform one’s job because of stress
Controlling Stress

- **Step 1** – Identify stressors
- **Step 2** – Determine their causes and consequences
- **Step 3** – Plan to eliminate or decrease the stress
Ways to Reduce Stress

- Relaxation
- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Support System
- Positive Thinking
Causes of Stress and How to Control Stress

Factors that can make your stress level high

Your personality type

Ways to keep your stress level low

Exercise

Relaxation

Support system

Positive thinking

Nutrition

Controlling stress

Organizational climate

Job Satisfaction

Management behavior

Causes of stress

Exhibit 2.3
Many organizations view managing knowledge as the key to their success.
Intelligence – is the level of one’s capacity for:

- new learning
- problem solving
- decision making

It is generally agreed that intelligence is a product of both genetics and the environment.
Intelligence is a strong predictor of many important outcomes in life, such as:

- educational attainment
- occupational attainment

People have multiple intelligences, two of which (interpersonal and leadership) involve working with people.
Emotional Intelligence

- Incorporates a broad range of abilities that explain workplace behavior as it relates to the way individuals manage emotions
- It is part of multiple intelligences
## Five Components of Emotional Intelligence

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<th>Description</th>
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| 1. Self-awareness | Being conscious of your emotions within you  
Your *gut feelings* can help you on the job |
| 2. Managing emotions | Not letting your emotions get in the way of getting the job done |
| 3. Motivating oneself | Being optimistic despite obstacles, setbacks, and failure |
| 4. Empathy | Putting yourself in someone else’s situation and understanding that person’s emotions |
| 5. Social skills | To build relationships, respond to emotions, and influence others |
The Four Learning Styles (1 of 2)

- Accommodator
- Converger
- Assimilator
- Diverger

Exhibit 2.4
# The Four Learning Styles (2 of 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Style</th>
<th>Learning Method</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Accommodator</td>
<td>Prefers learning by <em>doing and feeling</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Diverger</td>
<td>Prefers learning by <em>observing and feeling</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Converger</td>
<td>Prefers learning by <em>doing and thinking</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assimilator</td>
<td>Prefers learning by <em>observing and thinking</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning organizations:

- cultivate the capacity to learn, adapt, and change with the environment to be innovative with speed
- focus on improving learning and on determining how knowledge is circulated throughout the organization
- question old beliefs and ways of doing things, yet they make the learning process as painless as possible

When employees work together, learning and innovation are optimized
The learning organization learns to:

- Operate using the systems effect
- Avoid making the same mistakes
- Make continuous performance improvements
- Share information
Perception

- Perception – refers to a person’s interpretation of reality
  - People with different personalities perceive things differently
  - Perception is influenced by:
    - Heredity
    - Environment
    - Personality
    - Intelligence
    - Needs
    - Self concept, attitudes, and values
Biases in Perception

- Stereotypes
- Frame of Reference
- Expectations
- Selective Exposure
- Interest
- Projection
Perceptual Congruence

- The degree to which people see things the same way
- When people perceive things the same way, there are positive consequences in the organization
Developing Positive First Impressions

- **Primacy Effect** - The way people perceive one another during their *first impressions*

- These first impressions:
  - Establish the mental framework within which people view one another
  - Are based on personality and appearance

- **Four-minute Barrier** - The time we have to make a good impression
Image Projection

- **Image** – other people’s attitudes toward us
- **Impression management** – image from *your* perspective
- We can control the image we project by our:
  - appearance
  - nonverbal communications
  - behavior