

MGT502 Organizational Behavior

All in One Solved Subjectives

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1. *Individuals in leadership and management positions recognize that "putting people first" results in a significant competitive advantage when it comes to sustaining operations in the marketplace. List and describe, using examples, the kinds of practices which differentiate organizations that place people first from those who adopt a different philosophy.*

Answer:

- Actively seek a diverse workforce
- Assist employees to balance work and personal responsibilities
- Keep employee skill levels current and relevant
- Delegate responsibility and authority down to lower levels
- Create an environment to enable greater commitment from the workforce
- Develop a reputation for recruiting more conscientious and loyal employees

2. *Workforce diversity has become a major issue for organizational function and goal achievement in a variety of settings. Using examples and your own experience, describe some of the implications that workforce diversity has for management practices.*

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- shift in managerial philosophy to recognize differences in culture and values in order to accommodate them in ways that will ensure productivity
- clear recognition of discrimination and structuring of work situation to prevent this from occurring
- provision of diversity training to increase awareness of the dynamics and potential implications
- when properly managed, can increase innovation and improve decision making
- when improperly handled, can cause serious problems resulting in turnover, poor communication and interpersonal conflicts

3. Evidence and experience have shown that managing a company well makes a significant difference to its ultimate success and profitability. List and describe characteristics which directly contribute to a manager's ability to perform in a superior manner. Provide examples to support your discussion.

Answer:

- developing a humane and family-friendly corporate culture
- growing need for team approach throughout the organization
- advanced training and skill development
- increased employee share ownership
- need for a strong visionary leader
- establishment of a physical environment that employees like
- chance to change careers within the company
- promotion, flexibility, good benefits, exciting work

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4. Many high profile business leaders have built a reputation and achieved a position in both local and international markets which is generally recognized and respected by their peers and others in the business community. Using examples, list and describe the major characteristics which an individual must possess to achieve higher levels of success, reputation and influence.

Answer:

- assertive; risk-taker; driven in terms of goals, objectives and achievements
- possesses wisdom and patience; learns from failures
- able to withstand moderate to severe criticism
- perceptions of how viewed by others also affects actions
- efficient organizer and trusts others to do their work
- strong and influential leadership style
- hands-on innovator who can implement restructuring plans

5. It is believed that emotional intelligence is one of the prime factors which every manager and, ultimately the organization, must understand and accommodate for when dealing with employees and human resource systems. Emotional intelligence is what makes people successful in the workplace. Using examples, describe the five dimensions of emotional intelligence.

Answer:

- self-awareness - realistic comprehension of your feelings and influence on others; exhibited by self-confidence, realistic self-assessment, self-deprecating sense of humor
- self-management - ability to control own emotions and impulses from negatively affecting others; exhibited by trustworthiness, integrity, comfort with ambiguity, openness to change

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- self-motivation - tenacity to keep on going in the face of setbacks and failures ; exhibited by strong drive to achieve, optimism, high organizational commitment
- empathy - ability to sense how others are feeling and behave accordingly ; exhibited by ability to attract and keep talented people, cross-cultural sensitivity, service to clients and customers
- social skills - ability to handle the emotions of others and take appropriate action ; exhibited by persuasiveness, ability to build and lead teams

6. Today's organizations are characterized by complex issues such as downsizing, restructuring, increased competitiveness and the need to maintain a highly effective workforce. As a result, the role of the organization in its employees' careers has become a major focus. Outline and discuss, using appropriate examples, both the organization's responsibilities and the employee's responsibilities with respect to career development.

Answer:

- organization's responsibilities - provide support for employees to continually add to their skills, abilities and knowledge; clearly communicate organization's goals and future strategies; create growth opportunities; offer financial assistance; provide time to learn
- employee's responsibilities - only employee holds prime responsibility for career development; ensure your employability; have a fallback position; know your key skills; market continually; act Type A but be Type B; stay culturally current; communicate effectively and efficiently; manage finances; act like an insider and think like an outsider; be capable of rewarding yourself

7. Globalization, along with a greater realization of many employees from different cultures, has created a business and work environment significantly different from that of fifteen to twenty years ago. Business leaders and individuals, at all levels of management, recognize that this diversity must be addressed and managed well if success is to be achieved for both the company and its workers. Some managers, however, seem to think that managerial skills are transferable across cultures.

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Discuss the pros and cons of cross-cultural training using appropriate examples to support your position.

Answer:

- pro cross-cultural training - higher individual performance; improves relationships; quicker adjustment to new culture; significantly reduces expatriate failure rates; increased job satisfaction; superior company image
- against cross-cultural training - managing is universal; where managing is done is irrelevant; training believed not to be effective; managerial skills perfectly transferable across cultures, domestic track record is sufficient for assignment; foreign nationals can be hired to fill required roles

8. Attitudes, in general, are evaluative statements which somehow concern the people, objects or events in an individual's environment. Management knows that attitudes and respective values have a significant impact upon individuals and their performance in the workplace. Keeping these factors in mind, describe and compare job satisfaction and job involvement. Use examples to illustrate what impact these two attitudes have on the workplace.

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- job satisfaction - general attitude towards job; high satisfaction results in positive attitudes toward job, dissatisfaction results in negative attitudes about job; determinants of job satisfaction include mentally challenging work, equitable rewards, supportive working conditions, and supportive colleagues; job fit; heredity; increased productivity
- job involvement - degree to which person identifies with job, actively participates in it, and considers his or her performance important to self-worth; employees generally care about the kind of work they do; fewer absences, lower resignation rates

9. Attitude surveys can assist an organization to determine the attitudes of employees and how these affect performance and job satisfaction. Sometimes, organizations wish to change employee attitudes for a variety of reasons. Diversity training is one example

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of attempting to modify attitudes. Identify and describe some methods of diversity training, and support with appropriate examples.

Answer:

- self-evaluation process
- confront ethnic and cultural stereotypes
- examine inner beliefs and values
- group discussions with representatives from diverse groups
- volunteer work in community or social service centers
- exercises to let participants feel what it's like to be different

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10. Money seems to be the most common denominator not only for organizations and companies, but also for management and employees. Some managers believe that money is the best and only major motivator. Others believe that a variety of factors can act as motivators depending on how they are viewed and their relationships to money. Compare and contrast the two positions using examples to illustrate your point of view.

Answer

- money doesn't motivate - high achievers intrinsically motivated; money relevant to those with strong lower-order needs which is generally not characteristic of majority of workforce; monetary rewards often determined by factors other than level of performance; pay determined by collective bargaining not by level of performance
- money motivates - must be important to individual; must be perceived as direct reward for performance and considered to be significant; management must have discretion to reward high performers with more money; flexibility is key issue

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- money is crucial incentive to work motivation - medium of exchange by which employees can purchase desirable things; scorecard to assess value organization places on services; comparison of one's value to others; cheque absolutely necessary to meet basic needs; primary outcome against which inputs are compared; pay contingent on performance

11. Expectancy theory is considered to be one of the most widely accepted explanations of motivation. Many managers use this understanding to great advantage since they realize that employee expectations are somehow tied to their own goals and those of the organization. Identify and briefly describe the three relationships of expectancy theory. To illustrate how this theory might apply to the work situation, provide examples of things that managers can do to increase employee motivation.

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- effort-performance relationship - perceived probability that given amount of effort will lead to performance - make certain that employees have adequate skills; provide training; assign reasonable tasks
- performance-reward relationship - belief that performing at certain level leads to attainment of desired outcome - actually recognize performance; deliver rewards as promised
- rewards-personal goals relationship - attractiveness of organizational rewards to personal goals and needs - determine what kinds of rewards value; make certain that rewards are actually valued

12. Corporations facing increased competition and globalization are having to adopt new methods and procedures to achieve company direction, maintain profitability, and survive into the future. A process called stretch targets is a relatively new technique for improving effectiveness which enables employees not only to stretch their abilities to new levels, but to change the organization's competitive position. Identify and describe four conditions under which stretch targets can work.

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- autonomy - ability of the group working on a goal to control the situation themselves
- empowerment - groups have power over resources; power to propose and implement changes as necessary; autonomy and empowerment increase willingness to accept stretch targets
- structural accommodation - support of top management; unlimited access to information; power to change organizational procedures as necessary; undergo important cultural changes to provide the necessary support
- bureaucratic immunity - report only to top management; not subject to bureaucratic review process as with other projects; not subject to the power politics during the time of their special assignments; inspires creativity and eliminates fear of failure

13. Although group function certainly has proven to be a highly effective way of attaining organizational goals, some managers still believe that jobs must be designed around, and focused on, the individual employee. Compare and contrast the factors which characterize job design considering group structure and focus on the individual only. Use examples to support your response.

Answer:

- individual focus - strong individual identity is valuable even in team setting; clear linkage between individual effort and visible outcome; frustration can occur when individual contributions are lost in the group; individuals wish to be recognized for their own talents and efforts; some have difficulty accepting group's decision; difficulty with promotion or termination based on group performance
- group focus - small groups seem to be well accepted by individuals; satisfy membership needs, support systems; effective problem finding, innovative and creative; superior decision making; more effective implementation and commitment; control and discipline individual members; fend off negative effects of large size; spontaneous development of small groups cannot be prevented

14. Individuals serving in management positions in both private and public sectors have recognized that support for groups to work together has become a vital function. List

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and describe six ways in which organizations can facilitate group function. Provide examples to illustrate your response.

Answer:

- assign appropriate people to the group-technical and interpersonal skills; building trust; open and supportive relationships; "we" feeling
- provide appropriate group training - group function; programs to improve technical and interpersonal skills
- provide adequate and timely information - ensure appropriate information for the group; clearly explain to employees information sources or lack thereof
- give challenging, specific performance objectives - moderately difficult goals; challenge of meeting deadlines; quality that needs to be achieved; tasks need to be interesting and meaningful
- give rewards for excellent performance - groups tend to engage in activities that are rewarded; range from recognition to tangible items; motivating task is often a reward
- direct rewards and objectives to the group level - activities must be group-based; individual rewards will focus only on individual needs

15. While organizations can provide goals and tasks that groups will find challenging and motivating, the group itself must create an internal climate that makes participating worthwhile for both the organization and the individuals involved. Identify and briefly describe the characteristics that differentiate between effective and ineffective groups.

Answer:

- clear purpose - jointly agreed upon goals
- participation - share information; all contributions valued
- civilized disagreement - manage conflict; mechanisms to resolve
- open communications - build trust; formal and informal opportunities to communicate

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- listening - understand information; interpersonal understanding and empathy
- informal climate - comfortable and relaxed atmosphere; flexibility
- consensus decisions - express opinions, reservations, disagreements; form solution entire group can support
- clear roles and work assignments - clear agreement about roles, responsibilities and assignments
- shared leadership - members work together not to burden one person with all responsibility
- style diversity - recognize differences in members; use differences to advantage
- external relationships - collects information from a variety of sources
- self-assessment - how well group is doing; what group is doing correctly; how performance can be improved; is everyone contributing adequately

16. Compare and contrast the differences between a work group and a work team by listing specific characteristics of each.

Answer:

- work group-senior member usually designated to lead; goals set by formal leader; performance evaluated by leader, work style determined and success defined by the designated leader; leader knows best how to proceed; speed and efficiency may be higher than that of teams; products are largely individual
- work team - shared leadership roles; individual and mutual accountability; specific team purpose that team itself delivers; collective work products; encourages open-ended discussion and active problem solving; performance evaluated by team members and leader; speed and efficiency equal to single leader group after initial organization and orientation

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17. Team leaders have a significant impact on a team's climate of trust. Team leaders must build trust between themselves and their team members. Identify eight ways that a team leader can build that necessary trust process.

Answer:

- demonstrate that you are working for others' interests as well as your own
- be a team player through words and actions; defend the team
- practice openness since it leads to confidence and keeps people informed
- be fair, objective, impartial and give credit where credit is due
- speak your feelings so that others will view you as real and human
- show consistency in basic values that guide your decision making
- maintain confidences and take great care not to betray or leak information
- demonstrate competence; develop and display your communication, team building and other interpersonal skills

18. The traditional individual-oriented evaluation must be modified to reflect team performance. In this process, team members provide feedback to each other in three critical areas including team results, team functioning and personal effectiveness. Identify at least six behaviours which are related to each of these areas.

Answer:

- team results - effort, achieving individual role requirements; collaborating with others toward achieving common goals; smoothing relationships with customers and suppliers; adhering to standards; realizing tactical plans
- team functioning - sustaining morale and team spirit; recognizing others' contributions and opinions; listening; solving problems without taking ownership; resolving conflict but maintaining dignity; helping team carry out strategic and long-term thinking and

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planning; living up to company principles, values and ethics; building trust by meeting commitments and keeping agreements

- personal effectiveness - giving personal support, recognition, clear and useful feedback; enthusiasm; understanding priorities; skill expansion; understanding roles and behaviours; growth and development; mentoring; understanding interpersonal relationships; pointing out opportunities and risks regarding career development

19. Because hearing and listening are generally assumed to be the same, listening skills are often taken for granted. The difference between the speed of speech and the speed of comprehension has contributed to acquisition of bad listening habits to fill in "idle time." Eight specific behaviours have been identified as being associated with effective listening skills. Choose five and discuss.

Answer:

- make eye contact - may listen with ears, but tendency by others to judge whether one is really listening by looking at eyes
- exhibit affirmative head nods and appropriate facial expressions - shows interest in what is being said; especially effective when combined with eye contact
- avoid distracting actions or gestures - makes speaker feel you are bored or uninterested, indicate you aren't fully attentive and may be missing part of the message
- ask questions - analysis of what one is hearing; provides clarification; ensures understanding; assures speaker that you are listening
- paraphrase - excellent device to check whether you are listening carefully; control for accuracy
- avoid interrupting speaker - don't attempt to second guess where speaker's thoughts are going
- don't overtalk - talking may be more fun and silence may be uncomfortable, cannot talk and listen simultaneously

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- make smooth transitions between roles of speaker and listener - easy to listen when communication is one-way; means concentrating on what speaker is saying and not thinking about what you are going to say as soon as you have the opportunity

20. Men and women often have difficulty communicating with each other. This misinterpretation of communication has the potential for negatively impacting interpersonal and working relationships. Discuss the differences in the way men and women communicate which would help us understand and eliminate these gender communication barriers.

Answer:

communication is continuous balancing act between conflicting needs for intimacy and independence; intimacy emphasizes closeness and commonalities; independence emphasizes separateness and differences; similar dialogue interpreted differently

- men - conversations are means to preserve independence and maintain status in hierarchical social order; assert desire for independence and control by offering solutions to problems; approach conflict by stating opinions without providing supporting evidence; view female indirectness as covert or sneaky and interpret weakness when definitive stand not taken; view apologizing as weakness because interpret it to mean acceptance of blame
- women - conversations are negotiations for closeness in attempt to seek and give confirmation and support; view talking about problems as means to promote closeness through support and connection, not for advice; mutual understanding seen as being symmetrical whereas advice giver is viewed as being more knowledgeable, reasonable and in control; approach conflict by presenting supporting evidence rather than simply relying on own knowledge or beliefs; interpret male directness as assertion of status and one-upsmanship; view apology as an expression of empathy

21. Conflict is something that everyone will experience in a variety of situations throughout the course of their lives. However, conflict does not necessarily have to be dysfunctional or destructive. By managing the interpersonal conflict that can accompany group interactions well, groups will have greater success in achieving

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their goals without letting the conflict get in the way. Identify and describe six tactics that can assist groups in reducing conflict.

Answer:

- information - using more rather than less; discussion based on facts
- multiple alternatives - enrich level of debate and discussion
- commonly agreed-upon goals - shared with members; agreed to
- humour - injected into discussion and decision process
- balance - power structure within and outside the group
- resolution - agree to issues without forcing consensus

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22. The employee empowerment grid is designed to provide one way of determining the effects of empowerment (i.e. giving power to employees). The content and context of jobs are the two dimensions used to categorize the degree of empowerment. Identify and describe the five types of power and their effects on employees.

Answer

- no discretion - highly routine and repetitive; task assigned but no discretion given and generally monitored by supervisor; less satisfied with jobs; less productive
- task setting - determine how job gets done but no discretion regarding what job gets done; discretion over timing and procedures; develop new skills to help perform work in a better fashion; more motivated and satisfied
- participatory empowerment - some decision-making authority over content and context; higher satisfaction and productivity
- mission defining - set broad goals for project but not responsible for carrying out tasks of project

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- self-management - total decision-making power for content and context; generally reserved for top management

23. Despite the sometimes questionable ethics of politics and politicking, certain behaviours can be displayed and engaged in which to improve this process. Identify and describe eight behaviours or suggestions that are likely to improve your political effectiveness.

Answer:

- frame arguments in terms of organizational goals - camouflage self-interest; arguments to support organization
- develop right image - know organizational culture; project appropriate image; address style and substance
- gain control of organizational resources - organizational resources are a source of power; knowledge; expertise
- make yourself appear indispensable - appearance rather than objective facts; no ready substitute for what you are giving the organization
- be visible - everyone aware of your contribution; call attention to yourself by discretely highlighting success
- develop powerful allies - contacts with influential people at all levels; gaining valuable information; coalition of support
- avoid "tainted" members - avoid those of questionable status; deny close association
- support your boss - performance evaluation becomes central issue; keep your boss on your side; don't undermine your boss; don't speak negatively of your boss

24. Dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace has resulted in a variety of approaches, policies and procedures to alleviate problems and difficulties encountered, particularly by female employees. Identify eight initiatives which will help to solve many of these problems.

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Answer:

- developing formal procedures to consult with women regarding integration into nontraditional jobs
- creating employment equity plans to address recruitment, training and promotion
- plan workshops, seminars or retreats to focus on the needs of women in the workplace
- provide better education and information about the nature of sexual harassment
- examine traditional practices since behaviour that was once tolerated is becoming less acceptable
- clearly specify employer obligations, procedures and policies
- human rights commissions should be more involved in campaigns and encouraging victims to come forward
- provincial governments should make more funds available to allow investigation, prevention and education

25. Part of the metamorphosis stage is a series of alternatives designed to bring about desired socialization. The more managers rely on certain options, the greater the likelihood that newcomers' differences and perspectives will be changed and replaced by standard and predictable behaviours. Identify and describe the five entry socialization options that contribute to this change.

Answer:

- formal - segregation from ongoing work setting; differentiated to make explicit newcomer's role; specific orientation and training programs
- collective - grouped and processed through identical experiences; military bootcamp
- fixed - standardized time schedule to make transition from outsider to insider; rotational training and probationary periods

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- serial - use of role models who train and encourage; apprenticeship and mentoring programs
- divestiture - strip away characteristics to shape into proper role; fraternity and sorority pledges

26. The family-friendly workplace is one example of several different types of organizational cultures. Describe the characteristics and advantages of this type of culture.

Answer:

- on-site day-care; child-care and elder-care referrals
- flexible hours; compressed workweeks
- job sharing; telecommuting
- temporary part-time employment
- relocation assistance for employees with family members
- advantages - improve morale, productivity; reduce absenteeism; recruit and retain first-class workers; appeal to both males and females

27. Cultural innovation is a practice which will assist a company in designing and implementing new practices to improve performance and profitability. Innovative organizations promote individuals to become champions of change. Describe the personality and job characteristics of these individuals.

Answer:

- extremely high self-confidence
- persistence, energy, tendency to take risks

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- associated with transformational leadership
- inspire and energize others with their vision
- strong personal conviction in their mission
- gain commitment of others to support their mission
- considerable autonomy and decision-making discretion

28. Visionary leaders must create a realistic direction for the organization with which they are involved. These visions have certain characteristics or properties which differ from other forms of direction-setting. Identify and describe six of these characteristics and provide examples to support your response.

Answer:

- inspirational possibilities that are value-centered, realizable, with superior imagery and articulation
- create possibilities that are unique and can produce organizational distinction
- offer a view of the future that is clearly better for the organization and its members
- fit times and circumstances to reflect the uniqueness of the organization
- must have clear articulation and powerful imagery to be more easily grasped and accepted
- highly successful visionary companies are led by charismatic individuals

29. Leaders, at some point in their careers, are involved in a team building and facilitating process. The leader's job then is to focus on the team's boundaries and functions, and to effectively facilitate the team process if benefits are to be fully realized. To this end, there are four specific roles that team leaders must play to achieve intended success. Identify and, using examples, describe these four roles.

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- liaise with external constituencies - upper management, other internal teams, customers, suppliers; clarifies others' expectations of the team; secures needed resources; gathers information from outside and shares with team members
- troubleshooter - attempt to resolve problems; asking penetrating questions; assist with team discussions; obtain needed resources from external constituencies
- conflict manager - process conflict; source of conflict; issues; options; advantages and disadvantages of solutions; minimize disruption
- coach - clarify expectations and roles; teach; offer support; cheerlead

30. Over the past decade or so, a trend has emerged which has major implications for individuals in leadership positions. This trend, known as empowerment, suggests that effective leaders need to share power and responsibility with their employees. This has an impact on how people behave and how the organization functions to achieve its outcomes. Identify and describe what you consider to be the characteristics of empowerment and provide examples to support your response.

Answer:

- demonstrate trust for superiors and subordinates
- develop and implement a vision
- remove performance - blocking barriers
- offer encouragement, support and confidence
- motivate employees and peers
- develop a system of coaching employees
- part of corporate-wide efforts
- downsizing, higher employee skills, commitment to continuous training, total quality management, self-managed teams all increase the need for a more empowering approach

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31. Although group decision-making has been the focus of much attention and is being increasingly used in organizations, a negative byproduct of this process is that of groupthink. Identify and describe the six symptoms of groupthink using examples to illustrate your response.

Answer:

- rationalized resistance - rationalized resistance to existing assumptions; contradictory evidence not considered; reinforcement of assumptions becomes strong
- peer pressure - direct pressure on those who even momentarily express doubts about group's shared views; questioning validity of arguments supporting alternative favored by majority not accepted
- minimized doubts - individuals with differing points of view avoid deviating from group direction; keeping silent about misgivings; minimize to themselves the importance of their doubts
- illusion of unanimity - silence means agreement and compliance; abstention becomes an indication of support
- illusion of invulnerability - overconfidence; take extraordinary risks
- assumption of morality - belief in moral rightness of group's objectives; no need to debate ethics of actions

32. Four group decision-making techniques have been used with some validity within organizations. Each has its own strengths and weaknesses. The decision to use one technique over another is dependent upon the criteria one wishes to emphasize and the cost-benefit trade-off. Using examples, discuss these four techniques.

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- interacting groups - members meet face-to-face; verbal and nonverbal interaction; sometimes groups censor themselves and pressure members toward conformity; most common form
- brainstorming - overcome pressures of conformity; enhance development of creative alternatives; idea-generating process that encourages wide alternatives; reduces criticism of alternatives; process for generating ideas only
- nominal group technique - members independently produce own ideas; members take turns to present single ideas; group discusses ideas for clarity; ideas are then rank-ordered; idea with highest aggregate ranking determines final decision
- electronic meeting - use of computer technology; respondents sit at table with computer terminals; respond to issues placed before them; anonymity, honesty, speed; discussions don't digress

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33. Many Canadian corporations are beginning to recognize that they need to accept responsibilities beyond those of profitability for their owners and shareholders. This means they must also consider goals which will create an image and reputation of contributions to their business environment. Identify, using examples, at least six practices corporations are beginning to develop to demonstrate their social responsibility.

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- donation of pretax profits to charity
- provision of resources and facilities to non-profit organizations
- encourage employees to volunteer for charitable organizations
- inclusion of customer, employee, community and environment in long-term and day-to-day decision-making
- responsibility to improve the physical environment and reclamation standards
- showing commitment to, and assistance for, disadvantaged and minority groups

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34. Using examples, differentiate between the mechanistic and organic models of organizational design.

Answer:

- mechanistic - extensive departmentalization; high formalization; limited information network; mostly downward communication; little participation by low-level members in decision-making; fits for individuals with high degree of bureaucratic orientation; preference for formal relationships with others on the job; better accepted by individuals from high power distance cultures
- organic - flat; uses cross-hierarchical and cross-functional teams; low formalization; comprehensive information network; lateral, upward and downward communication; high participation in decision-making; fits for individuals with low degree of bureaucratic orientation

35. Objectives are generally derived from an organization's overall strategy which must be linked to the structure to provide a logical system of doing things. If strategy changes, then it is likely the structure will need to be changed. Using examples, define and describe three strategy dimensions that are commonly used.

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- innovation strategy - organic-introduction of major new products or services; meaningful and unique innovations
- cost-minimization strategy - mechanistic-tight cost controls; refrain from incurring unnecessary innovation or marketing expenses; cuts prices in selling basic product
- imitation strategy - mechanistic and organic-capitalize on best parts of innovation and cost-minimization strategies; move into new products or markets only after viability has been proven; minimize risk; maximize opportunity for profit; take successful ideas of innovators and copy them

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36. An organization's structure is affected by its environmental uncertainty. There are three key dimensions to any organization's environment which impact its structure and how it "does business." Using examples, identify and describe these dimensions.

Answer:

- capacity - degree to which growth can be supported; growing environments generate excess resources; scarce capacity leaves little room for error and poor business decision-making
- volatility - degree of instability; dynamic environment with high degree of unpredictable change makes it difficult to accurately predict probabilities of decision alternatives; stability can breed complacency; impact of global environment
- complexity - degree of heterogeneity and concentration among environmental elements; simple environments are homogeneous and concentrated; few competitors easy to monitor; complex environments are heterogeneous and dispersed; constant evolution and new entries of competitors makes things difficult to monitor

37. TQM is seen as being best achieved through a team approach. To make this possible, five goals have been identified which must be considered when designing and developing these teams. Describe these goals.

Answer:

- teams should be small enough to be efficient and effective
- members must be properly trained in the required skills
- allocate enough time for working on identified problems
- provide sufficient authority for problem resolution and implementation of corrective action
- designate someone to champion the team and get around roadblocks

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38. Re-engineering is a relatively new process which is used to make companies more effective at what they are doing. Describe several factors that are addressed by re-engineering to restructure an organization to better fit an efficient and effective operating system.

Answer:

- "How would we do things if we were starting from scratch?"
- development of new repair, maintenance, operations, production, and service approaches
- rethinking and redesigning those processes which the organization uses to create value and do work
- defining distinctive competencies
- reduction of the number of managers used
- initially driven by top management creating a workplace which is largely self-managed
- changing global environment
- today's organizations operating in global conditions of overcapacity
- markets, production and capital are globally mobile
- demand for quality, service and low cost; "if you can't provide, they'll get it from someone else"
- teams; decentralized decisions; widened spans of control; flattened structures

39. Telecommuting is close to being the ideal job for many individuals and is becoming more popular with a variety of companies and organizations. Although it has been found to increase productivity and job satisfaction and, perhaps even more importantly, reduce stress, its long-term future is uncertain. What are some of the issues that still need to be determined regarding this particular type of flexible work arrangement?

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Answer

- Will employees who work at home be at a disadvantage in office politics?
- Might consideration for salary increases and promotions be reduced?
- Will non-work-related distractions significantly reduce productivity for those without superior willpower and discipline?
- What are the effects on individuals working in somewhat isolated circumstances day after day?

40. *As early as the beginning of the 1990s, companies began to understand that certain factors needed to be recognized and accomplished when major changes such as downsizing were being faced by management and employees. Using examples, outline several factors which a company will must address to achieve change with the least amount of stress.*

Answer:

- start with revising or creating a new vision statement
- move from a command-and-control system to greater flexibility and innovation
- focus on individual initiative and their ideas
- inform employees they are valuable part of the organization
- assist employees to recognize that enormous commitment will be necessary from them
- keep employees constantly informed
- set the stage where a high level of trust and commitment can be obtained from all personnel

41. *Restructuring, reorganizing and downsizing are realities in today's workforce. It has become apparent that the true test of communication effectiveness within an organization is how well it works during times of ambiguity, confusion and anxiety. Describe, using examples, eight factors that impact the effectiveness of employee communications during times of organizational change.*

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Answer :

- commitment of CEO to importance of communication - philosophically and behaviourally; serves as skilled and visible communications role model
- congruency between managerial actions and words - important for credibility with employees
- commitment to two-way communication - grievance procedures that quickly process complaints; management training in, and reinforcement for, feedback techniques
- emphasis on face-to-face communication - demonstrates understanding of employee needs and concerns
- shared responsibility for communication by management and employees - minimizes ambiguity and need for grapevine
- positive ways of dealing with bad news - creation of climate where bad news is candidly reported and individuals not afraid to be truthful; increases credibility of good news
- shaping messages for intended audiences - individuals and groups differ in the type of information they need and the most effective way in which they can receive it
- treating communication as an ongoing process - rationale for decisions; timeliness is vital; particularly important during change or crisis; linking "big" picture with "little" picture; not dictating interpretations or feelings

42. Discuss the components of workforce diversity.

Answer:

A diverse workforce today is comprised of a heterogeneous mix in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, work styles, age, and preferences. It consists of multinational employees, immigrants, part-timers, and contract employees. The U.S. workforce will grow increasingly diverse due to increased immigration and birth rates of some racial minorities.

43. How has psychology contributed to the study of organizational behaviour?

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The field of psychology has expanded the study of leadership effectiveness, training, emotional intelligence, learning, perception, performance appraisals, attitude measurement, work design, and job stress, and selection techniques.

44. *How important is intellectual ability to job performance? How can an employer assess intellectual ability?*

Answer:

Intellectual ability may be more important in some jobs when compared to other jobs. The more complex a job is in terms of information-processing demands, the more general intelligence and verbal abilities will be necessary to perform the job successfully. However, for jobs in which employee behavior is highly routine and there are little or no opportunities to exercise discretion, a high IQ is not as important to performing well. Yet, this does not mean that people with high IQ's cannot have a significant impact on jobs that are traditionally less complex. Intelligence is one of the better predictors of performance across all sorts of jobs.

There are many tests measuring intelligence, but the most widely used test for hiring decisions is the Wonderlic Personnel Test. There are many different forms of the test, each with 50 questions, and those being tested are allowed only 12 minutes to complete the test. The Wonderlic provides valid information at a relatively low price, leading to its increased use.

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45. *What is learning? Describe three fundamental theories of learning.*

Answer:

Learning can be characterized as any relatively permanent change in behavior that occurs as a result of experience. Three fundamental theories of learning are classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and social learning.

Classical conditioning research, pioneered by Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov, used an unconditioned stimulus (meat), paired with an artificial or conditioned stimulus (ringing of a bell), to evoke salivation (an unconditioned response). After a time, when the dog heard the bell ringing (a conditioned stimulus), even when there was no meat, it began to salivate (conditioned response).

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Pioneered by B.F. Skinner, operant conditioning argues that reinforcement strengthens a behavior and increases the likelihood that it will be repeated. Moreover, these rewards are most effective if they immediately follow the response.

Finally, social-learning theory is the view that we learn through both observation and direct experience. An extension of operant conditioning, social-learning theory recognizes the existence of observational learning and the importance of perception in learning. People respond to how they perceive and define consequences, not to the objective consequences themselves.

46. What is cognitive dissonance?

Answer:

Cognitive dissonance is any incompatibility between two or more attitudes, or between behavior and attitudes. Through this theory, Leon Festinger sought to explain the link between attitudes and behavior. Festinger argued that any form of inconsistency is uncomfortable and that individuals will attempt to reduce dissonance.

47. What is the difference between job satisfaction and job involvement?

Answer:

Job satisfaction is an individual's general attitude toward his or her job. A person with a high level of job satisfaction holds positive feelings about the job, while a person who is dissatisfied with his or her job holds negative feelings about the job. A closely related concept is job involvement. Job involvement is the degree to which a person identifies with his or her job, actively participates in it, and considers his or her performance important to self-worth. High levels of job involvement are positively related to organizational citizenship and job performance.

48. What are the major factors influencing personality?

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Personality appears to be a result of both heredity and environmental factors. Heredity refers to those factors that were determined at conception. These include physical stature, facial attractiveness, gender and muscle composition. Environment is the culture in which we were raised: family friends, social groups, and our early social conditioning.

49. What is the difference between Type A and Type B personality?

Answer:

Type As are competitive and always experiencing a sense of time urgency; they strive to think or do two or more things at once and cannot cope with leisure time. Type Bs never suffer from a sense of time urgency, can relax without guilt, and play for fun and relaxation.

50. What is the difference between fundamental attribution error and self-serving bias?

Answer:

Both fundamental attribution error and self-serving bias are errors or biases that distort attributions. The tendency to underestimate the influence of external factors and overestimate the influence of internal factors when making judgments about the behavior of others is fundamental attribution error. Fundamental attribution error occurs when evaluating the behavior of others, while self-serving bias occurs when an individual or organization evaluates their success or failure. Self-serving bias is the tendency for individuals to attribute their own successes to internal factors while putting the blame for failures on external factors.

51. What is self-fulfilling prophecy?

Answer:

A self-fulfilling prophecy is a situation in which one person inaccurately perceives a second person and the resulting expectations cause the second person to behave in ways consistent with the original perception. Sometimes referred to as the Pygmalion effect, it reflects that fact that an individual's behavior tends to be determined by other people's expectations of them.

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52. Explain Herzberg's two-Factor theory.

Answer:

Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory suggests that there are two types of factors in the workplace: hygiene factors and motivational factors. Hygiene factors are extrinsic factors, such as supervision, pay, company policies, and working conditions. The absence of one or more hygiene factors can lead to a state of dissatisfaction, but their presence does not lead to a greater desire to excel at one's job. Motivational factors are intrinsic factors, like advancement, recognition, responsibility, and achievement, that are directly related to job satisfaction. The absence of motivational factors does not cause dissatisfaction; rather, a state of neutrality. Herzberg suggests that managers must make sure that hygiene factors have been addressed to move employees from a state of "dissatisfaction" to a state of "no dissatisfaction" and must add one or more motivational factors to move employees from "no satisfaction" to "satisfaction".

53. Describe McClelland's theory of needs.

Answer:

McClelland's theory of needs states that workers are motivated by three needs: need for achievement, need for power, and need for affiliation. Individuals differ in the degree to which a particular need motivates them. Individuals with a high need for achievement have a drive to excel, to achieve in relation to a set of standards. Individuals with a high need for power need to make others behave in a way that they would not have otherwise behaved, while individuals with a high need for affiliation have the desire for friendly and close interpersonal relationships. The most successful managers will have an appropriate fit between their job and their dominant need.

54. Describe three alternative work arrangements.

Answer:

Three alternative work arrangements, flextime, job sharing, and telecommuting, alter work arrangements to increase motivation. Flextime, or flexible work hours, allows employees some discretion over their start and stop times, while requiring a specific number of hours per week. Job sharing allows two or more individuals to split a traditional 40-hour-a-week job. Finally, telecommuting, allows employees to do work at home through a computer linked to their office.

55. What is an employee involvement program?

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Answer:

Employee involvement programs are a way to increase workers' control and autonomy to improve their motivation, organizational commitment, productivity, and job satisfaction. Examples of involvement programs include participative management, representative participation, and quality circles. Participative management programs use joint decision making as a strategy to improve employee performance. Representative participation programs, widely required by law in Western Europe, provide for worker representation in company decision making. The two most common implementations of representative participation are work councils and board representatives. Quality circles, another form of employee involvement, are work groups of eight to ten employees and supervisors who have a shared area of responsibility. They meet regularly to discuss their quality problems, investigate causes of the problems, recommend solutions, and take corrective actions.

56. Differentiate between affect, mood, and emotions.

Answer:

Affect is a general term that includes both moods and emotions. While emotions can be defined as intense feelings that are directed at someone or something, moods are less intense and often lack a contextual stimulus. Emotions are more likely to be caused while a specific event, while moods may be more cognitive, causing individuals to think or brood for longer periods of time. In addition, emotions and moods mutually influence each other.

57. What is emotional intelligence?

Answer:

Emotional intelligence is one's ability to detect and manage emotional cues and information. People who know their own emotions and are good at reading others' emotions may be more effective in their jobs - the ability to handle the emotions of others.

Several studies suggest that emotional intelligence plays an important role in job performance, although this belief is not universally shared among organizational behavior researchers.

58. What were the major conclusions of the Hawthorne studies?

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The Hawthorne Studies provided valuable insight into the effect of norms on worker behavior. Originally initiated by Western Electric officials and later overseen by Harvard professor Elton Mayo, the Hawthorne studies concluded that a worker's behavior and sentiments were closely related, that group influences were significant in affecting individual behavior, that group standards were highly effective in establishing individual worker output, and that money was less factor in determining worker output than were group standards, sentiments, and security.

59. Describe group decision-making techniques.

Answer:

Group decision making techniques include brainstorming, nominal groups, and electronic meetings. They are an attempt to overcome pressures for conformity with face-to-face interacting groups. Brainstorming utilizes an idea-generating process that encourages any and all alternatives, while withholding any criticism of those alternatives. The nominal group technique restricts discussion or interpersonal communication until all ideas have been presented. Ideas are silently and independently ranked. The idea with the highest aggregate ranking determines the final decision. A more recent type of group decision making technique is electronic decision making, where up to 50 people sit around a horseshoe shoe table and contribute via computer input.

60. Describe four general types of teams.

Answer:

The four most common types of work teams are problem-solving teams, self-managed work teams, cross-functional teams, and virtual teams. On problem-solving teams, members share ideas or offer suggestions on how work processes and methods can be improved. Self-managed teams are groups of employees who perform highly related or interdependent jobs and take on many of the responsibilities of their former supervisors. On a cross-functional team, one will find employees from about the same hierarchical level, but from different work areas, who come together to accomplish a task. Finally, virtual teams use computer technology to tie together physically dispersed members in order to achieve a common goal.

61. What are the advantages and disadvantages of diversity within teams?

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Answer:

In general, diversity represents an advantage to teams. Advantages of diversity include multiple perspectives, greater openness to new ideas, multiple interpretations, increased creativity, increased flexibility, and increased problem-solving skills. However, there are some challenges associated with diverse teams. Disadvantages include ambiguity, complexity, confusion, miscommunication, difficulty in reaching a single agreement, and difficulty in agreeing on specific actions.

62. What are the four functions of communication?

Answer:

There are four functions of communication within a group or organization: control, motivation, emotional expression, and information. Communication acts to control member behavior through both formal and informal channels. Communication fosters motivation by clarifying to employees what is to be done, how well they are doing, and what can be done to improve performance. In addition, communication allows for the emotional expression of feelings and for fulfillment of social needs. Finally, communication provides the information that individuals and groups need to make decisions by transmitting the data to identify and evaluate alternative choices.

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63. Discuss the barriers to effective communication.

Answer:

A number of barriers can retard or distort communication, including filtering, selective perception, information overload, emotions, language, communication apprehension, gender differences, and "politically correct" communication. Filtering refers to the purposeful manipulation of language so that it will be seen more favorably by the receiver. Selective perception is also a barrier to effective communication - people receiving information tend to project their interests and expectations into communications as they decode them. When the information we have to work with exceeds our processing capability, the result is information overload. With the number and speed of communication channels increasing, overload becomes a more important issue. Emotions and language may also limit the effectiveness of

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communication. In addition, some managers choose the wrong medium because they suffer from communication apprehension, in which they experience undue anxiety speaking in front of groups or to other people. These managers tend to choose e-mail and notes regardless of whether they are appropriate to the situation. There are many differences between genders which may make communication more challenging. Finally, "political correctness" often gets in the way of clear understanding.

64. What traits are associated with effective leadership?

Answer:

The predictive validity of traits was drastically increased when they were organized along the Big Five framework personality dimensions of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and emotional stability. Of the five traits, extraversion is the most important trait of effective leaders, although it is more strongly related to leader emergence than to leader effectiveness. Conscientiousness and openness to experience also showed consistent relationships to leadership, while agreeableness and emotional stability were not as strongly correlated.

65. Describe Fielder's model of leadership.

Answer:

The first of the contingency theories, Fiedler's contingency model, suggests that effective group performance depends on the proper match between the leaders' style and the degree to which the situation gives control to the leader. The leader's style is determined by his or her score on the least preferred co-worker (LPC) questionnaire, which measures the degree to which the respondent enjoyed working with the person they disliked the most. The situation is measured by the favorability of leader-member relations (the degree of confidence, trust, and respect members have in their leader), task structure (the degree to which the job assignments are procedurized), and position power (the degree of influence a leader has over power variables such as hiring, firing, discipline, promotions, and salary increases). Fielder developed a grid that identifies the most appropriate managerial style for a given situation, described in terms of the variables identified above. Fiedler assumes that leadership style is fixed, so either the manager or the situation must be changed if there is a mismatch between the situation and the manager's preferred style.

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66. What is transformational leadership?

[Answer:](#)

Transformational leaders pay attention to the concerns and developmental needs of individual followers; they change followers' awareness of issues by helping them to look at old problems in new ways; and they are able to excite, arouse, and inspire followers to put out extra effort to achieve group goals. Transformational leadership builds on top of the base of transactional leadership. Transformational leaders encourage their followers to be more innovative and creative and to pursue ambitious goals. Transformational leaders communicate vision and solicit commitment and trust from followers. The overall evidence suggests that transformational leadership is more strongly correlated than transactional leadership with lower turnover rates, high productivity, and higher employee satisfaction.

67. What are the three types of trust in organizational relationships?

[Answer:](#)

The three types of trust in organizational relationships are deterrence-based, knowledge-based, and identification-based. Deterrence-based trust is the most legalistic in that one violation or inconsistency can destroy the relationship. This form of trust is based on fear of reprisal if the trust is violated. Knowledge-based trust relies on information rather than deterrence. Knowledge develops over time, largely as a function of experience that builds confidence of trustworthiness and predictability. Identification-based trust is an emotional connection between parties, an emotional connection between two persons that allows them to act on behalf of one another.

68. Describe the formal bases of power.

[Answer:](#)

Formal bases of power include coercive, reward, and legitimate power. Coercive power is dependent upon fear and rests on the application of sanctions, such as a threat to dismiss, suspend, or demote. Another formal base of power, reward power, is derived from the ability to distribute or withhold rewards, such as pay rates, raises, promotions, work shifts, or sales territories. Finally, legitimate power stems from one's position within the organization.

69. Describe power tactics and their effectiveness.

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Answer:

Power tactics are strategies that people may use to influence their bosses, coworkers, and employees. Research has identified nine distinct influence tactics: legitimacy, rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, consultation, exchange, personal appeals, ingratiation, pressure, and coalitions. Evidence indicates that rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, and consultation tend to be the most effective, while pressure tends to be the least effective of the nine. Situational and cultural factors also affect the effectiveness of power tactics.

70. What is the difference between functional and dysfunctional conflict? What factors influence whether conflict is functional or dysfunctional?

Answer:

Functional conflict supports the goals of the group and improves its performance, while dysfunctional conflict is conflict that hinders group performance. Conflict can also be described by type: task, relationship, or process. Task conflict relates to the contents and goals of the work, while relationship conflict focuses on interpersonal relationships. Process conflict, in contrast, relates to how the work gets done. Studies indicate that relationship conflict is almost always dysfunctional, while low levels of process conflict and low to moderate levels of task conflict are functional.

71. How can third parties assist in negotiations?

Answer:

Negotiation outcomes can be improved by using neutral third parties, like mediators, arbitrators, conciliator, and consultants. Mediators facilitate solutions by using reasoning and persuasion, while arbitrators have the authority to dictate an agreement. A conciliator is a trusted third party who provides an informal communication link between the negotiator and the opponent. Finally, consultants attempt to facilitate problem solving through communication and analysis.

72. What is work specialization? What are the advantages and disadvantages of work specialization?

Answer:

Work specialization or division of labor is the degree to which activities in the organization are subdivided into separate jobs. Work specialization creates efficiency and productivity, but can also result in boredom, fatigue, stress, low productivity, poor quality, increased absenteeism, and

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high turnover. The trend towards specialization has been altered by the realization that productivity may be increased by enlarging the scope of job activities.

73. What is a boundaryless organization?

Answer:

The boundaryless organization attempts to flatten organizational hierarchy by using cross-hierarchical teams, participative decision-making, combined with both extranets and intranets. Vertical and horizontal boundaries are collapsed to create increased flexibility; external boundaries are eliminated to create more options for organizational alliances. The boundaryless organization seeks to eliminate the chain of command, have limitless spans of control, and replace departments with empowered teams.

74. How does a dominant culture differ from a subculture?

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A dominant culture expresses the core values that are shared by a majority of the organization's members. Subcultures tend to develop in large organizations to reflect common problems, situations, or experiences that members face. These subcultures are likely to be defined by departmental designations and geographic separations.

75. Describe the socialization process.

Answer:

Socialization is the process that adapts employees to the organization's culture. It includes prearrival, encounter, and metamorphosis stages. The prearrival stage explicitly recognizes that each individual arrives with a set of values, attitudes, and expectations. On entry to the organization, the new member enters the encounter stage. During this stage, the newly hired employee confronts the possible dichotomy between her expectations and reality. Finally, during the metamorphosis stage, the new member must work out any problems discovered during the encounter stage. Metamorphosis and entry socialization is complete when new members have become comfortable with the organization and their job.

76. How can training programs be customized to fit different learning styles?

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Formal training programs should be individualized to reflect the learning style of the employee. Learning styles include reading, watching, listening, and participating. If a manager is aware of the preferred style of an employee, a training program can be designed to take advantage of that preference. Without information on the preferred style, a training program should use a variety of styles. Overreliance on a single style places individuals at a disadvantage who don't learn well from that style.

77. Why are managers reluctant to provide performance feedback?

Answer:

Many managers are reluctant to provide performance feedback for a number of reasons. Managers are often uncomfortable discussing performance weaknesses directly with employees. Many employees become defensive when their weaknesses are pointed out. They may challenge the evaluation by criticizing the manager or redirecting blame to someone else. Finally, employees tend to have an inflated assessment of their own performance. Even when managers are providing good news, employees are likely to perceive it as not good enough.

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78. What is action research?

Answer:

Action research is a change process based on the systematic collection of data and selection of a change action based on what the analyzed data indicate. The process of action research consists of five steps: diagnosis, analysis, feedback, action, and evaluation. During the diagnosis step, the change agent asks questions, interviews employees, reviews records, and listens to the concerns of employees. During the analysis step, the change agent synthesizes the information into primary concerns, problem areas, and possible actions. In the feedback stage, information from the first two stages is shared with employees and goals and action plans are developed. The action step involves carrying out the specific actions to correct the problems that have been identified. Finally, the change agent evaluates the effectiveness of the action plan.

79. What is a learning organization? How can organizations transform themselves into learning organizations?

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A learning organization is an organization that has developed the capacity to adapt and change. The text provides a number of suggestions from transforming an organization into a learning organization. First, management must make an explicit commitment to change, innovation, and continuous improvement. Second, the organization's structure must be flattened and the use of cross-functional teams increased. Finally, the organizational culture must be reshaped to include risk taking, openness, and growth.

80. What is organizational structure?

Answer:

An organizational structure defines how job tasks are formally divided, grouped, and coordinated. The elements that must be addressed are work specialization, departmentalization, chain of command, span of control, centralization and decentralization, and formalization.

81. What is work specialization?

Answer:

Work specialization is also known as division of labor. It describes the degree to which tasks in the organization are subdivided into separate jobs. The essence of work specialization is that, rather than an entire job being done by one individual, it is broken down into a number of steps, each step being completed by a separate individual. In essence, individuals specialize in doing part of an activity rather than the entire activity.

82. What is departmentalization?

Answer:

The basis by which jobs are grouped together is called departmentalization. Tasks can be grouped by function performed, the type of product the organization produces, on the

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basis of geography or territory, process used, or by the particular type of customer the organization seeks to reach.

83. *What is chain of command?*

[Answer:](#)

The chain of command is an unbroken line of authority that extends from the top of the organization to the lowest echelon and clarifies who reports to whom. It answers questions for employees such as “To whom do I go if I have a problem?” and “To whom am I responsible?” The two complementary concepts are authority and unity of command. Authority refers to the rights inherent in a managerial position to give orders and expect the orders to be obeyed. The unity of command principle helps preserve the concept of an unbroken line of authority. It states that a person should have one and only one superior to whom he or she is directly responsible.

84. *What is span of control?*

[Answer:](#)

The question of span of control is important because, to a large degree, it determines the number of levels and managers an organization has. It answers the question “How many employees can a manager efficiently and effectively direct?” All things being equal, the wider or larger the span of control, the more efficient the organization.

85. *What is the difference between centralization and decentralization?*

[Answer:](#)

The term centralization refers to the degree to which decision making is concentrated at a single point in the organization. The concept includes only formal authority, that is, the rights inherent in one’s position. The more that lower-level personnel provide input or are actually given the discretion to make decisions, the more decentralization there is. An organization characterized by centralization is an inherently different structural animal from one that is decentralized. In a decentralized organization, action can be taken more

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quickly to solve problems, more people provide input into decisions, and employees are less likely to feel alienated from those who make the decisions that affect their work lives.

86. *What is the virtual organization?*

[Answer:](#)

The virtual organization is sometimes called the network or modular organization. Typically, a small, core organization outsources major business functions. In structural terms, the virtual organization is highly centralized, with little or no departmentalization. Why own when you can rent is the question that captures the essence of the virtual organization.

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87. *Explain the concept of the “boundaryless” organization.*

[Answer:](#)

Jack Welch coined the term boundaryless organization to describe his idea of what he wanted GE to become. He wanted to eliminate vertical and horizontal boundaries within GE and break down external barriers between the company and its customers and suppliers. The boundaryless organization seeks to eliminate the chain of command, have limitless spans of control, and replace departments with empowered teams. Because it relies so heavily on information technology, some have called this structure the T-form or technology-based organization. By removing vertical boundaries, management flattens the hierarchy. Status and rank are minimized.

88. *What is the difference between the mechanistic model and the organic model?*

[Answer:](#)

The mechanistic model is generally synonymous with the bureaucracy in that it has extensive departmentalization, high formalization, a limited information network (mostly downward communication), and little participation by low-level members in decision

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making. At the other extreme is the organic model. This model looks a lot like the boundaryless organization. It is flat, uses cross-hierarchical and cross-functional teams, has low formalization, possesses a comprehensive information network and it involves high participation in decision making.

89. What are five common ways that an organization can group activities? Give an example of each.

Answer:

One of the most popular ways to group activities is by functions performed. A manufacturing manager might organize his or her plant by separating engineering, accounting, manufacturing, personnel, and supply specialists into common departments. Tasks can also be departmentalized by type of product the organization produces. Procter & Gamble is organized along these lines. Each major product is placed under the authority of an executive who has complete global responsibility for that product. Another way to departmentalize is on the basis of geography or territory. The sales function, for instance, may have western, southern, mid-western, and eastern regions. Each of these regions is, in effect, a department organized around geography. Process departmentalization can be used to group departments. At an Alcoa aluminum tubing plant in upstate New York, production is organized into five departments: casting; press; tubing; finishing; and inspecting, packing, and shipping. Each department specializes in one specific phase in the production of aluminum tubing. A final category is to use the particular type of customer the organization seeks to reach. Microsoft recently reorganized around four customer markets: consumers, large corporations, software developers, and small businesses.

90. Discuss innovation strategy, cost-minimization strategy, and imitation strategy.

Answer:

An innovation strategy does not mean a strategy merely for simple or cosmetic changes from previous offerings but rather one for meaningful and unique innovations. An organization that is pursuing a cost-minimization strategy tightly controls costs, refrains

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from incurring unnecessary innovation or marketing expenses, and cuts prices in selling a basic product. Organizations following an imitation strategy try to capitalize on the best of both of the previous strategies. They seek to minimize risk and maximize opportunity for profit. Their strategy is to move into new products or new markets only after viability has been proven by innovators

91. Discuss the three key dimensions of an organization's environment: capacity, volatility, and complexity.

Answer:

An organization's environment is composed of those institutions or forces that are outside the organization and potentially affect the organization's performance. These typically include suppliers, customers, competitors, government regulatory agencies, public pressure groups, and the like. The capacity of an environment refers to the degree to which it can support growth. Rich and growing environments generate excess resources, which can buffer the organization in times of relative scarcity. Abundant capacity leaves room for an organization to make mistakes, while scarce capacity does not. The degree of instability in an environment is captured in the volatility dimension. Where there is a high degree of unpredictable change, the environment is dynamic. This makes it difficult for management to predict accurately the probabilities associated with various decision alternatives. At the other extreme is a stable environment. Finally, the environment needs to be assessed in terms of complexity; that is, the degree of heterogeneity and concentration among environmental elements. Simple environments are homogeneous and concentrated. Environments characterized by heterogeneity and dispersion are called complex. Organizations that operate in environments characterized as scarce, dynamic, and complex face the greatest degree of uncertainty. (Page 472)

92. Identify and explain the six key elements that define an organization's structure. Include the advantages and problems of each.

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An organizational structure defines how job tasks are formally divided, grouped, and coordinated. There are six key elements that managers need to address when they design their organization's structure. These are: work specialization, departmentalization, chain of command, span of control, centralization and decentralization, and formalization.

The essence of work specialization is that, rather than an entire job being done by one individual, it is broken down into a number of steps, with each step being completed by a separate individual. In essence, individuals specialize in doing part of an activity rather than the entire activity. Management saw this as a means to make the most efficient use of its employees' skills. In most organizations, some tasks require highly developed skills and others can be performed by untrained workers. If all workers were engaged in each step of, say, an organization's manufacturing process, all would have to have the skills necessary to perform both the most demanding and the least demanding jobs. The result would be that, except when performing the most skilled or highly complex tasks, employees would be working below their skill levels. And because skilled workers are paid more than unskilled workers and their wages tend to reflect their highest level of skill, it represents an inefficient use of organizational resources to pay highly skilled workers to do easy tasks. Managers also saw other efficiencies that could be achieved through work specialization. Employee skills at performing a task successfully increase through repetition. Less time is spent in changing tasks, in putting away one's tools and equipment from a prior step in the work process, and in getting ready for another. Equally important, training for specialization is more efficient from the organization's perspective. It's easier and less costly to find and train workers to do specific and repetitive tasks.

The basis by which jobs are grouped together is called departmentalization. One of the most popular ways to group activities is by functions performed. A manufacturing manager might organize his or her plant by separating engineering, accounting, manufacturing, personnel, and supply specialists into common departments. Of course, departmentalization by function can be used in all types of organizations. Only the functions change to reflect the organization's objectives and activities. The major advantage to this type of grouping is obtaining efficiencies from putting like specialists together. Functional departmentalization seeks to achieve economies of scale by placing people with common skills and orientations into common units. Jobs can also be departmentalized by the type of product the organization produces. The major advantage to this type of grouping is increased accountability for product performance. If an

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organization's activities are service rather than product related, each service would be autonomously grouped. Another way to departmentalize is on the basis of geography or territory. The sales function, for instance, may have western, southern, midwestern, and eastern regions. Each of these regions is, in effect, a department organized around geography. If an organization's customers are scattered over a large geographic area and have similar needs based on their location, then this form of departmentalization can be valuable. Process departmentalization is when each department specializes in one specific phase in the production of aluminum tubing. Process departmentalization can be used for processing customers as well as products. A final category of departmentalization is to use the particular type of customer the organization seeks to reach. The assumption underlying customer departmentalization is that customers in each department have a common set of problems and needs that can best be met by having specialists for each.

93. *Describe the three common organizational designs: simple structure, bureaucracy, and matrix structure.*

Answer:

The simple structure is said to be characterized most by what it is not rather than what it is. The simple structure is not elaborate. It has a low degree of departmentalization, wide spans of control, authority centralized in a single person, and little formalization. The simple structure is a "flat" organization; it usually has only two or three vertical levels, a loose body of employees, and one individual in whom the decision-making authority is centralized. Standardization is the key concept that underlies the bureaucracy. It is characterized by highly routine operating tasks achieved through specialization, very formalized rules and regulations, tasks that are grouped into functional departments, centralized authority, narrow spans of control, and decision making that follows the chain of command. The matrix combines two forms of departmentalization: functional and product. It breaks the unity-of-command concept. Employees in the matrix have two bosses – their functional department managers and their product managers. Therefore, the matrix has a dual chain of command.

94. *Explain the behavioral implications of different organizational designs.*

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A review of the evidence linking organizational structures to employee performance and satisfaction leads to a pretty clear conclusion – you can't generalize. Not everyone prefers the freedom and flexibility of organic structures. Individual differences must be addressed. The evidence generally indicates that work specialization contributes to higher productivity but at the price of reduced job satisfaction. Work specialization is not an unending source of higher productivity. Problems start to surface, and productivity begins to suffer, when the human diseconomies of doing repetitive and narrow tasks overtake the economies of specialization. As the workforce has become more highly educated and desirous of jobs that are intrinsically rewarding, the point where productivity begins to decline seems to be reached more quickly than in decades past. Negative behavioral outcomes from high specialization are most likely to surface in professional jobs occupied by individuals with high needs for personal growth and diversity.

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A review of the research indicates that it is probably safe to say there is no evidence to support a relationship between span of control and employee performance. There is some evidence indicating that a manager's job satisfaction increases as the number of employees he or she supervises increases. Fairly strong evidence has linked centralization and job satisfaction. In general, organizations that are less centralized have a greater amount of participative decision making. Participative decision making is positively related to job satisfaction. But, again, individual differences surface. The decentralization-satisfaction relationship is strongest with employees who have low self-esteem. Because individuals with low self-esteem have less confidence in their abilities, they place a higher value on shared decision making, which means that they're not held solely responsible for decision outcomes.

To maximize employee performance and satisfaction, individual differences, such as experience, personality, and the work tasks, should be taken into account. In addition, national culture influences preference for structure so it, too, needs to be considered. There is substantial evidence that individuals are attracted to, selected by, and stay with organizations that suit their personal characteristics. So the effect of structure on employee behavior is undoubtedly reduced where the selection process facilitates proper matching of individual characteristics with organizational characteristics.

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95. *What is organizational culture?*

[Answer:](#)

Organizational culture refers to a system of shared meaning held by members that distinguishes the organization from other organizations. This system of shared meaning is, on closer examination, a set of key characteristics that the organization values.

96. *Distinguish the dominant culture from a subculture.*

[Answer:](#)

A dominant culture expresses the core values that are shared by a majority of the organization's members. When we talk about an organization's culture, we are referring to its dominant culture. It is this macro view of culture that gives an organization its distinct personality. Subcultures tend to develop in large organizations to reflect common problems, situations, or experiences that members face. These subcultures are likely to be defined by department designations and geographical separation.

97. *What are the functions of culture?*

[Answer:](#)

Culture performs a number of functions within an organization. First, it has a boundary-defining role. That is, it creates distinctions between one organization and others. Second, it conveys a sense of identity for organization members. Third, culture facilitates the generation of commitment to something larger than one's individual self-interest. Fourth, it enhances social system stability. Culture is the social glue that helps hold the organization together by providing appropriate standards for what employees should say and do. Finally, culture serves as a sense-making and control mechanism that guides and shapes the attitudes and behavior of employees.

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98. *When can culture be a liability?*

[Answer:](#)

Culture is a liability when the shared values are not in agreement with those that will further the organization's effectiveness. This is most likely to occur when an organization's environment is dynamic. When an environment is undergoing rapid change, an organization's entrenched culture may no longer be appropriate. So consistency of behavior is an asset to an organization when it faces a stable environment. It may, however, burden the organization and make it difficult to respond to changes in the environment. These strong cultures become barriers to change when business as usual is no longer effective.

99. *What are the three stages of socialization?*

[Answer:](#)

The three stages of socialization are prearrival, encounter, and metamorphosis. The prearrival stage recognizes that each individual arrives with a set of values, attitudes, and expectations. These cover both the work to be done and the organization. Upon entry into the organization, the new member enters the encounter stage. Here the individual confronts the possible dichotomy between her expectations and reality. Finally, the new member must work out any problems discovered during the encounter stage. This may mean going through changes – hence, this is called the metamorphosis stage.

100. *What are rituals?*

[Answer:](#)

Rituals are repetitive sequences of activities that express and reinforce the key values of the organization, what goals are most important, which people are important and which are expendable.

101. *What are the six key variables in shaping customer-responsive cultures?*

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Answer:

There are six key variables in shaping customer-responsive cultures. First is the type of employees themselves. Successful, service-oriented organizations hire employees who are outgoing and friendly. Second is low formalization. Service employees need to have the freedom to meet changing customer service requirements. Third is an extension of low formalization – it's the widespread use of empowerment. Empowered employees have the decision discretion to do what's necessary to please the customer. Fourth is good listening skills. Employees in customer-responsive cultures have the ability to listen to and understand messages sent by the customer. Fifth is role clarity. Service employees act as boundary spanners between the organization and its customers. Finally, customer-responsive cultures have employees that exhibit organizational citizenship behavior. They are conscientious in their desire to please the customer. And they're willing to take the initiative, even when it's outside their normal job requirements, to satisfy a customer's needs.

102. What is spirituality?

Answer:

Workplace spirituality is not about organized religious practices. It's not about God or theology. Workplace spirituality recognizes that people have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community. Organizations that promote a spiritual culture recognize that people have both a mind and a spirit, seek to find meaning and purpose in their work, and desire to connect with other human beings and be part of a community

103. What is organizational culture? What are the seven primary characteristics that capture the essence of an organization's culture?

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Organizational culture refers to a system of shared meaning held by members that distinguishes the organization from other organizations. This system of shared meaning is, on closer examination, a set of key characteristics that the organization values. There are seven primary characteristics that capture the essence of an organization's culture. Innovation and risk taking are the degree to which employees are encouraged to be innovative and take risks. Attention to detail is the degree to which employees are expected to exhibit precision, analysis, and attention to detail. Outcome orientation is the degree to which management focuses on results or outcomes rather than on the techniques and processes used to achieve these outcomes. People orientation is the degree to which management decisions take into consideration the effect of outcomes on people within the organization. Team orientation is the degree to which work activities are organized around teams rather than individuals. Aggressiveness is the degree to which people are aggressive and competitive rather than easygoing. Stability is the degree to which organizational activities emphasize maintaining the status quo in contrast to growth.

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104. Discuss the difference between strong and weak cultures.

Answer:

Strong cultures have a greater impact on employee behavior and are more directly related to reduced turnover. In a strong culture, the organization's core values are both intensely held and widely shared. The more members who accept the core values and the greater their commitment to those values is, the stronger the culture is. A strong culture will have a great influence on the behavior of its members because the high degree of sharedness and intensity creates an internal climate of high behavioral control. One specific result of a strong culture should be lower employee turnover. A strong culture demonstrates high agreement among members about what the organization stands for. Such unanimity of purpose builds cohesiveness, loyalty, and organizational commitment. These qualities, in turn, lessen employees' propensity to leave the organization.

105. Discuss how employees learn culture.

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Culture is transmitted to employees in a number of forms, the most potent being stories, rituals, material symbols, and language. Stories contain a narrative of events about the organization's founders, rule breaking, rags-to-riches successes, reductions in the workforce, relocation of employees, reactions to past mistakes, and organizational coping. These stories anchor the present in the past and provide explanations and legitimacy for current practices. Rituals are repetitive sequences of activities that express and reinforce the key values of the organization, what goals are most important, which people are important and which are expendable. The layout of corporate headquarters, the types of automobiles top executives are given, and the presence or absence of corporate aircraft are a few examples of material symbols. These material symbols convey to employees who is important, the degree of egalitarianism desired by top management, and the kinds of behavior that are appropriate.

106. What are the characteristics of a spiritual organization?

Answer:

There are five cultural characteristics that tend to be evident in spiritual organizations. Spiritual organizations build their cultures around a meaningful purpose. Spiritual organizations recognize the worth and value of people. They seek to create cultures where employees can continually learn and grow. Spiritual organizations are characterized by mutual trust, honesty, and openness. Managers aren't afraid to admit mistakes. And they tend to be extremely upfront with their employees, customers, and suppliers. The high-trust climate in spiritual organizations, when combined with the desire to promote employee learning and growth, leads to management empowering employees to make most work-related decisions. Managers in spiritually-based organizations are comfortable delegating authority to individual employees and teams. They trust their employees to make thoughtful and conscientious decisions. The final characteristic that differentiates spiritually-based organizations is that they don't stifle employee emotions. They allow people to be themselves.

107. How does culture begin and how can an organization keep its culture alive?

Answer:

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An organization's current customs, traditions, and general way of doing things are largely due to what it has done before and the degree of success it has had with those endeavors. The founders of an organization traditionally have a major impact on that organization's early culture. They have a vision of what the organization should be. They are constrained by previous customs or ideologies. The small size that typically characterizes new organizations further facilitates the founders' imposition of their vision on all organizational members.

The process of culture-creation occurs in three ways. First, founders only hire and keep employees who think and feel the way they do. Second, they indoctrinate and socialize these employees to their way of thinking and feeling. And finally, the founders' own behavior acts as a role model that encourages employees to identify with them and thereby internalize their beliefs, values, and assumptions.

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Once a culture is in place, there are practices within the organization that act to maintain it by giving employees a set of similar experiences. The selection process, performance evaluation criteria, training and career development activities, and promotion procedures ensure that those hired fit in with the culture, reward those who support it, and penalize those who challenge it. Three forces play a particularly important part in sustaining a culture: selection practices, the actions of top management, and socialization methods.

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108. What can management do to create a more ethical culture?

Answer:

To create a more ethical culture, management can take a number of steps. Management can be a visible role model. Employees will look to top management behavior as a benchmark for defining appropriate behavior. Management can also communicate ethical expectations. Ethical ambiguities can be minimized by creating and disseminating an organizational code of ethics. It should state the organization's primary values and the ethical rules that employees are expected to follow. Management can also provide ethical training. Training sessions can be used to reinforce the organization's standards of conduct, to clarify what practices are and are not permissible, and to address possible ethical dilemmas. Finally, management can visibly reward ethical acts and punish unethical ones. Performance appraisals of managers should include a point-by-point

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evaluation of how his or her decisions measured against the organization's code of ethics. Appraisals must include the means taken to achieve goals as well as the ends themselves.

109. Explain the factors and means of maintaining an organization's culture.

Answer:

Once a culture is in place, there are practices within the organization that act to maintain it by giving employees a set of similar experiences. Three forces play a particularly important part in sustaining a culture: selection practices, the actions of top management, and socialization methods.

Selection. The explicit goal of the selection process is to identify and hire individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the jobs within the organization successfully. It would be naive to ignore that the final decision as to who is hired will be significantly influenced by the decision maker's judgment of how well the candidates will fit into the organization. This attempt to ensure a proper match, whether purposely or inadvertently, results in the hiring of people who have values essentially consistent with those of the organization, or at least a good portion of those values. In addition, the selection process provides information to applicants about the organization. Candidates learn about the organization and, if they perceive a conflict between their values and those of the organization, they can self-select themselves out of the applicant pool.

Top Management. The actions of top management also have a major impact on the organization's culture. Through what they say and how they behave, senior executives establish norms that filter down through the organization as to whether risk taking is desirable; how much freedom managers should give their employees; what is appropriate dress; what actions will pay off in terms of pay raises, promotions, and other rewards; and the like.

Socialization. No matter how good a job the organization does in recruiting and selection, new employees are not fully indoctrinated in the organization's culture. Because they are unfamiliar with the organization's culture, new employees are

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potentially likely to disturb the beliefs and customs that are in place. The organization will, therefore, want to help new employees adapt to its culture. This adaptation process is called socialization. This is when the organization seeks to mold the outsider into an employee “in good standing.” Employees who fail to learn the essential or pivotal role behaviors risk being labeled “nonconformists” or “rebels,” which often leads to expulsion. But the organization will be socializing every employee, though maybe not as explicitly, throughout his or her entire career in the organization. This further contributes to sustaining the culture.

110. *What types of training are frequently offered by organizations?*

Answer:

Four general skills categories typically offered by organizations are basic literacy, technical, interpersonal, and problem solving.

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111. *What are the three most popular sets of criteria for evaluating employee performance?*

Answer:

The three most popular sets of criteria for evaluating employee performance are individual task outcomes, behaviors, and traits. If ends count, rather than means, then management should evaluate an employee’s task outcomes. In many cases, it’s difficult to identify specific outcomes that can be directly attributable to an employee’s actions. It’s not unusual for management to evaluate the employee’s behavior. The weakest set of criteria, yet one that is widely used by organizations is individual traits. They are weaker because they are farthest removed from the actual performance of the job itself.

112. *What are the alternatives and the pros and cons for who should evaluate an employee?*

Answer:

A number of organizations are recognizing the drawbacks to using supervisor evaluations as the primary source of evaluation data. Peer evaluations are one of the most reliable

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sources of appraisal data because they are close to the action. Using peers as raters results in a number of independent judgments. Self-evaluation is consistent with values such as self-management and empowerment. A fourth judgment source is an employee's immediate subordinates. Its proponents argue that it is consistent with recent trends toward enhancing honesty, openness, and empowerment in the workplace.

113. What is 360-degree evaluation?

[Answer:](#)

The latest approach to performance evaluation is the use of 360-degree evaluation. It provides for performance feedback from the full circle of daily contacts that an employee might have, ranging from mailroom personnel to customers to bosses to peers.

114. How can team performance evaluations be improved?

[Answer:](#)

Four suggestions are offered for designing a system to support and improve teams performance. First, tie the team's results to the organization's goals. Second, begin with the team's customers and the work process that the team follows to satisfy customers' needs. Third, measure both team and individual performance. Fourth, train the team to create its own measures.

115. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of the selection interview.

[Answer:](#)

Not only is the interview widely used, it also seems to carry a great deal of weight. That is, the results tend to have a disproportionate amount of influence on the selection decision. The candidate who performs poorly in the employment interview is likely to be cut from the applicant pool, regardless of his or her experience, test scores, or letters of recommendation. Conversely, all too often, the person most polished in job-seeking techniques, particularly those used in the interview process, is the one hired, even though he or she may not be the best candidate for the position

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116. What is an assessment center?

Answer:

A more elaborate set of performance simulation tests, specifically designed to evaluate a candidate's managerial potential, is administered in assessment centers. In assessment centers, line executives, supervisors, and/or trained psychologists evaluate candidates as they go through one to several days of exercises that simulate real problems that they would confront on the job. Based on a list of descriptive dimensions that the actual job incumbent has to meet, activities might include interviews, in-basket problem-solving exercises, leaderless group discussions, and business decision games. For instance, a candidate might be required to play the role of a manager who must decide how to respond to ten memos in his or her in-basket within a two-hour period.

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117. What are the types of typical written tests and what are they best used for?

Answer:

Typical written tests include tests of intelligence, aptitude, ability, interest, and integrity. Tests in intellectual ability, spatial and mechanical ability, perceptual accuracy, and motor ability have shown to be moderately valid predictors for many semiskilled and unskilled operative jobs in industrial organizations. Intelligence tests have proven to be particularly good predictors for jobs that require cognitive complexity. As ethical problems have increased in organizations, integrity tests have gained in popularity. These are paper-and-pencil tests that measure factors such as dependability, carefulness, responsibility, and honesty.

118. What are reasons to use performance-simulation tests?

Answer:

What better way is there to find out if an applicant can do a job successfully than by having him or her do it? They also more easily meet the requirement of job-relatedness than do most written tests.

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119. Describe and discuss the four general skill categories addressed by most training activities.

Answer:

Four general skill categories typically offered by organizations are basic literacy, technical, interpersonal, and problem solving. Organizations increasingly have to provide basic reading and math skills for their employees. Most training is directed at upgrading and improving an employee's technical skills. Technical training has become increasingly important today for two more reasons – new technology and new structural designs. Almost all employees belong to a work unit. To some degree, their work performance depends on their ability to effectively interact with their co-workers and their bosses. Managers, as well as many employees who perform nonroutine tasks, have to solve problems on their job. When people require these skills but are deficient in them, they can participate in problem-solving training.

120. Compare and contrast the two types of selection interviews.

Answer:

The unstructured interview—short in duration, casual, and made up of random questions—has been proven to be an ineffective selection device. The data gathered from such interviews are typically biased and often unrelated to future job performance. Without structure, a number of biases can distort results. These biases include interviewers tending to favor applicants who share their attitudes, giving unduly high weight to negative information, and allowing the order in which applicants are interviewed to influence evaluations.

By having interviewers use a standardized set of questions, providing interviewers with a uniform method of recording information, and standardizing the rating of the applicant's qualifications, the variability in results across applicants is reduced and the validity of the interview as a selection device is greatly enhanced. Additionally, the effectiveness of the interview is increased by using behavioral structured interviews. This interview techniques requires applicants to describe how they handled specific problems and

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situations in previous jobs. It's built on the assumption that past behavior offers the best predictor of future behavior.

121. Describe and discuss three selection devices.

Answer:

Selection devices include interviews, written tests, and performance simulation tests. Of all the selection devices that organizations use to differentiate candidates, the interview continues to be the one most frequently used. Not only is the interview widely used, it also seems to carry a great deal of weight. The evidence indicates that interviews are most valuable for assessing an applicant's applied mental skills, level of conscientiousness, and interpersonal skills. When these qualities are related to job performance, the validity of the interview as a selection device is increased. Typical written tests are tests of intelligence, aptitude, ability, interest, and integrity. More than 60 percent of all U.S. organizations use some type of employment test today. Managers have come to recognize that there are valid tests available and that these tests can be helpful in predicting who will be successful on the job. What better way is there to find out if an applicant can do a job successfully than by having him or her do it? That's precisely the logic of performance simulation tests. The two best-known performance simulation tests are work sampling and assessment centers. The former is suited to routine jobs, whereas the latter is relevant for the selection of managerial personnel.

122. Describe and discuss the two most popular forced comparison methods of performance evaluation.

Answer:

The two most popular comparisons are group order ranking and individual ranking. The group order ranking requires the evaluator to place employees into a particular classification, such as top one-fifth or second one-fifth. This method is often used in recommending students to graduate schools. The individual ranking approach ranks employees from best to worst. If the manager is required to appraise 30 employees, this approach assumes that the difference between the first and second employee is the same as that between the twenty-first and twenty-second. Even though

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some of the employees may be closely grouped, this approach allows for no ties. The result is a clear ordering of employees, from the highest performer down to the lowest.

123. Describe and discuss the advantages of performance simulation tests over written tests.

Answer:

What better way is there to find out if an applicant can do a job successfully than by having him or her do it? That's precisely the logic of performance-simulation tests. Although more complicated to develop and more difficult to administer than written tests, performance-simulation tests have increased in popularity during the past several decades. This appears to be due to the fact that they more easily meet the requirement of job-relatedness than do most written tests.

Work sample tests are hands-on simulations of part or all of the job that must be performed by applicants. By carefully devising work samples based on specific job tasks, management determines the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for each job. Then each work sample element is matched with a corresponding job performance element. Work samples are widely used in the hiring of skilled workers, such as welders, machinists, carpenters, and electricians. The results from work sample experiments are impressive. Studies almost consistently demonstrate that work samples yield validities superior to written aptitude and personality tests.

A more elaborate set of performance simulation tests, specifically designed to evaluate a candidate's managerial potential, is administered in assessment centers. In assessment centers, line executives, supervisors, and/or trained psychologists evaluate candidates as they go through one to several days of exercises that simulate real problems that they would confront on the job. Based on a list of descriptive dimensions that the actual job incumbent has to meet, activities might include interviews, in-basket problem-solving exercises, leaderless group discussions, and business decision games. The evidence on the effectiveness of assessment centers is impressive. They have consistently demonstrated results that predict later job performance in managerial positions.

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124. What purposes do performance evaluations serve in organizations?

Answer:

Performance evaluations serve a number of purposes in organizations. Management uses evaluations for general human resource decisions. Evaluations provide input into such important decisions as promotions, transfers, and terminations. Evaluations identify training and development needs. They pinpoint employee skills and competencies that are currently inadequate but for which programs can be developed to remedy. Performance evaluations can be used as a criterion against which selection and development programs are validated. Newly hired employees who perform poorly can be identified through performance evaluation. Evaluations also fulfill the purpose of providing feedback to employees on how the organization views their performance. Furthermore, performance evaluations are used as the basis for reward allocations. Decisions as to who gets merit pay increases and other rewards are frequently determined by performance evaluations.

125. Discuss some suggestions for improving performance evaluations.

Answer:

Evaluators must emphasize behaviors rather than traits. Many traits often considered to be related to good performance may, in fact, have little or no performance relationship. Managers may prize traits like loyalty and initiative, but there is no evidence to support that certain traits will be adequate synonyms for performance in a large cross section of jobs.

Performance behaviors should be documented in a diary. Diaries help evaluators to better organize information in their memory. The evidence indicates that by keeping a diary of specific critical incidents for each employee, evaluations tend to be more accurate and less prone to rating errors.

The use of multiple evaluators is also recommended. As the number of evaluators increases, the probability of attaining more accurate information increases. By moving

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employees about within the organization so as to gain a number of evaluations or by using multiple assessors, we increase the probability of achieving more valid and reliable evaluations.

Appraisers should evaluate only those areas in which they have some expertise. If raters make evaluations on only those dimensions which they are in a good position to rate, we increase the inter-rater agreement and make the evaluation a more valid process.

Evaluators should be trained. If you can't find good evaluators, the alternative is to make good evaluators. There is substantial evidence that training evaluators can make them more accurate raters.

Finally, employees should be provided with due process. The concept of due process can be applied to appraisals to increase the perception that employees are treated fairly. Three features characterize due process systems: individuals are provided with adequate notice of what is expected of them, all relevant evidence to a proposed violation is aired in a fair hearing so individuals affected can respond, and the final decision is based on the evidence and free from bias

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126. What are the goals of change?

Answer:

There are two goals of planned change. First, to improve the ability of the organization to adapt to changes in its environment. Second, to change employee behavior.

127. What are the three steps in Lewin's model for change?

Answer:

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Kurt Lewin argued that successful change in organizations should follow three steps: unfreezing the status quo, movement to a new state, and refreezing the new change to make it permanent.

128. What is action research?

Answer:

Action research refers to a change process based on the systematic collection of data and then selection of a change agent based on what the analyzed data indicate. Their importance lies in proving a scientific methodology for managing planned change. The process of action research consists of five steps: diagnosis, analysis, feedback, action, and evaluation. These steps closely parallel the scientific method.

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129. What is innovation?

Answer:

Innovation is a more specialized kind of change. It is a new idea applied to initiating or improving a product, process, or service. So all innovations involve change, but not all changes necessarily involve new ideas or lead to significant improvements.

130. What is a learning organization?

Answer:

A learning organization is an organization that has developed the continuous capacity to adapt and change. Just as individuals learn, so too do organizations.

131. What is the difference between single-loop learning and double-loop learning?

Answer:

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Most organizations engage in what has been called single-loop learning. When errors are detected, the correction process relies on past routines and present policies. In contrast, learning organizations use double-loop learning. When an error is detected, it is corrected in ways that involve the modification of the organization's objectives, policies, and standard routines. Double-loop learning challenges deep-rooted assumptions and norms within an organization. It provides opportunities for radically different solutions to problems and dramatic jumps in improvement.

132. What is stress?

Answer:

Stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint, or demand related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Stress is not necessarily bad in and of itself.

133. What can managers do to make their firms learning organizations?

Answer:

Managers can make their firms learning organizations through a number of suggestions. Management can establish a strategy. Management might also redesign the organization's structure. In addition, they can reshape the organization's culture.

134. Discuss some of the psychological consequences of stress?

Answer:

Stress can cause dissatisfaction. Job-related stress can cause job-related dissatisfaction. Other psychological states include tension, anxiety, irritability, boredom, and procrastination.

135. What are some individual approaches to managing stress?

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Answer:

Individual strategies that have proven effective include implementing time management techniques, increasing physical exercise, relaxation training, and expanding the social support network.

136. List the six specific forces for change.

Answer:

The six specific forces for change are: the nature of the workforce, technology, economic shocks, competition, social trends, and world politics. The nature of the workforce includes more cultural diversity, increase in professionals, and many new entrants with inadequate skills. Technology includes faster and cheaper computers, new mobile communication devices, and deciphering of the human genetic code. Economic shocks include the rise and fall of dot.com stocks, the decline in the value of the Euro, and the collapse of Enron Corporation. Competition includes global competitors; mergers and consolidations; and the growth of e-commerce. Social trends include Internet chat rooms, the retirement of Baby Boomers, and the increased interest in urban living. World politics includes the escalation of hostilities in the Middle East, the opening of markets in China, and the war on terrorism.

137. What are the five steps of the action research process?

Answer:

The process of action research consists of five steps: diagnosis, analysis, feedback, action, and evaluation. The change agent begins by gathering information about problems, concerns, and needed changes from members of the organization. The change agent asks questions, interviews employees, reviews records, and listens to the concerns of employees. In the diagnosis stage, the change agent synthesizes this information into primary concerns, problem areas, and possible actions. Action research includes extensive involvement of the change targets. Feedback requires sharing with employees what has been found from steps one and two. The employees, with the help of the change agent, develop action plans for bringing about any needed change. The

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employees and the change agent carry out the specific actions to correct the problems that have been identified. The final step is evaluation of the action plan's effectiveness.

138. List six interventions that change agents might consider using.

Answer:

Sensitivity training refers to a method of changing behavior through unstructured group interaction. Members are brought together in a free and open environment in which participants discuss themselves and their interactive processes, loosely directed by a professional behavioral scientist. One tool for assessing attitudes held by organizational members, identifying discrepancies among member perceptions, and solving these differences is the survey feedback approach. The purpose of process consultation is for an outside consultant to assist a client to perceive, understand, and act upon process events with which he or she must deal. These might include work flow, informal relationships among unit members, and formal communication channels. Team building utilizes high-interaction group activities to increase trust and openness among team members. Intergroup development seeks to change the attitudes, stereotypes, and perceptions that groups have of each other. Appreciative inquiry seeks to identify the unique qualities and special strengths of an organization, which can then be built upon to improve performance. That is, it focuses on an organization's successes rather than its problems.

139. Discuss resistance to change in term of its organizational sources.

Answer:

There are six major sources of organizational resistance to change. Organizations have built-in mechanisms to produce stability. Formalization provides job descriptions, rules, and procedures for employees to follow. Organizations are made up of a number of interdependent subsystems. You can't change one without affecting the others. Even if individuals want to change their behavior, group norms may act as a constraint. Changes in organizational patterns may threaten the expertise of specialized groups. Any redistribution of decision-making authority can threaten long-established power

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relationships within the organization. Those groups in the organization that control sizable resources often see change as a threat. They tend to be content with the way things are.

140. Explain individual difference variables that moderate the stress–outcome relationship.

Answer:

At least six variables—perception, job experience, social support, belief in locus of control, self-efficacy, and hostility—have been found to be relevant moderators.

Employees react in response to their perception of reality rather than to reality itself. Perception, therefore, will moderate the relationship between a potential stress condition and an employee's reaction to it. So stress potential doesn't lie in objective conditions; it lies in an employee's interpretation of those conditions.

The evidence indicates that experience on the job tends to be negatively related to work stress. Voluntary turnover is more probable among people who experience more stress. Therefore, people who remain with the organization longer are those with more stress-resistant traits or those who are more resistant to the stress characteristics of their organization. Second, people eventually develop coping mechanisms to deal with stress. Because this takes time, senior members of the organization are more likely to be fully adapted and should experience less stress.

There is increasing evidence that social support—that is, collegial relationships with co-workers or supervisors—can buffer the impact of stress. The logic underlying this moderating variable is that social support acts as a palliative, mitigating the negative effects of even high-strain jobs.

Those with an internal locus of control believe they control their own destiny. Those with an external locus believe their lives are controlled by outside forces. Evidence

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indicates that internals perceive their jobs to be less stressful than do externals. When internals and externals confront a similar stressful situation, the internals are likely to believe that they can have a significant effect on the results. They, therefore, act to take control of events. In contrast, externals are more likely to be passive and feel helpless.

Self-efficacy has also been found to influence stress outcomes. Recent evidence indicates that individuals with strong self-efficacy reacted less negatively to the strain created by long work hours and work overload than did those with low levels of self-efficacy. That is, confidence in one's own abilities appears to decrease stress. As with an internal locus of control, strong efficacy confirms the power of self-beliefs in moderating the effect of a high-strain situation.

Some people's personality includes a high degree of hostility and anger. These people are chronically suspicious and mistrustful of others. Evidence indicates that this hostility significantly increases a person's stress and risk for heart disease. More specifically, people who are quick to anger, maintain a persistently hostile outlook, and project a cynical mistrust of others are more likely to experience stress in situations.

141. Discuss stress and its consequences. Include potential sources of stress and both individual and organizational approaches to managing stress.

Answer:

Stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint, or demand related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Stress is not necessarily bad in and of itself.

Environmental sources of stress include economic uncertainty, political uncertainty, and technological uncertainty. Organizational sources of stress include: task demands, role demands, interpersonal demands, organizational structure, organizational leadership, and an organization's life cycle. Individual factors include family problems, financial problems, and personality.

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Stress can cause dissatisfaction. Job-related stress can cause job-related dissatisfaction. Other psychological states include: tension, anxiety, irritability, boredom, and procrastination. Behaviorally related stress symptoms include changes in productivity, absence, and turnover, as well as changes in eating habits, increased smoking or consumption of alcohol, rapid speech, fidgeting, and sleep disorders.

Individual strategies that have proven effective include: implementing time management techniques, increasing physical exercise, relaxation training, and expanding the social support network.

Strategies that management might want to consider include: improved personnel selection and job placement, training, use of realistic goal setting, redesigning of jobs, increased employee involvement, improved organizational communication, offering employee sabbaticals, and establishment of corporate wellness programs.

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