Chapter 14

Understanding Individual Behavior
Value and Difficulty of Knowing Yourself

**Self-awareness**: Being aware of the internal aspects of one’s nature, such as personality traits, beliefs, emotions, attitudes, and perceptions, and appreciating how your patterns affect people.
Enhance Your Self-Awareness

Soliciting Feedback

- Seeking feedback to enhance self-awareness improves performance and job satisfaction

Self Assessment

- Reflection to gain insights into oneself from the results of self-assessment instruments
Organizational Behavior

- **Interdisciplinary field** – study human attitudes, behavior, and performance in organizations
  - Important to managers as they depend on human cooperation

- **Organizational citizenship** – the tendency of people to help one another
Attitudes

- An evaluation—either positive or negative—that predisposes a person to act in a certain way
- Managers need to understand employee attitudes for job behavior
- Managers want to develop and reinforce positive attitudes
- Positive, happy people are healthier, more effective, and more productive
High-Performance Work Attitudes

- **Job Satisfaction** – A positive attitude toward one’s job
- **Organizational Commitment** – An employee’s loyalty to and engagement with the organization
- **Managers want the benefit of loyal, committed employees**
# 14.2 - Rate Your Job Satisfaction

**Instructions:** Think of a job—either a current or previous job—that was important to you, and then answer the following questions with respect to how satisfied you were with that job. Please answer the six questions with a number 1–5 that reflects the extent of your satisfaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 = Very dissatisfied</th>
<th>2 = Dissatisfied</th>
<th>3 = Neutral</th>
<th>4 = Satisfied</th>
<th>5 = Very satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Overall, how satisfied are you with your job?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How satisfied are you with the opportunities to learn new things?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How satisfied are you with your boss?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How satisfied are you with the people in your work group?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How satisfied are you with the amount of pay you receive?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How satisfied are you with the advancement you are making in the organization?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scoring and Interpretation:** Add up your responses to the six questions to obtain your total score: ______. The questions represent various aspects of satisfaction that an employee may experience on a job. If your score is 24 or above, you probably feel satisfied with the job. If your score is 12 or below, you probably do not feel satisfied. What is your level of performance in your job, and is your performance related to your level of satisfaction?

**Sources:** These questions were adapted from Daniel R. Denison, *Corporate Culture and Organizational Effectiveness* (New York: John Wiley, 1990); and John D. Cook et al., *The Experience of Work: A Compendium and Review of 249 Measures and Their Use* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1981).
Conflicts among Attitudes

Employees manage personal and work commitments, they may feel *cognitive dissonance*:

Discomfort that occurs when individuals recognize inconsistencies in their own attitudes and behavior.
Perception

Perception is the cognitive process people use to make sense of the environment

- **Perceptual Distortions** – Errors in perceptual judgment
  - Stereotyping: Generalizing about group or individual
  - Halo effect: Impression based on one characteristic
  - Perceptual defense: protecting oneself against objects and ideas that are threatening

- **Attributions** – Judgments about the cause of a person’s behavior
14.3 - The Perception Process

- **Observe**
  - Observing information via the senses

- **Screen**
  - Screening the information and selecting what to process

- **Organize**
  - Organizing the selected data into patterns for interpretation and response
14.4 - Perception—What Do You See?

a. Do you see the dog?

b. Old woman or young woman?

c. How many blocks?
### 14.5 - How Accurate Is Your Perception?

**Instructions:** Think about a job that you have held or a project that you have worked on in class or a volunteer organization. With respect to data or information coming to you, rate whether each statement below is Mostly True or Mostly False for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mostly True</th>
<th>Mostly False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I look for inconsistencies and seek explanations for them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I generate multiple explanations for available information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I check for omissions, distortions, or exaggerations in available information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I make it a point to distinguish facts from opinions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I stay conscious of my own style of approaching problems and how this might affect the way I process information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I am well aware of my own biases and values that influence the way I see people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Scoring and Interpretation:** Your total score is the number of Mostly True answers to all six questions. A score of 5 or above suggests that you are conscious of and make attempts to remove distortions from your perceptual process. A score of 3 or 4 indicates that you make solid effort, and a score of 1 or 2 suggests that you take perception for granted. Look at any individual items where you have marked Mostly False to get an idea of where you might have perceptual weaknesses. What can you do to improve your perceptual process?

Biases when making attributions

Fundamental attribution error – Underestimating the influence of external factors and overestimating the influence of internal factors

Self-serving bias – giving too much credit for oneself when a job is done well, and blaming external factors for failure to perform
Personality Traits

- ✓ Extroversion
- ✓ Agreeableness
- ✓ Conscientiousness
- ✓ Emotional stability
- ✓ Openness to experience
14.6 - The Big Five Personality Traits

Each individual's collection of personality traits is different; it is what makes us unique. But, although each collection of traits varies, we all share many common traits. The following phrases describe various traits and behaviors. Rate how accurately each statement describes you, based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very inaccurate and 5 very accurate. Describe yourself as you are now, not as you wish to be. There are no right or wrong answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extroversion</th>
<th>Neuroticism (Low Emotional Stability)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am usually the life of the party.</td>
<td>I often feel critical of myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable around people.</td>
<td>I often envy others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am talkative.</td>
<td>I am temperamental.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreeableness</th>
<th>Openness to New Experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am kind and sympathetic.</td>
<td>I am imaginative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a good word for everyone.</td>
<td>I prefer to vote for liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I never insult people.</td>
<td>political candidates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>I really like art.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conscientiousness</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am systematic and efficient.</td>
<td>I am imaginative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I pay attention to details.</td>
<td>I prefer to vote for liberal political candidates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am always prepared for class.</td>
<td>I really like art.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which are your most prominent traits? For fun and discussion, compare your responses with those of classmates.
Attitudes and Behaviors Influenced by Personality

- **Locus of Control** – Responsibility of success/failure within oneself vs. outside forces
- **Authoritarianism** – Power and status differences should exist within organization
- **Machiavellianism** – Focus on acquiring power
- **Different problem-solving styles and approaches:**
  - **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator assessment**
# 14.8 - Four Problem-Solving Styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Style</th>
<th>Action Tendencies</th>
<th>Likely Occupations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Sensation-Thinking   | • Emphasizes details, facts, certainty  
                      • Is a decisive, applied thinker  
                      • Focuses on short-term, realistic goals  
                      • Develops rules and regulations for judging performance | • Accounting  
                      • Production  
                      • Computer programming  
                      • Market research  
                      • Engineering |
| Intuitive-Thinking   | • Prefers dealing with theoretical or technical problems  
                      • Is a creative, progressive, perceptive thinker  
                      • Focuses on possibilities using impersonal analysis  
                      • Is able to consider a number of options and problems simultaneously | • Systems design  
                      • Systems analysis  
                      • Law  
                      • Middle/top management  
                      • Teaching business, economics |
| Sensation-Feeling    | • Shows concern for current, real-life human problems  
                      • Is pragmatic, analytical, methodical, and conscientious  
                      • Emphasizes detailed facts about people rather than tasks  
                      • Focuses on structuring organizations for the benefit of people | • Directing supervisor  
                      • Counseling  
                      • Negotiating  
                      • Selling  
                      • Interviewing |
| Intuitive-Feeling    | • Avoids specifics  
                      • Is charismatic, participative, people oriented, and helpful  
                      • Focuses on general views, broad themes, and feelings  
                      • Decentralizes decision making, develops few rules and regulations | • Public relations  
                      • Advertising  
                      • Human Resources  
                      • Politics  
                      • Customer service |
Emotions

- A mental state that arises spontaneously within a person based on interactions
- People cannot be separated from their emotions
- Managers can influence positive or negative emotions at work
  - Emotional contagion
- **Good managers pay attention to people’s emotions**
14.9 - Positive and Negative Emotions

Negative Emotions: Anger, Fright/Anxiety, Guilt/Shame, Sadness, Envy/Jealousy, Disgust

Positive Emotions: Happiness/Joy, Pride, Love/Affection, Relief
Emotional Intelligence

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship management
Basic Principles for Self-Management

- Clarity of mind
- Clarity of objectives
- An organized system
14.10 – Follow the Steps to Get Organized

- Empty Your Head: Collect all the things you need or want to do.
- Decide the Next Action: Do it, delegate it, or defer it.
- Get Organized: Schedule appointments, tasks; set up calendars, action lists.
- Perform a Weekly Review: Update calendars, action lists; process new items.
- Consider time and context, energy level, and task priority.
- Do It:

Stress and Stress Management

- Work-related stress is increasing worldwide
- Low levels of stress can be a positive force
- Too much stress can have negative consequences

Causes of Work Stress
- Task demands
- Interpersonal demand
Stress and Stress Management

- **Challenge stress**
  - Stress that challenges and helps increase focus

- **Threat stress**
  - Stress that is counterproductive
  - *Presenteeism* – people go to work, but are too stressed to be productive
**Type A Behavior**
Pattern characterized by extreme competitiveness, impatience, aggressiveness, and devotion to work

**Type B Behavior**
Pattern that lacks Type A characteristics and includes more balanced, relaxed lifestyle
Causes of Work Stress

- **Task Demands**
  - Stressors arising from the tasks required of a person holding a particular job
  - *Role ambiguity* – People are unclear of the task behavior expected of them

- **Interpersonal demands**
  - Stressors associated with relationships in the organization
  - *Role conflict* – occurs when an individual faces incompatible demands
Innovative Responses to Stress Management

- Destroy sources of stress
- Find support
- Meditate
- Quiet rooms
- Wellness programs
- Training programs
- Manager intervention
- Work/life balance initiatives