Chapter 17

Dynamics of Behavior in Organizations

Chapter Outline

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Annotated Learning Objectives

After studying this chapter, students should be able to:

1. Define attitudes, including their major components, and explain their relationship to personality, perception, and behavior.
An attitude is an evaluation that predisposes a person to act in a certain way. The three components of attitudes are cognitions (thoughts), affect (feelings), and behavior. The cognitive component of an attitude includes the beliefs, opinions, and information the person has about the object of the attitude, such as knowledge of what a job entails and opinions about personal abilities.

The affective component is the person’s emotions or feelings about the object of the attitude, such as enjoying or hating a job. The behavioral component of an attitude is the person’s intention to behave toward the object of the attitude in a certain way. The cognitive element is the conscious thought, “my job is interesting and challenging.” The affective element is the feeling that “I love this job.”

An individual’s personality is the set of characteristics that underlie a relatively stable pattern of behavior in response to ideas, objects, or people in the environment. Understanding an individual’s personality can help managers predict how that person will act in a particular situation.

Perception is the cognitive process people use to make sense out of the environment by selecting, organizing, and interpreting information from the environment. Attitudes affect perceptions and vice versa. Because of individual differences in attitudes, personality, values, interests, and so forth, people often “see” the same thing in different ways.

2. Discuss the importance of work-related attitudes.

A positive attitude toward one’s job is called job satisfaction. People experience this attitude when their work matches their needs and interests, when working conditions and rewards (such as pay) are satisfactory, and when the employees like their coworkers. Organizational commitment is loyalty to and heavy involvement in the organization. An employee with a high degree of organizational commitment is likely to say “we” when talking about the organization. Such a person tries to contribute to the organization’s success and wishes to remain with the organization.

3. Identify major personality traits and describe how personality can influence workplace attitudes and behaviors.

In common usage, people think of personality in terms of traits, or relatively stable characteristics of a person. Extroversion is the degree to which a person is sociable, talkative, assertive, and comfortable with interpersonal relationships. Agreeableness is the degree to which a person is able to get along with others by being good-natured, cooperative, forgiving, understanding, and trusting. Conscientiousness, which is the degree to which a person is focused on a few goals, thus behaving in ways that are responsible, dependable, persistent, and achievement oriented. Emotional stability is the degree to which a person is calm, enthusiastic, and secure, rather than tense, nervous, depressed, moody, or insecure. Openness to experience is the degree to which a person has a broad range of interests and is imaginative, creative, artistically sensitive, and willing to consider new ideas. An individual’s personality influences a wide variety of work-related attitudes and behaviors, some of which are locus of control, authoritarianism, Machiavellianism, and problem-solving styles. The locus of control defines whether a person places the primary
responsibility within themselves or on outside forces. Authoritarianism is the belief that power and status differences should exist within the organization. Machiavellianism is characterized by the acquisition of power and the manipulation of other people for purely personal gain. Managers also need to understand that individuals differ in the way they go about gathering and evaluating information for problem solving and decision-making.

4. Define the four components of emotional intelligence and explain why they are important for today’s managers.

The four components of emotional intelligence include:

Self-awareness. The basis for all the other components; being aware of what you are feeling.

Managing emotions. The ability to balance one’s moods so that worry, anxiety, fear, or anger do not cloud thinking and get in the way of what needs to be done.

Motivating oneself. The ability to be hopeful and to persist in the face of obstacles, setbacks, and even outright failure. This ability is crucial for pursuing long-term goals.

Empathy. Being able to put yourself in someone else’s shoes, to recognize what others are feeling without them needing to tell you.

Social skill. The ability to connect to others, build positive relationships, respond to the emotions of others, and influence others.

There has been a link between a positive relationship between job performance and high degrees of emotional intelligence in a variety of jobs.

5. Explain how people learn in general and in terms of individual learning styles.

Learning is a change in behavior or performance that occurs as the result of experience. There are individual differences in the learning process. First, a person encounters a concrete experience. This is followed by thinking and reflective observation, which leads to abstract conceptualization and in turn, to active experimentation. The results of the experimentation generate new experiences, and the cycle repeats. Each person’s learning style is a combination of the emphasis placed on the four stages. They are Diverger, Assimilator, Converger, and Accommodator.

6. Discuss the effects of stress and identify ways individuals and organizations can manage stress to improve employee health, satisfaction, and productivity.

Stress is an individual’s physiological and emotional response to stimuli that place physical or psychological demands on the individual and create uncertainty and lack of personal control when important outcomes are at stake.

These stimuli, called stressors, produce some combination of frustration (the inability to achieve a goal, such as the inability to meet a deadline because of inadequate...
resources) and anxiety (such as the fear of being disciplined for not meeting deadlines). People’s responses to stressors vary according to their personality, the resources available to help them cope, and the context in which the stress occurs.

People’s responses to stressors vary according to their personality, the resources available to help them cope, and the context in which the stress occurs. When the level of stress is low relative to a person’s coping resources, stress can be a positive force, stimulating desirable change and achievement. However, too much stress is associated with many negative consequences, including sleep disturbances, drug and alcohol abuse, headaches, ulcers, high blood pressure and heart disease. Too much stress is harmful to employees as well as to the organization.

Organizations that want to challenge their employees and stay competitive in a fast-changing environment will never be stress-free. But because many consequences of stress are negative, managers need to participate in stress management for themselves and for their employees. They can do so by identifying the major sources of stress, including the task, physical, role, and interpersonal demands of the job and organization. Although individuals can pursue stress management strategies on their own, today’s enlightened companies support healthy habits to help employees manage stress and be more productive.

There are a variety of techniques to help individuals manage stress. Among the most basic strategies are those that help people stay healthy: exercising regularly, getting plenty of rest, and eating a healthful diet. In addition, most people cope with stress more effectively if they lead balanced lives and are part of a network of people who support and encourage them. Family, relationships, friendships, and memberships in nonwork groups such as community or religious organizations are helpful for stress management, as well as for other benefits. Supporting employees can be as simple as encouraging people to take regular breaks and vacations. Creating broad work-life balance initiatives that may include flexible work options such as telecommuting and flexible hours, as well as benefits such as onsite daycare, fitness centers, and personal services. Organizations and employees should look for ways to reduce the stressors and increase employees’ coping skills. Organizations can provide training or clearer directions so that employees feel able to handle their responsibilities. They can make the work environment safer and more comfortable. Individuals also can act on their own initiative to develop their knowledge and skills.

Lecture Outline

Suggested Opening Remarks

Vinita Gupta needed to strengthen her emotional intelligence, particularly in the areas of self-awareness, and relationship management. Gupta hired a corporate coach to help her learn more about herself and manage the personality characteristics and behaviors that could be contributing to decreased performance and higher turnover at Quick Eagle. Gupta worked on a series of exercises to help develop greater empathy and improve her
social skills, including coaching employees, being more open and less defensive, and using humor to create a lighter atmosphere. She now makes a point of greeting people upon arrival, introducing herself to employees she’s never met, and having lunch with colleagues. Gupta has learned that she cannot change some of her personality characteristics—-for example, she will never score high on extroversion. However, she has learned to manage her attitudes and behaviors to make Quick Eagle a more pleasant, comfortable place to work. Employees have noticed that the atmosphere is lighter, and people are no longer afraid to speak up in meetings or if they have a concern. Turnover has decreased by 20 percent from a year earlier.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

➢ What is organizational behavior?

Organizational behavior, commonly referred to as OB, is an interdisciplinary field dedicated to the study of human attitudes, behavior, and performance in organizations. The concepts and principles of organizational behavior are important because human beings make decisions to control how the organization will acquire and use resources. People distract from the firm’s strategy by engaging in conflict and misunderstandings or pool their talents and perspectives to do more as a group than as individuals.

By understanding what causes people to behave as they do, managers can exercise leadership to achieve positive outcomes.

They can foster behaviors such as organizational citizenship, work behavior that goes beyond job requirements and contributes as needed to the organization’s success.

An employee demonstrates organization citizenship by being helpful, doing extra work, and looking for ways to improve products and procedures.

Managers encourage organizational citizenship by selecting people with positive attitudes, helping them contribute, and enabling them to learn from with workplace challenges.

Discussion Question #1: Why is it important for managers to have an understanding of organizational behavior? Do you think knowledge of OB might be more important at some managerial levels than at others? Discuss.

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II. ATTITUDES

➢ What is an attitude?

Exhibit 14.1
An attitude is a cognitive and affective evaluation that predisposes a person to act in a certain way.

An employee with an attitude problem might be hard to get along with, might gripe, and consistently resist new ideas.

Understanding employee attitudes is important to interact with others, and behave on the job; managers strive to develop and reinforce positive attitudes among employees.

Managers should recognize that negative attitudes can be the result of underlying problems in the workplace as well as a contributor to forthcoming problems.

A. Components of Attitudes

One important step is for managers to recognize that attitudes have three components: cognitions (thoughts), affect (feelings), and behavior.

- The cognitive component includes the beliefs, opinions, and information the person has about the object of the attitude, such as knowledge of what a job entails and opinions about personal abilities.
- The affective component is the person’s emotions or feelings about the object of the attitude, such as enjoying or hating a job.
- The behavioral component of an attitude is the person’s intention to behave toward the object of the attitude in a certain way.

As a general rule, changing one component of an attitude—cognitions, affect, or behavior—can contribute to an overall change in attitude.

Discussion Question #2: In what ways might the cognitive and affective components of attitude influence the behavior of employees who are faced with learning an entirely new set of computer-related skills in order to retain their jobs at a manufacturing facility?

B. High-Performance Work Attitudes

Exhibit 14.2

To lead employees effectively, managers seek to cultivate the kinds of attitudes that are associated with high performance.

Two attitudes that may relate to high performance are job satisfaction and commitment to the organization.

1. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a positive attitude to one’s job; people experience this attitude when their work matches their needs and interests, and they like their co-workers.

Job satisfaction also occurs when working conditions and rewards are satisfactory, when they have a positive relationship with supervisors.
Research shows that the link between job satisfaction and performance is small and is affected by other factors.

Satisfaction varies according to the amount of control the employee has; a study found a link between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction, and revenue.

Managers play an important role in whether employees have positive or negative attitudes about their jobs.

For example, the CEO of General Mills recognized that managers must pay attention to their own attitudes and behaviors to influence those of employees.

2. Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is loyalty to and heavy involvement in one’s organization.

Most managers want to enjoy the benefits of loyal, committed employees, including low turnover and willingness to do more than the job’s basic requirements.

A recent study of 650,000 employees in global organizations found that companies with highly committed employees outperformed the industry average by 6 percent.

High motivation and engagement that comes with organizational commitment are essential to the success of knowledge-based organizations that depend on creativity.

UNLOCKING CREATIVE SOLUTIONS THROUGH PEOPLE

The Ropkenbok Magic

Paul Eichen had helped start a successful technology company and grow it to sales of $100 million. However, work was eating him alive, so he walked away from his lucrative, successful job. When Eichen opened the doors to Rokenbok Toy Co., it wasn’t in an industrial park but in a village by the beach, in an old rehabilitated warehouse. The pattern of work was different. As long as employees did their work, they were encouraged to set their own hours, dress as they liked, tend to their health, and put their families first. In the first five years of its existence, Rokenbok’s company reached sales of $10 million in 1999. “Our executives have chosen quality of life over the seductiveness of … wealth,” says Eichen.

C. Conflicts Among Attitudes

Sometimes a person may discover that his or her attitudes conflict with one another or are not reflected in his or her behavior.

This can create a state of cognitive dissonance, a condition in which two attitudes or a behavior and an attitude conflict.

This theory states that people want to behave in accordance with their attitudes and will take corrective action to alleviate the dissonance and achieve balance.
For those who work overtime and cannot restructure their workloads, they might develop an unfavorable attitude, reducing organizational commitment.

**Discussion Question #3:** *What steps might managers at a company that is about to be merged with another company take to promote organizational commitment among employees?*

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### III. PERCEPTION

*Exhibit 14.4*

- **What is perception?**

*Perception* is the cognitive process people use to make sense out of the environment by selecting, organizing, and interpreting information from the environment.

Because of individual differences in attitudes, personality, values, interests, and so forth, people often “see” the same thing in different ways.

A class that is boring to one student might be fascinating to another.

Perception can be viewed as a step-by-step process: first we observe information (sensory data); next our mind screens the data, and third we organize selected data.

*Exhibit 14.5*

The visuals show (a) a dog or dots, (b) an old or young woman, and (c) six or seven blocks; these visuals show how complex perception is.

#### A. Perceptual Selectivity

*Perceptual selectivity* is the process by which individuals screen and select the various stimuli that vie for their attention.

People typically focus on stimuli that satisfy their needs and that are consistent with their attitudes, values, and personality.

Characteristics of the stimuli itself also affect perceptual selectivity.

People tend to notice stimuli that stand out against other stimuli or that are more intense than surrounding stimuli.

People also tend to notice things that are familiar to them, as well as things that are new or different from their previous experiences.

*Primacy* and *recency* are important to perceptual selectivity.

*Primacy* supports the old truism that first impressions do count; *recency* reflects the reality that the last impression might be a lasting impression.

Managers can use an understanding of the perceptual selectivity to obtain clues about why one person sees things differently from others and apply this to communication.
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B. Perceptual Distortions

Once people have selected the sensory data, they group the data into patterns; perceptual organization is the process by which people organize or categorize stimuli. Perceptual distortions are errors in perceptual judgment that arise from inaccuracies in any part of the perceptual process.

Some types of errors are so common that managers should become familiar with them:

- **Stereotyping.** The tendency to assign an individual to a group or broad category and then attribute generalizations about the group to the individual.
- **Halo Effect.** An overall impression of a person or situation based on one attribute, either favorable or unfavorable.
- **Projection.** The tendency to see one’s own personal traits in other people.
- **Perceptual Defense.** The tendency of perceivers to protect themselves by disregarding ideas, objects, or people that are threatening to them.

C. Attributions

As people organize what they perceive, they often draw conclusions about the stimuli. Attributions are judgments about what caused a person’s behavior—either a characteristics of the person or of the situation. There are two types of attributions:

An **internal attribution** refers to characteristics of the person led to the behavior; An **external attribution** says something about the situation caused the person’s behavior.

Three factors that influence whether an attribution will be external or internal:

- **Distinctiveness** - whether the behavior is unusual for that person.
- **Consensus** - whether other people tend to respond to similar situation in the same way.
- **Consistency** - whether the person being observed has a history of behaving in the same way.

In addition to these general rules, people tend to have biases that they apply when making attributions.

- **Fundamental attribution error** - The tendency to underestimate the influence of external factors on another’s behavior and to overestimate the influence of internal factors.
- **Self-serving bias** - The tendency to overestimate the contribution of internal factors to one’s successes and the contribution of external factors to one’s failures.
**Discussion Question #5:** What is meant by “perceptual selectivity”? Explain some characteristics of the perceiver and of the stimuli that might affect perception.

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**IV. PERSONALITY AND BEHAVIOR**

> Why is personality of particular interest to organizational behavior?

An individual’s personality is the set of characteristics that underlie a relatively stable pattern of behavior in response to ideas, objects, or people in the environment.

Understanding personality can help managers predict how that person might act in a particular situation.

Managers who appreciate the ways their employees’ personalities differ have insight into what kinds of leadership behavior will be most influential.

**A. Personality Traits**

There are five general dimensions that describe personality, often called the “Big Five” personality factors:

- **Extroversion** - The degree to which a person is sociable, talkative, assertive, and comfortable with interpersonal relationships.
- **Agreeableness** - The degree to which a person is able to get along with others by being good-natured, cooperative, forgiving, understanding, and trusting.
- **Conscientiousness** - The degree to which a person is focused on a few goals, thus behaving in ways that are responsible, dependable, persistent, and achievement oriented.
- **Emotional stability** - The degree to which a person is calm, enthusiastic, and secure, rather than tense, nervous, depressed, moody, or insecure.
- **Openness to experience** - The degree to which a person has a broad range of interests and is imaginative, creative, artistically sensitive, and willing to consider new ideas.

These factors represent a continuum; a person may have a low, moderate, or high degree of each quality.

Having a moderate-to-high degree of each personality factor is considered desirable for a wide range of employees; in addition, factors may be important for a specific job.

Many companies use personality testing to hire, evaluate, or promote employees (e.g., Marriott Hotels looks for people who score high on conscientiousness and agreeableness).

**Discussion Question #4:** In the Big Five personality factors, extroversion is considered a “good” quality to have. Why might introversion be an equally positive quality?
B. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) includes five basic components:

- **Self-awareness** - the bias for all the other components, means being aware of what you are feeling.
- **Self-management** - the ability to control disruptive or harmful emotions and balance one’s moods so that worry, anxiety, fear, or anger do not cloud thinking.
- **Social awareness** – the ability to understand others and practice empathy, putting yourself in someone else’s shoes, recognizing the feelings of others without being told.
- **Relationship awareness** – the ability to connect to others, build positive relationships, respond to the emotions of others, and influence others.

Studies have found a positive relationship between job performance and high degrees of emotional intelligence in a variety of jobs.

At times of great change or crisis, managers need a higher EQ level to help employees cope with anxiety and stress.

Employee fears over terrorism, the war in Iraq, and economic hardship have made managers take on a new role; EQ can be learned and developed throughout one’s life.

**Discussion Question #6**: *Which of the five components of emotional intelligence do you consider most important to an effective manager in today’s world? Why?*

**Notes**
MANAGER’S SHOPTALK

What’s Your Crisis EQ?

The turbulence of today’s world has left lingering psychological and emotional damage in workplaces across the U.S. as well as in the rest of the world. Here are some important elements of crisis EQ for managers:

- Be visible and provide as much up-to-date, accurate information as possible.
- Find simple ways to get employees together.
- Give employees room to be human.
- Publicize the company’s charitable endeavors and make them available to employees.
- Thank employees in person and with handwritten notes for charitable acts.
- Recognize that routine, structured work can help people heal.
- Provide professional counseling services for people who need it.

C. Attitudes and Behaviors Influenced by Personality

An individual’s personality influences a wide variety of work-related attitudes and behaviors:

1. Locus of Control

   *Locus of control* is the tendency to place the primary responsibility for one’s success or failure either within oneself (internally) or on outside forces (externally).

   Some believe that their actions can strongly influence what happens to them; they feel in control of their own fate and have a high *internal* locus of control.

   Others believe that events occur because of chance, luck, or outside people or events; these individuals have a high *external* locus of control.

   Many top leaders of e-commerce and high-tech organizations have a high internal locus of control.

   Research has shown differences in behavior in a wide range of settings; people with an internal locus of control are easier to motivate and can handle complex information.

   They are better at problem solving, are more achievement oriented, but are also more independent and therefore more difficult to lead.

   People with an external locus of control are harder to motivate, less involved in their jobs, blame others, but are more compliant and conforming, and easier to lead.
Discussion Question #7: How might understanding whether an employee has an internal or an external locus of control help a manager better communicate with, motivate, and lead the employee?

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2. Authoritarianism

Authoritarianism is the belief that power and status differences should exist within the organization.

If a manager and employees differ in their degree of authoritarianism, the manager may have difficulty leading effectively.

The trend toward empowerment and shifts in expectations among younger employees for more equitable relationships has caused a decline in authoritarianism.

3. Machiavellianism

Machiavellianism is the tendency to direct much of one’s behavior toward the acquisition of power and the manipulation of others for personal gain.

Research shows that high Machs are predisposed to being pragmatic, capable of lying to achieve personal goals, more likely to win, and more likely to persuade.

In loosely structured situations, high Machs actively take control, while low Machs accept the directions given by others.

Low Machs thrive in highly structured situations, while high Machs perform in a detached disinterested way.

4. Problem-Solving Styles and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Exhibit 14.9

Individuals differ in the way they go about gathering and evaluating information for problem solving and decision-making.

Psychologist Carl Jung believed that people gather information either by sensing or feeling but not by both simultaneously.

Sensation-type people would rather work with known facts and data; intuitive-type people prefer to look for possibilities and use abstract concepts for problem-solving.

People evaluate information by thinking or feeling; thinking-type people base their judgments on impersonal analysis, using reason and logic, not emotion or values.

Feeling-type individuals base their judgments on personal feelings such as harmony and make decisions that result in approval from others.

According to Jung, only one of the four functions—sensation, intuition, thinking, or feeling—is dominant; however, the dominant feature is backed up by one of the others.

Two additional sets of paired opposites not related to problem solving are introversion-extroversion and judging-perceiving.
Myers’-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a personality test that measures a person’s preference for introversion vs. extroversion, sensation vs. intuition, thinking vs. feeling, and judging vs. perceiving.

The various combinations of these four preferences result in 16 unique personality types, with positive and negative consequences.

The two preferences associated with effective management are thinking and judging.

Dow Chemical managers believe that MBTI can help put people in the right job---where they can be the happiest and make the strongest contribution to the firm.

D. Person-Job Fit

An important responsibility of managers is to try to match employee and job characteristics so that work is done by people who are well suited to do it.

*Person-job fit* is the extent to which a person’s ability and personality match the requirements of a job.

When person-job fit is poor, the manager may have to restructure tasks or replace employees.

*Person-environment fit* looks not only at whether the person and job are suited to one another but also how well a person fits in the organizational environment.

**Discussion Question #8:** Why is it important for managers to achieve person-job fit when they are hiring employees?

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V. LEARNING

*Learning* is a change in behavior or performance that occurs as the result of experience.

Experience may take the form of observing others, reading or listening to sources of information, or experiencing the consequences of one’s own behavior.

A. The Learning Process

One model of the learning process depicts learning as a four-stage cycle.

First a person encounters a concrete experience, followed by thinking and reflective observation, leading to abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.

The arrows in the model of the learning process indicate that this is a recurring cycle; Best Buy, a chain of electronic stores, owes its birth to the learning process.

B. Learning Styles

Individuals develop personal learning styles that vary in terms of how much they emphasize each stage of the learning cycle.
These differences occur because the learning process is directed by individual needs and goals.

Some people have a tendency to overemphasize one stage of the learning process, or to avoid some aspects of learning.

Not many people have totally balanced profiles; the key to effective learning is competence in each of the four stages when it is needed.

Each person’s learning style is a combination of the emphasis placed on the four stages.

Researchers have identified four fundamental learning styles that combine elements of the four stages: Diverger, Assimilator, Converger, Accommodator.

Through awareness of their learning style, managers can understand how they approach problems and issues, their learning strengths and weaknesses, and how they react to employees or co-workers who have different learning styles.

C. Continuous Learning

To thrive or even to survive in today’s fast-changing business climate, individuals and organizations must be continuous learners.

For individuals, continuous learning entails looking for opportunities to learn from classes, reading, talking to others, and looking for the lessons in life’s experiences.

For organizations, continuous learning involves the processes and systems through which people learn, share their growing knowledge, and apply it to their work.

Managers can foster continuous learning by stopping from time to time and asking, “What can we learn from this experience?”

They can allow employees time to attend training and reflect on their experiences; they can focus on how they and their employees can learn from mistakes.

Managers also can encourage organizational learning by establishing information systems that enable employees to share knowledge and learn in new ways.

Managers can help themselves and set an example for their employees by being continuous learners, listening to others, reading widely, and reflecting on their observations.

Discussion Question #9: Review Exhibit 14.11. Which learning style type best characterizes you? How can you use this understanding to improve your learning ability? To improve your management skills?

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VI. STRESS AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

Stress is a physiological and emotional response to stimuli that place physical or psychological demands on an individual.
These stimuli, called stressors, produce some combination of frustration. People’s responses to stressors vary according to their personality, the resources available to help them cope, and the context in which the stress occurs.

When the level of stress is low, stress can be a positive force, stimulating desirable change and achievement.

However, too much stress is associated with many negative consequences, including sleep disturbances, drug and alcohol abuse, headaches, ulcers, high blood pressure, and heart disease.

People, experiencing the ill effects of stress may withdraw from interactions with their coworkers, take excess time off for illnesses, and have more health problems.

People suffering from stress are less productive and may leave the organization; too much stress is harmful to employees as well as to companies.

A. Type A and Type B Behavior

Researchers have categorized people as having two behavior patterns:

- **Type A Behavior** is a behavior pattern characterized by extreme competitiveness, impatience, aggressiveness, and devotion to work.

- **Type B Behavior** is a behavior pattern that lacks Type A characteristics and includes a more balanced, relaxed lifestyle.

Type A individuals can be powerful forces for innovation and leadership within their organizations.

However, many Type A personalities cause stress-related problems for themselves and sometimes for those around them. Most Type A individuals are high-energy people.

Type B individuals experience less conflict with other people and a more balanced lifestyle.

B. Causes of Work Stress

Work related stress is on the rise.

Managers can better cope with their own stress and establish ways for the organization to help employees cope if they define the conditions that tend to produce work stress.

One way to identify work stressors is to place them in four categories:

- **Task demands** are stressors arising from the tasks required of a person holding a particular job—decisions with incomplete information and important consequences.

- **Physical demands** are stressors associated with the setting in which an individual works.

- **Role demands** are challenges associated with a role—that is, the set of behaviors expected of a person because of that person’s position in the group.
Some people encounter *role ambiguity*, the uncertainty about what behaviors are expected of a person in a particular role.

*Role conflict* is the incompatible demands of different roles.

- *Interpersonal demands* are stressors associated with relationships in the organization.

**Discussion Question #10**: *Describe a time when you experienced role ambiguity or role conflict. What stress management techniques did you use to cope with the stress this created?*

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**C. Stress Management**

Organizations that want to challenge their employees and stay competitive in a fast-changing environment will never be stress-free.

Because many consequences of stress are negative, managers need to participate in stress management for themselves and for their employees.

1. **Individual Stress Management**

   A variety of techniques help individuals manage stress. Among the most basic strategies are those that help people stay healthy, exercise regularly, get plenty of rest. And eat a healthy diet.

   Most people cope with stress more effectively if they lead balanced lives and are part of a network of people who support and encourage them.

   People who don’t take care of themselves physically and emotionally are more susceptible to stress in their personal as well as professional lives.

2. **New Workplace Responses to Stress Management**

   Although individuals can pursue stress management strategies on their own, today’s enlightened companies support healthy habits to help employees manage stress and be more productive.

   In the new workplace, taking care of employees has become a business as well as an ethical priority.

   Supporting employees can be as simple as encouraging people to take regular breaks and vacations.

   Companies also develop other programs aimed specifically at helping employees reduce stress and lead healthier, more balanced lives.

   Many companies offer wellness programs that provide access to nutrition and exercise facilities.
Some companies create broad work-life balance initiatives to include flexible work options such as telecommuting and flexible hours as well as onsite daycare, fitness centers, and personal services such as pick-up of dry cleaning.

*Daily flextime* is considered by many employees to be the most effective work-life practice, which means giving employees the freedom to vary their hours.

Work-life practices also communicate that managers and the organization care about employees as human beings.

Managers’ attitudes make a tremendous difference in whether employees are stressed out and unhappy or relaxed, energetic, and productive.

**Discussion Question #11:** Do you think it is the responsibility of managers and organizations to help employees manage stress? Why or why not?

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**Lecture Example File**

In 1970 the American journalist and sociologist Alvin Toffler predicted that the rate of change in modern civilization would accelerate to such a degree that enormous numbers of people would experience shattering stress and disorientation. Toffler described this condition as FUTURE SHOCK.

Many civilizations are feeling the impact of global change. The effects of change reach into every crevice of life putting people more and more under pressure. Human biological evolution is lagging behind developments in technology and lifestyle. Physiological and psychological stress emerges as a result of a growing deficit between daily demands and coping resources.

Today it is virtually impossible to avoid stress. Many try but find that the avoidance strategies frequently generate more stress rather than reducing it.

To cope with the stress of future shock people need to get tough. A new word has been coined in the social sciences to describe stress-toughness... the word is HARDINESS.

**WHAT IS STRESS?**

It is different things to different people. To a mountaineer it is the challenge of pushing physical resources to the limit by striving to achieve a demanding goal. To the homeward bound motorist it can be the hassles of heavy traffic and obnoxious exhaust fumes. To the student it can be exam pressure.

Most people respond to the word stress in negative ways. They see it as a destructive, debilitating force.
However, not all stress is negative. The word EUSTRESS has been coined to describe positive stress. Eustress results from exhilarating experiences. It is the type of stress you are likely to experience when you inherit a large amount of money or receive an unexpected promotion or reward. Eustress is the stress of winning and achieving.

Negative stress is DISTRESS. It is the stress of losing, failing, overworking and not coping. Distress affects people in a negative often harmful manner. We all experience distress from time to time. It is a normal, unavoidable part of living.

STRESSORS CAUSE STRESS

Stress results from failure to adequately cope with stressors. Stressors could be loud noise, uncomfortable air-conditioning, debts, ringing telephones, broken relationships, unrealistic deadlines, discouragement, fear, pain and thousands of other things that impact upon us in the normal course of life.

It is impossible to avoid stressors. The only totally stress-free state is death! Stressors will always be there because we live in an imperfect and unpredictable world.

We experience stress as the body adjusts to the external demands placed upon it. Our body constantly seeks to maintain stability and stress is usually sensed as the body readjusts to too much pressure.

Scientists use the term HOMEOSTASIS to define the physiological limits in which the body functions efficiently and comfortably. Stress disturbs homeostasis by creating a state of imbalance. The source of stress may be outside the body or it may originate from within the body in the form of blood pressure, pain, tumors or disturbing thoughts.

Stress is the tension that the body exerts as it seeks to return to a steady state.

Perhaps the most significant background stressor is the ever-increasing rate of change experienced in modern society.

Change generates stress by forcing us to make adjustments in our lives, often in a climate of uncertainty and unpredictability.

Answers To End-Of-Chapter Discussion Questions

1. What are the three basic leadership skills that lie at the core of identifying and solving people problems? Why is it important for managers to develop these skills?

Three basic leadership skills are at the core of identifying and solving people problems: (1) diagnosis or gaining insight into the situation a manager is trying to influence; (2) adapting individual behavior and resources to meet the needs of the situation; and (3) communicating in a way that others can understand and accept. By increasing their knowledge of individual differences in the areas of attitudes, personality, perception, learning, and stress management, managers can understand and lead employees and colleagues through many workplace challenges more effectively.
2. *In what ways might the cognitive and affective components of attitude influence the behavior of employees who are faced with learning an entirely new set of computer-related skills in order to retain their jobs at a manufacturing facility?*

The cognitive component of an attitude includes the beliefs, opinions, and information the person has about the object of the attitude, such as knowledge of what a job entails and opinions about personal abilities. Learning is a change in behavior or performance that occurs as the result of experience. Learning can be the result in the development of new skills such as the skills required as a result of advancing technology to operate a computer in a manufacturing setting.

3. *What steps might managers at a company that is about to be merged with another company take to promote organizational commitment among employees?*

Managers can take action to promote organizational commitment by keeping employees informed, giving them a say in decisions, providing the necessary training, and other resources that enable them to succeed, treating them fairly, and offering rewards they value. Employee commitment can be forthcoming to prepare them for a planned change as to an acquisition or merger.

4. *Think about an important event in your life. Do you believe that the success or failure of the event was your responsibility (internal locus of control) or the responsibility of outside forces or people (external locus of control)? Has your belief changed since the event took place? How does your locus of control affect the way you now view the event?*

Students will vary in their response because of their exposure to different events and activities. Depending on the event it could be internal or external locus of control. People with an internal locus of control are easier to motivate because they believe the rewards are the result of their behavior. People with an external locus of control are harder to motivate, less involved in their jobs, more likely to blame others when faced with a poor performance evaluation, but more compliant and conforming and, therefore, easier to lead. Some students’ beliefs will change following the event. Finally, students may have a different perspective of their locus of control today. The locus of control could change due to changing attitudes and behavior patterns as we look back on the activity or event.

5. *In the Big Five personality factors, extroversion is considered a “good” quality to have. Why might introversion be an equally positive quality?*

Personalities will influence behavior at work. It is estimated that three out of every four individuals have an extroverted personality trait. With an introverted personality individuals can be better suited for certain types of jobs. An example would be market researchers or anyone who prefers to work alone. Introverted personalities prefer to have their thoughts and energies kept inside of them; whereas, extroverted personalities prefer their thoughts and energies be generated outwardly.
6. Review Exhibit 17.9. According to the chart, which type of problem-solving style do you prefer? Describe briefly a decision you have made using this style.

Problem solving styles will vary based on student responses and work experiences in real life. Anyone of the four problem solving types have application and will have success based on their preference of behavior on the job. The problem styles are sensation-thinking, intuitive-thinking, sensation-feeling and intuitive-feeling. Anyone of the four problem-solving styles could vary based on student behavior and experiences.

7. Why is it important for managers to achieve person-job fit when they are hiring employees?

When hiring and leading employees, managers should try to achieve person-job fit so that employees are more likely to contribute and be satisfied.

8. How might a design manager use a combination of novelty, familiarity, and repetition in the presentation of a new product idea to the company’s financial managers?

As a design manager one must submit a new product plan that is built upon the novelty of the product idea, familiarity of the new product to existing product line, and repetition to permit the product to fit into the organization’s capacity. The manager must be able to demonstrate how this new product will become profitable to the financial manager and generate company growth. There are six distinct stages of new product development. Each stage, beginning with idea generation, going through business screening, followed by product evaluation, and proceeding to production prototype, to market testing and commercialization must be presented to the financial manager to convince them that this is a worthy and profitable new product for the organization to consider.

9. What characteristics of perceivers might influence the attendees of a human resources seminar on employee benefits (such as retirement planning, health care insurance, vacation, and the like)?

Several characteristics of the perceiver also can influence the selection of sensory data:
- Needs and motivation—people tend to notice stimuli that provide a way to satisfy their needs.
- Learning—experience with similar stimuli teaches people what it is important for them to pay attention to.

10. Describe a situation in which you learned how to do something—use a computer or ride a snowboard. In your description, identify the four stages of the learning cycle.

First, a person encounters a concrete experience. This is followed by thinking and reflective observation, which leads to abstract conceptualization and, in turn, to
active experimentation. The results of the experimentation generate new experiences, and the cycle repeats.

11. Do you think that a Type A person or a Type B person would be better suited to managing a health care facility? Why?

Type B behavior because they experience less conflict with other people and have a more balanced, relaxed lifestyle.

**Teaching Note for Experiential Exercise**

**High Five: How Many of the “Big Five” Personality Traits Are Yours?**

Student personalities will vary based on the responses they give to each of the ten questions in this experiential exercise. Remember each of the five personality traits is likely to have greater success in performing one’s job.

**Teaching Note for Ethical Dilemma**

**Should I Fudge the Numbers?**

While student responses may vary, based on the information given, it appears Sara would select response number two. Stick to your ethical principles and refuse to fudge the numbers. Tell Kristin you will work overtime to help develop an alternate proposal that stays within the budget by providing more training to employees who work directly with customers and fewer training hours for those who don’t have direct customer contact. This decision is based on Sara’s strong conviction to the ethical dilemma she is confronted with. It appears Sara would have difficulty signing this proposal. This was developed before Sara had a chance to participate in its formulation and placed Sara in a very uncomfortable position.

**Surf the Net**

1. **Authoritarianism.** Two companies not mentioned in the chapter are Regent International and Taqueria Canonita Restaurant. The connection between Curtis Carlson and his company is that it was privately owned by this entrepreneur.

2. **Perceptual Organization.** "Day and Night" and "Circle Limit IV" are two well-known examples of M. C. Escher's artistic prints that incorporate tessellating patterns, which cause a figure/ground illusion. The boundaries between the different figures are ambiguous. In the case of "Day and Night," the white geese during the day switch with the black geese who fly at night. In "Circle Limit IV" the angels and devils perceptually flip back and forth. It is difficult, but not impossible, to see both interpretations simultaneously. These are just two perceptual illustrations among many that can be found.
3. **Learning Styles.** Student responses will vary pertaining to analysis of learning styles. Self examination should be adhered to and submitted to instructor. An example of an instrument: Your Temporal and Spatial Learning Situation Preferences.

Click in the boxes of the statements that best suit you.

I, (your name),
[sleep and rising habits]
do not like to get up early in the morning.
like to get up early.
like to hang out in bed in the morning.
jump out of bed and get going early.
like to go to bed early.
like to go to sleep late at night or early the next morning: I'm a "night owl".
If I get up before 6am. I'm fine and raring to go.
If I get up around 8am. I'm fine and raring to go.
If I get up before 10am. I'm tired and cranky.
If I get up before noon. I'm tired and cranky.
I stay up only ‘til around 10pm on school nights.
I stay up only ‘til around 11pm on school nights.
I stay up ‘til around midnight on school nights.
I stay up ‘til 1 or 2 am on school nights.
[concentration and work ability times]
I never pull an all-nighter.
I rarely pull an all-nighter.
I sometimes pull an all-nighter.
I frequently pull an all-nighter.
And if I stay up late or pull an all-nighter, I'm ok the next day and can function reasonably well.
And if I stay up late or pull an all-nighter, sometimes I'm ok the next day and can function reasonably well and sometimes I can't.
And if I stay up late or pull an all-nighter, I can't do anything the next day.
I concentrate well in the early morning.
I concentrate well in the late morning.
I concentrate well in the early afternoon.
I concentrate well in the middle of the afternoon.
I concentrate well in the evening.
I concentrate well late at night.
I prefer to do non-thinking types of work in the morning.
I prefer to do non-thinking types of work in the early afternoon.
I prefer to do non-thinking types of work in the late afternoon.
I prefer to do non-thinking types of work in the evening.
I prefer to do non-thinking types of work in the late at night.
[eating, drinking and munchies]
I have to eat breakfast to study and work well.
I have to eat lunch to study and work well.
I have to eat dinner early in the evening to study and work well.
I have to eat dinner late at night to study and work well.
I have to eat snacks to study and work well.
I like to eat in class or chew gum.
I have something to drink in class.
I have to have something to drink when I study and learn.
I feel lazy and slow after I eat, especially after lunch.

[temperature, comfort, and noise]
I prefer to study and learn where it's warm.
I prefer to study and learn where it's cool.
I prefer formal settings to study and learn well: a study hall, library, lab, or special desk/study area.
I prefer informal settings to study and learn: TV rooms, my bed, a sofa, a cafe or student recreation area.
I need to sit up straight in a chair to study and learn well.
I need to lounge a bit, put my feet up, or recline to pay attention.
I need to move around when I'm learning otherwise I get "antsy".
I can't have any noise around me when I'm trying to concentrate.
I need some noise around me when I'm trying to concentrate, I can't take pure silence.
I need noise around me when I'm trying to concentrate: I need people, music, or just background noise.

Case for Critical Analysis Solution

Volkswagen’s Ferdinand Piech

1. What personality traits do you think Ferdinand Piech exhibits? Do you think these contribute to a good person-job fit? Why or why not?

Ferdinand Piech demonstrates the personality traits of an authoritarian and a Machiavellian personality in most situations. An authoritarian personality is one who believes that power and status differences should exist within the organization. A Machiavellian personality is characterized by a person who tends to direct much of his/her behavior toward the acquisition of power and the manipulation of others for personal gain. Piech is definitely a combination of those two personalities. A good person-job fit will depend on the personality traits of other managers and employees. Some people can work very well with an authoritarian personality. Piech has been very successful in turning around Volkswagen. He has caused it to become very profitable, and the stockholders are satisfied with his performance. His personality is extreme; however, he is result-oriented. Therefore, his personality fits the job.

2 Hardly anyone would argue that Piech is an authoritarian executive. Do you sense that he is Machiavellian as well? Do you think these characteristics have a positive or negative impact on the way Volkswagen is run? Explain your answer.
Piech is definitely a Machiavellian. He is a manipulator and abuses people to get their very best performance. He is perfidious, operates from a power base, and demands excellence in subordinates performing their job. Like it or not, he has had a positive effect. He is getting results by making the decision to reintroduce the Volkswagen Beetle. This product features all the bells and whistles and has been positioned correctly in the U.S. market.

3. Imagine that you are a manager at Volkswagen, and you are experiencing some cognitive dissonance about being asked to work long hours on one of Piech’s pet projects—a new car model whose success you have doubts about. How might you resolve your dissonance?

As a manager one may experience difficulty with the autocratic leadership style of Piech. He directs and controls the behavior of others, therefore, one may experience cognitive dissonance. The cognitive dissonance occurs because there is very little or no participation by managers in the decision making process. One must be trained and conditioned to this type of culture to permit job growth and survival at Volkswagen. The way to resolve cognitive dissonance is to become flexible and adaptable to this situation. One is expected to commit a maximum of energy and work long hours on Piech’s pet project. One should develop the objective of survival and growth and be able to take direction from management.