

Introduction to Organizational Behavior

Introduction to Organizational Behavior (OB)

Key concepts, theories, and practical implications for individuals, teams, and organizations.

1. What Is Organizational Behavior?

Aspect	Description
Definition	The systematic study of how people interact within groups, organizations, and work environments.
Goal	Improve organizational effectiveness and employee well-being by understanding attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes.
Scope	Individual behavior ? Team dynamics ? Organizational structure & culture ? External environment.
Disciplines Integrated	Psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, and management.

2. Levels of Analysis

Level	Focus	Typical Questions
Individual	Personality, perception, motivation, learning, decision-making.	<i>Why does an employee choose to stay or leave?</i>
Group/Team	Norms, roles, cohesion, conflict, communication, leadership.	<i>How does team composition affect performance?</i>
Organizational	Structure, culture, change, politics, systems.	<i>What cultural traits drive innovation?</i>
Environmental	Industry trends, technology, regulations, societal expectations.	<i>How do market forces shape HR policies?</i>

3. Core Individual Concepts

Concept	Core Idea	Practical Implications
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Personality	Stable traits (e.g., Big Five: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism).	Use personality assessments for selection, team building, and leadership development.
Perception & Attribution	How people interpret stimuli and assign causes to behavior.	Train managers to recognize biases (e.g., halo effect) to improve performance appraisals.
Motivation	Forces that drive goal-directed behavior. Key theories: • Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs • Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory • Expectancy Theory • Self-Determination Theory	Design reward systems that address hygiene factors, provide autonomy, mastery, and purpose.
Learning & Reinforcement	Behavior changes through experience (classical & operant conditioning).	Implement feedback loops, coaching, and positive reinforcement programs.
Decision-Making	Rational models vs. bounded rationality, heuristics, and biases.	Encourage structured decision processes (e.g., checklists) and diverse viewpoints.

4. Group & Team Dynamics

Element	Description	Management Tips
Team Formation	Stages: Forming ? Storming ? Norming ? Performing ? Adjourning (Tuckman).	Facilitate clear goals and norms early; monitor conflict constructively.
Roles & Norms	Expected behaviors (formal & informal) that guide interaction.	Clarify role expectations; reinforce positive norms through modeling.
Cohesion	Degree of attraction among members; linked to performance (but can lead to groupthink).	Balance cohesion with critical thinking; rotate leadership to avoid conformity traps.
Communication	Flow of information (downward, upward, lateral).	Use multiple channels, establish feedback mechanisms, and train active listening.

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Element	Description	Management Tips
Conflict	Functional (task?related) vs. dysfunctional (personal).	Address issues early, use mediation techniques, and focus on interests, not positions.
Leadership	Influence process; styles include: • Transactional (contingent reward) • **	