Human Behavior in Organizations

Williams · Huber

Third Edition

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PREFACE

Our goal in writing *Human Behavior in Organizations*, third edition, is to help the reader become successful in predicting, understanding, and influencing behavior in organizations.

Of course, every reader has already acquired a good deal of knowledge about human behavior through years of personal experience. So why write this book? One reason is that a significant portion of what most people think they know about human behavior is erroneous. Another reason is that, for a person who has had thousands of personal experiences, careful reading of this book will provide a far more intensive learning opportunity (in terms of information acquired per unit of time) than would an equivalent number of additional hours of personal experience.

A third reason for studying organizational behavior is that a primary purpose of education is less to teach facts than it is to teach how to acquire facts. Thus in this book we examine not only facts but concepts and frameworks that will enable the reader to convert future experiences into useful knowledge.

Organizational behavior, the subject of this book, has become established as a discipline in its own right. This is not to say that all contributors to the field view its scope and content in exactly the same way. Essentially, however, organizational behavior is that aspect of management that focuses on predicting, understanding, and influencing human behavior in organizations.

Building on the bedrock belief that there is nothing so practical as a good theory, organizational behavior is deeply grounded in research, especially in the research of the behavioral sciences of industrial/organizational psychology and industrial sociology. Organizational behavior, a uniquely interdisciplinary field, is committed to the formulation of sound, empirically tested theory and to the application of that theory in organizations. It is concerned with human personality and behavior—but always within the context of organizational life. A major goal of organizational behavior is, therefore, a thorough melding of individual and group psychology with organization theory. Studiously avoiding quick and easy solutions to problems, it offers a variety of theories, models, and strategies through which thinking managers can find their own solutions in specific situations.

Anyone with an interest in relating more effectively to others in a work environment should find this book interesting and valuable. It is, however, written primarily for undergraduate students in colleges and universities. It may also be used by managers and advanced supervisors

in development courses or programs of self-study. Although the organizational behavior course in most colleges and universities follows the introductory course and elaborates on the human aspects of management, an introductory course is not a prerequisite for understanding this book.

This third edition of *Human Behavior in Organizations* differs from the second primarily in four ways. First, the entire book has been updated to reflect recent research and changes in the organizational, social, and economic environments within which organizations and their members function. Second, in keeping with changing organizational practices, a chapter on participation in organizations has been added. This chapter contains many practical guidelines for gaining and managing participation on both day-to-day and more formal bases. Third, again in keeping with changing organizational practices, a good deal of readily applied material has been added to the chapters on motivation and decision making. Finally, the chapters on leadership have been slightly altered to achieve a better balance; the content of the second edition's chapter on effective discipline has been merged into this edition's chapter on the first line supervisor; and material concerning the important role of managers in creating organizational culture has been added to the chapter on managerial effectiveness.

To make *Human Behavior in Organizations*, third edition, interesting and to facilitate learning, each chapter begins with a thought stimulator—a quotation or point of view to arouse interest, perhaps at times even to antagonize for the purpose of generating thoughtful consideration of the content to follow. Objectives are stated in the chapter introductions, and each chapter ends with a list of *Important Terms and Concepts* to help students focus on the most relevant content. The *Suggested Readings*, articles and books related to the chapter, will be of special interest to those who wish to investigate the subject matter in greater depth. The use of the end-of-chapter *Study and Discussion Questions* and *Critical Incidents* (short cases) is continued in this revision.

We particularly appreciate the contributions to this third edition made by the following reviewers: Gerald Biberman, University of Scranton; Margaret Fenn, University of Washington; William Hahn, Savannah State College; John Hartley, Rochester Institute of Technology.

The result of all of this is, we hope, a useful and readable book. Part One presents the key foundations of the book with two chapters. Chapter 1 contains an introduction that motivates students by making clear why it is important to study organizational behavior. This chapter puts the field into perspective by describing the historical predecessors of organizational behavior, such as scientific management, and then goes on to describe the modern-day field. Chapter 2 provides unusual and highly

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relevant material on the goals of organizations and managers, including material on managerial ethics and corporate social responsibility. The intention is not to indoctrinate the students with any belief but rather to lend perspective to some of the forces that shape human behavior in organizations.

Part Two examines the relationships between individuals and organizations. Chapter 3 discusses the impact of both individual differences and job characteristics on behavior in organizations and explains Theories X, Y, and Z. Chapter 4 describes how needs affect organizational behavior and the strengths and weaknesses of the important need theories of Maslow and Herzberg. Practical guidance for motivating people is provided in Chapter 5, and the advice is based on sound research and theory. Topics include analyzing motivational problems, money as a motivator, and expectancy theory.

Part Three of the book moves on to the nature of groups and their important roles in organizations. Chapter 6 gives a thorough introduction to the dynamics of informal groups, stressing key variables such as cohesiveness, leadership, and internal control mechanisms. Practical analyses focus on how to deal with hostile groups and the types of informal work groups that develop in unionized organizations. The problems of disadvantaged groups are dealt with in Chapter 7. Statistical data on the changing status of racial minorities, women, and maladjusted employees, combined with an objective discussion of discrimination and reverse discrimination, provide the student with a useful perspective for understanding the problems of disadvantaged work force members. Chapter 8 provides in-depth understanding of the nature and role of unions in modern organizations and society. Of particular interest is the section describing the effects of unions on the behavior of both managers and employees. Conflict and stress are natural consequences of the competing forces and changing conditions found in modern organizations. Chapter 9 explains the organizational and individual conditions leading to conflict and stress and then describes proven approaches for minimizing their undesirable outcomes.

Organizational structures and processes are addressed in Part Four. Chapter 10 provides the student with a practical understanding of classical, neoclassical, and modern organization theory. A unique and important feature is the description, from contrasting classical and neoclassical viewpoints, of key organizational design concepts such as span of management, line and staff, and authority and responsibility. Chapter 11 is an explanation of how the organization's structure and processes, such as its communication, control, and reward systems, affect managerial behavior and performance. This unusual subject matter will be viewed by students as realistic and relevant to the work environment

many of them expect to experience. An important and uncommon feature of Chapter 12 is its stress on the mistakes commonly made by decision makers. In this way the chapter retains the book's behavioral emphasis. The chapter goes on to describe proven approaches for overcoming mistakes and is thus prescriptive at the same time that it is descriptive. Chapter 13 describes the nature and causes of communication problems and then gives research-based but practical guidance on how to improve communication in organizations. The chapter is more practical and concrete than the communication chapter found in most textbooks. Besides addressing the expected topics of change, resistance to change, and organizational development, Chapter 14 examines the important topic of management development in depth.

Part Five deals with the important subject of leadership in organizations. Chapter 15 takes a modern approach to the subject of authority and power, explaining in addition the alternative forms of influence that pervade modern organizations. Chapter 16 presents in an understandable way the important leadership concepts and theories. Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid®, Fiedler's contingency approach, and House's path-goal approach are each described. The chapter also introduces related material that is treated in greater depth in later chapters, such as participation and management by objectives. Chapter 17 takes the unusual step of looking at managers as individuals rather than as a class of position holders. Personal characteristics such as emotional maturity, problem-solving skills, and varying motivations provide concreteness and realism. A unique feature of the chapter is the discussion of the leader's role in creating organizational culture. No book on human behavior in organizations could be considered complete without a strong chapter on that key figure, the first line supervisor. Besides thoroughly addressing the topics of the supervisor's role conflicts, responsibility, and authority imbalance, Chapter 18 sensibly treats the subjects of supervisory role design and effective disciplinary action. Participation has become a key practice and behavior in organizational life. Chapter 19 provides research-based guidelines for gaining the benefits of participation on both an everyday basis and in more structured group meetings and gives a more practical and thorough treatment of this subject than any other text. Finally, Chapter 20 provides a thorough and objective treatment of goal-setting and management by objectives. The material is research-based but is described in a clear and useful way with many practical suggestions for using these important techniques.

The writing of a book on a subject as broad as human behavior in organizations necessarily requires continual decisions about what to include. We believe this book contains the best of what is known about the interrelated cluster of subjects that make up the discipline of orga-

nizational behavior. Extraneous detail and lengthy illustrations that would likely detract from relevant facts and concepts have deliberately been omitted. It is our hope that, as in the case of the successful first and second editions, *Human Behavior in Organizations*, third edition, will meet the needs of serious students of organizational behavior both in the classroom and in the real world of management and organizations.

J. Clifton Williams

George P. Huber

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PART 1

FOUNDATIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

1 Organizational Behavior in Perspective
2 The Goals and Values of Organizations and Managers

The two chapters of Part 1 lay the foundation for the remaining chapters. They describe the historical and methodological context from which organizational behavior (OB) emerged as a more or less distinguishable field of study within the discipline of management.

Part of the difficulty in tracing the development of OB, or even in stating confidently that it is a subdiscipline of management, arises from the fact that it is in the fullest sense an interdisciplinary field with historical roots in psychology, sociology, and anthropology as well as management. OB has drawn liberally from both the content and methods of these behavioral sciences, and they continue to contribute to OB theory and application.

OB is philosophical as well as scientific; it has a long-standing commitment to certain humanistic values. Those values are difficult to define because the personal values and perceptions of professionals in the field differ, but they exist nonetheless. OB is concerned with profits, with efficiency, with productivity; but from its beginnings it has also been concerned with the worth of the employee as a person rather than merely as one through whom organizational goals are achieved. It is because of this orientation that an early chapter on the goals and values of organizations and managers is included. All that is said in this book about how to understand and influence people may justifiably appear to be manipulative and exploitive unless placed within a value context—a frame of reference in which concerns for people and productivity are maturely integrated.

1

Organizational Behavior in Perspective

It is important to recognize that every student already has a good deal of knowledge about human behavior, acquired through a fifth of a century or more of personal experience. So why formally study organizational behavior? One reason is that a significant portion of what we think we have learned from experience is much less correct than we believe it is. This is easily demonstrated in a number of ways, one of which is to ask three people the best way to handle a particular behavioral problem and then to observe their disagreement.

There is much evidence to demonstrate that people frequently mislearn from experience. Their conclusions about human behavior are based on limited experience, and this "knowledge" is usually ill-suited to any management situation. In contrast, the knowledge obtained by studying what scientists have concluded about behavior in organizations is based on thousands of carefully studied "experiences."

Another reason to study organizational behavior is that for a person who has already been exposed to thousands of personal learning experiences, formal study provides a far more intensive learning opportunity. In terms of the amount of knowledge acquired during a given period of time, much more can be learned through study than through an equivalent number of additional hours of personal experience.

A third reason for formally studying organizational behavior is that the primary purpose of post-secondary education is less to teach facts than it is to teach concepts. In this book, therefore, we will examine not only "facts" but also concepts that will make us far more effective in converting future experiences into useful knowledge.

Throughout recorded history leaders have recognized the need to understand human behavior and to develop leadership and other interpersonal skills. Thus, the needs of today's managers for effective methods of coping with the human aspects of their work are essentially the

same as those of past leaders. The uniqueness of the modern approach lies in the extent of our accumulated knowledge and, perhaps more importantly, in our improved methods for collecting and analyzing data and making practical applications.

The prescientific approach to studying and teaching human relations in organizations was wasteful and inefficient because of its dependence on trial-and-error learning and its acceptance of theories that had not been systematically tested. Our modern approach—the organizational behavior (OB) approach—is not totally scientific. Nevertheless, because of its deep commitment to scientific methods, its progress has been impressive and its future is promising. The objectives of Chapter 1, an introduction to the field of organizational behavior, are

TO UNDERSTAND:

1. The definition of organizational behavior
2. The relevance of organizational behavior
3. The historical background of organizational behavior
4. The influences of the behavioral sciences on organizational behavior

THE FIELD OF ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

> **Organizational behavior** (OB) is a field of management that is primarily concerned with understanding, predicting, and influencing human behavior in organizations. Specifically, OB attempts to understand individuals in formal organizations as a basis for meeting individual needs and achieving organizational objectives.

This definition of OB contains concepts that may need clarification. In fact, the term *organizational behavior* is itself somewhat ambiguous. Do organizations behave or is it really individual behavior with which OB is concerned? These are relevant questions. Their answers provide an appropriate introduction to the field of organizational behavior.

The table of contents of this book suggests that OB is indeed concerned with the behavior of individuals—especially with how individuals are motivated and led. Individuals do not, however, behave identically in various situations, and appropriate behavior in one situation may be inappropriate in another. People are accustomed to being members of organizations—as family members, students, members of social or religious groups, and so on—but each type of organization is unique

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