Fourth Edition

Interpersonal Skills in
Organizations

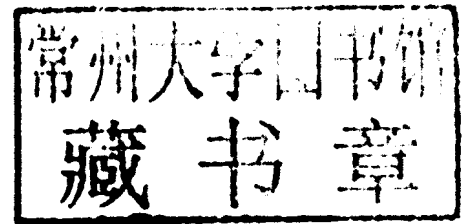Suzanne C. de Janasz · Karen O. Dowd · Beth Z. Schneider

Interpersonal Skills in Organizations

Fourth Edition

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Dedication

From Suzanne:

> To my father, Stan Cooper, who was a model of strength, courage, and perseverance; you are forever in my heart. To my children, Gabby and Alex, who continue to make me proud in so many ways. To my mother, my friends, and my colleagues, who have been a source of inspiration, renewal, and support.

From Karen:

> To Laurel, my true sister and friend, whose courage and good heart have inspired me for almost thirty years.

From Beth:

> To my husband Jeff, sons Andrew and Nicholas for their constant love and support, and to my colleagues for all their support in helping me reach my goals.

About the Authors

Suzanne C. de Janasz, Ph.D., is Professor of Leadership and Organization Development at IMD—Institute for Management Development in Lausanne, Switzerland. As a Fulbright Fellow, she taught at Warsaw University in Warsaw, Poland, and has had visiting stints there and at ALBA Graduate Business School in Vouliagmeni, Greece. An award-winning instructor, Suzanne specializes in the areas of leadership, negotiations, organizational behavior, creativity/innovation, entrepreneurship, and interpersonal/managerial skills.

Suzanne's research on mentoring, careers, authenticity, work–family conflict, and leadership appears in such journals as *Academy of Management Executive, Journal of Organizational Behavior, Journal of Vocational Behavior, Career Development International,* and *Journal of Management Education* and has been featured in domestic and international newspapers and radio programs. Her upcoming text on negotiation and alternative dispute resolution (co-authored with Beverly DeMarr) is due out in 2011. In addition to her Fulbright Fellowship, Suzanne received the New Educator Award from the Organizational Behavior Teaching Society (OBTS) and the Jepson Fellowship from her previous university. Suzanne is currently the Careers Division Chair in the Academy of Management, and she has held leadership roles in the Southern Management Association and the OBTS. She also serves on the boards of several nonprofit organizations.

After earning an undergraduate music degree from the University of Miami, Suzanne earned her MBA and Ph.D. degrees from the Marshall School of Business at the University of Southern California (USC). Between the two degrees, she worked for five years as an organizational consultant in the aerospace industry. Prior to joining the faculty of IMD, Suzanne taught at James Madison University and the University of Mary Washington's College of Graduate and Professional Studies, both in Virginia.

Karen O. Dowd, Ph.D., is Executive Director of Career Services and co-lead of Corporate Engagement for the Daniels College of Business, University of Denver. Dowd is an experienced teacher, writer, administrator, speaker, and consultant. Prior to Daniels, she was at the University of Notre Dame, The Empower Group in New York City, and the University of Virginia. Dowd also taught at James Madison University, where she teamed with her co-authors and the Management Department to develop a required course in Interpersonal Skills that is offered to all undergraduate students. Karen is the co-author, with Sherrie Gong Taguchi, of *The Ultimate Guide to Getting the Career You Want* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003). Karen earned her doctorate from the University of Virginia, her master's degree from Indiana University South Bend, and her bachelor's degree from Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana. She is a member of the National Association of Colleges and Employers and is on the board of the MBA Career Services Council. Karen has conducted numerous management training programs on many of the topics addressed in this book and on career management for managers. Her research interests include faculty careers, candidate selection, and career branding.

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Prior to coming to Winston-Salem State University, Beth was an instructor at George Mason University, a lecturer at the College of Business at James Madison University, an instructor in the Department of Business and Accountancy at the University of North Carolina at Asheville, and an instructor at Blue Ridge Community College in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Beth also was president and manager of restaurant operations in Winter Park, Florida, and owner and manager of two catalogue companies in North Carolina.

Preface

Birth of an Idea

While we were all teaching at James Madison University, a group of executives, who served as the College of Business dean's board of advisors at the university, identified a critical ingredient missing in most business school graduates. The executives found that while students were technically competent—they could read a balance sheet, do a market analysis, and develop cash flow projections—many graduates lacked interpersonal skills or the ability to work effectively with others. The executives created a wish list of "soft skills," faculty were hired, and the Interpersonal Skills course was born. Since that time, thousands of students have taken part in this required undergraduate course.

In the beginning, the cadre of faculty dedicated to this course selected two books and additional readings to support the course objectives. In response to student and recruiter feedback, we improved continuously both the content and delivery of the course. One such improvement stemmed from students' concerns that the books were inadequate for a variety of reasons. We agreed and continued to search for a book that met our needs. Frustrated with our inability to find the interpersonal skills text for our particular audience, we decided to write it.

"I Want to Buy This Book for My Boss"

As our colleagues and students have heard about this book, a common response is not simply "Where can I buy this book," but "My boss could use this—can you send him (or her) a copy?" The truth is this book is very relevant to a variety of readers. While it was written primarily with an undergraduate student audience in mind, each of the authors is experienced working with graduate students, adult learners, and working managers. In addition to our current teaching and research responsibilities, one or more of us has been a management consultant, a corporate trainer, an internal organization development consultant, a director of a career services center at a top-tier graduate business school, or a small business owner. Because of the depth of experience we offer, we are convinced that the material, with slight modification, is very appropriate for graduate students, adult learners, and managers as well as for undergraduate students. In short, this book is appropriate for anyone who wants to improve his or her ability to interact with others in the workplace.

A Unique Focus on Developing Managerial and Interpersonal Skills

In this textbook we have included certain design elements in order to:

- Offer a variety of activities and experiential elements to meet many types of instructional needs.

- Provide coverage of areas such as diversity, project management, facilitation, and personal goal setting, which are sometimes missing or limited in other textbooks.

- Maintain an academic standard appropriate for an undergraduate audience; yet with minor adjustments the material can be utilized at a graduate or professional training level.

- Use direct and action-oriented language in order to blend academic research with practical application for each skill set.

Emphasis on Both Personal and Professional

Some texts focus solely on managerial skills but provide little if any assistance in helping the reader understand how understanding him- or herself (intrapersonal effectiveness) relates to interpersonal and managerial effectiveness. The premise and sequencing of our book is that for students to be successful as managers in business, they must first have a solid understanding of self and how the self interacts with others to facilitate organizational success. The chapters and units are designed to be interchangeable so they can be easily rearranged and presented to fit many types of courses. Accordingly, we incorporate information on personal qualities needed for success in business and provide personal examples throughout the book focusing on family and other relationships alongside professional examples focusing on the workplace.

Balance between Theory and Practice

Our book offers a balance between theory and application. The skill sets addressed in this book are timeless. We don't focus on fads but on tried-and-true principles that are proven to help individuals succeed in organizations. In our experience, students and managers benefit by having some conceptual background on the topic of interpersonal skills but relate best to practical information that can be applied immediately to school, job, or team settings. Providing tips and techniques as well as conceptual grounding based on academic research motivates the reader to learn a particular skill. Some popular interpersonal skills texts provide substantial theoretical and conceptual grounding of each skill area covered and are written primarily for a graduate audience rather than for undergraduates or working managers. In each chapter, we strike a balance by providing both sufficient conceptual material and applied material appropriate for use in real-life personal, academic, and professional situations, using conversational, user-friendly language.

Coverage of New Topics or More Thorough Coverage of Existing Topics

We have included a number of topics that are covered minimally, if at all, by other textbooks. Reviewers who have read our manuscript report that our treatment of topics such as self-disclosure and trust, stress and time management, conveying verbal messages, listening, diversity, ethical decision making, and negotiation are more thorough than what exists now. Other topics such as project management, facilitation, and problem solving are new and not addressed substantively in other books. Although some of these topics may deal with more advanced interpersonal skills, these chapters can be important for individuals who gain greater experience in their professional lives as well as impactful for graduate level students.

Focus on Experiential Learning

In addition to the latest thinking about each of the topics covered, we provide different types of exercises at the end of each chapter that have been tested in the workplace or classroom and evaluated positively by both undergraduate and graduate students as well as working managers. The variety of exercises accomplishes several objectives. First, the instructor can accommodate multiple learning styles by fashioning a subset of exercises appropriate for a particular audience. "One size does not fit all." Second, the combination of experiential and reflective exercises helps give students concrete experience, feedback, and an opportunity to reflect on ways to improve their current skill level. These activities help you create an experiential learning environment that encourages learning through doing. Our experiential focus will allow you to further engage younger learners who tend to prefer and respond more positively to active learning. Finally, in an age when virtual and distance education are increasingly popular, the numerous observational and reflective exercises can facilitate learning even in settings that lack face-to-face interaction.

Why Focus on Interpersonal Skills?

The need to focus on improving interpersonal skills is recognized by more than business school faculty, deans, and executive advisory groups. In a recent survey by the TRACOM Group, more than 80 percent of people identified communication or interpersonal skills

training as important for leadership development, and 55 percent said bosses needed to improve these skills.[1] Studies have shown that interpersonal or "soft skills" are extremely important for entry-level success, and the lack of interpersonal skills may be the major reason highly qualified professionals are not promoted.[2] The rise of teamwork in contemporary organizations has increased the need for every employee to work effectively with and through others. Individuals on work teams need to be able to communicate and collaborate effectively with others whose personalities, approaches, and work styles may differ greatly. In addition, as power to make decisions and implement solutions is transferred down the condensed hierarchy to nonsupervisory employees, the ability to marshal needed resources in the absence of power or authority makes interpersonal and managerial skills more critical than ever. Even those in leadership positions need to be skilled on the softer side of management along with having the right knowledge and experience. Recent studies report communication skills, interpersonal skills, and initiative are what corporations seek when hiring MBAs.[3]

Organizations are looking for employees with outstanding interpersonal skills to help them remain flexible and viable in today's competitive workforce. Organizations are profoundly affected by interpersonal interactions within and between employees, customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders. The more effective the relationships and interpersonal communications are, the more productive for the organization and the individuals.[4]

According to Harvard professor Robert Katz, three types of managerial skills are necessary: conceptual, technical, and interpersonal. As one moves through the managerial layers, the need for technological and conceptual skills changes, whereas the need for interpersonal skills remains proportionate for all managerial levels: lower, middle, and top.[5] Improving interpersonal skills goes beyond the classroom and the boardroom; the lessons learned can have broad applications in helping individuals to better deal with problems and conflicts with family and friends.[6] Interpersonal skills help individuals initiate, build, and maintain relationships—in both personal and professional life.

"For things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them."

Aristotle

A Pedagogical Approach That Works

In today's service-oriented, knowledge- and information-focused, global marketplace, interpersonal skills are essential. However, these skills seldom occur naturally; for most of us they must and can be learned.[7] If these skills are neither learned nor practiced, the good news is that it is never too late to start. Recognizing the need for these skills and acquiring and enhancing them can help workers be continuous learners and remain marketable.[8]

We have designed the text and the supplementary materials to aid students and practicing managers in assessing their level of effectiveness and enhancing their capability in each of 19 skill areas. Each chapter begins with a set of questions that relate to the learning objectives of the chapter. Next, we include a case study that helps the reader understand how the skill (or lack thereof) applies in real-world situations. Then, we lay out the background about the skill—what it is and why it's important. We offer strategies and techniques for learning and using the skill. Key terms are listed at the end of each chapter and highlighted in the margins so students can check their understanding of the terms or phrases. The chapters are written in an easy-to-read style with numerous practical examples in both professional and personal settings. After the chapter summary and list of key terms and concepts, the reader can test his or her understanding of the written material and ability to apply the skills through the many exercises in each chapter. Some exercises are reflective, while others are experiential. Some exercises are designed to be performed in a class environment, while others can be performed outside the classroom. Some exercises allow for feedback from others while some activities encourage self-feedback. Many of the assignments can be used for creating writing assignments, either by reflection on the results of the activity or as a starting point for additional research.

How the Book Is Organized

The book is organized in a practical, experiential learning format that facilitates learning.[9] Each of the 19 chapters can be used as a stand-alone, modular chapter independent of the rest of the book or used in conjunction with other chapters. The chapters are grouped into four units: understanding self (intrapersonal skills), working effectively with others (interpersonal skills), working in teams, and leading individuals and groups.

In the first unit, intrapersonal skills, we begin the process of looking within ourselves to analyze our strengths and weaknesses and gain a better understanding of our personal perceptions, views, beliefs, and work style. Unit I topics include self-awareness, self-disclosure and trust, personal values, goal setting, and ethics, as well as self-management. In the second unit we move to interpersonal skills, or interacting with others, through multiple forms of communication, listening, persuading, and working with diverse others. The third unit focuses on more advanced interpersonal skills for working with teams and groups such as building teams, running meetings, facilitation, and decision making and creative problem solving. In the final unit, we focus on leading groups or individuals through the use of power and politicking, networking, mentoring, coaching, empowerment, and managing projects.

In each chapter, we discuss how a skill or concept can be incorporated into one's self-development, how a skill or concept is used in interactions with others, especially in team settings, and how the skill or concept is applied in the context of managerial roles in organizations.

Note to Instructors

Teaching interpersonal skills using an experiential, learner-centered approach differs greatly from those classes in which a more controlled, lecture-oriented approach may be appropriate. In order to help instructors transition from professor to facilitator, lecturer to experiential exercise leader, we took pains to carefully construct an Instructor's Manual and supporting materials that support this goal.

The Online Learning Center (OLC) available at www.mhhe.com/iso4e will enhance instructors' teaching experiences and students' learning experiences. Instructors will have access to an in-depth Instructor's Manual, which contains sample syllabi and assignments, chapter-by-chapter explanatory notes, teaching plans, ideas for implementing the material in the classroom, ways to motivate the discussion on a topic, detailed instructions for using the activities and exercises, discussion questions, additional resources, and sample test questions. PowerPoint slides, an electronic test bank with EZ Test, and an Asset Gallery of videos and exercises are also available on the OLC. Students will have access to self-grading quizzes and chapter review materials. Premium content is also available for purchase, including Test Your Knowledge exercises, Self-Assessment exercises, and Manager's Hot Seat videos.

What's New in the Fourth Edition?

Thanks to our students, faculty colleagues, and reviewers, we continue to search for new means to present the material necessary for analyzing, learning, and improving interpersonal skills. The emphasis in this edition focuses on making the text more current and enhancing its pedagogic effectiveness for students and instructors.

Organization of Material

While the third edition focused on the organization of the content within the chapters, the fourth edition focuses on updating material and adding descriptions and examples for added clarity. Topical material from the popular press along with results of current research and studies were added to provide depth for skill areas presented in the chapters.

However, the overall map of the book that specifies both the journey and the major stops along the way, including intrapersonal effectiveness (understanding yourself), interpersonal effectiveness (understanding others), understanding and working in teams, and leading individuals and groups, remains intact.

It is always a challenge to determine the exact order for delivering each skill area, so this edition has included more examples to illustrate how these skills are interrelated without reordering the chapters. For instance, effectively coaching others or providing feedback, as discussed in Chapter 17, requires not only well-honed communication skills (Chapter 7), but also listening skills (Chapter 6) and goal-setting skills (Chapter 3) as vital components for success. Dealing with challenging behavior on teams (Chapter 10) is also referenced in Chapters 11 (conflict), 12 (meetings), and 13 (facilitation). In the chapter on project management (Chapter 19), almost every chapter is referenced to reinforce how all of the skill sets are necessary for becoming an overall effective manager. Since Chapter 7 has taken a broader approach in communications beyond just verbal communication, the title was changed to "Communicating Effectively" in this edition to clearly reflect the expansion of material. The content of the chapter was also reworked to emphasize the importance of integrating nonverbal communication and electronic media.

Updating

Updating the material within the chapters was a key focus of this edition. While "landmark" research has been retained, several chapters incorporate new academic and commercial sources to reflect current trends and research on the topics. Some new opening scenarios were added to provide more in-depth examples of how each interpersonal skill impacts business situations. The opening scenarios are referenced more often within the chapters to aid instructors in using these examples as reflective teaching tools and to provide additional clarity to students. Greater emphasis is also placed on showing real-world applications and examples of the skill areas. The ever-increasing impact of technology on our lives and interpersonal connections is further discussed throughout the text by including more material on digital communication and social networking. Changes were made to address current implications of how social media, generational differences, and global expansion impact interpersonal skills. The language and tone of some material were changed to reflect changing societal mores and to resonate with students and managers in countries around the globe.

The delivery and formatting of material were also addressed in this issue. Key terms are now posted in the margins to alert students to new concepts and to aid them in reviewing definitions. Graphics were added or changed as space permitted to provide visual reinforcement of the content. New shaded boxes were added to illustrate the skill sets in action, and cartoons were included for visual interest and concept illustration.

Topic Expansion

Since the expansion of topics was the basis for the third edition, updating and integrating the material was the focus in the current edition. Based on reviewer feedback and our own self-reflection, stronger definitions, expanded explanations, more tips and techniques, and more visuals or examples enhance several topics. For instance, Chapter 3 provides a stronger connection between goal setting and ethical decision making, and new content was added to Chapter 4 on self-management to better integrate emotional intelligence into time and stress management. Chapter 7 was renamed to reflect the broad expansion of content beyond verbal communication. Virtual communication has been addressed in Chapters 9 and 12 to reflect its impact on negotiations and running meetings. Current topics and new techniques for networking and mentoring have been added to Chapter 16 to greatly enhance the material. We've provided a coaching script to aid students in practicing the coaching process in Chapter 17 and illustrated how impression management impacts career management in Chapters 2 and 15. And in Chapter 19 a connection to all of the skill sets and chapters has been added to point out the range of interpersonal skills needed to direct a project from start to finish and to illustrate the integration of the skill areas. Overall, chapters have been updated with the latest research and business examples, with the addition of quite a few new exercises; all but a few chapters

contain at least one new exercise and many more of the existing exercises were revised. Expansion of ideas for changing many of the activities are also provided in the Instructor's Manual.

The application of concepts through experiential activities has been and continues to be a necessary strength of our approach, and we continuously search for and create exercises that facilitate skill acquisition. We believe the additions and changes to the fourth edition make the text more content-rich, informative, practical, and immediately accessible and applicable. We are excited about these strengths and improvements and hope you find them as valuable as we believe they'll be.

Endnotes

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9. Priscilla Berry, "Redesign of the Undergraduate Business Curriculum: The Way Forward, a Paradigm Shift," *American Journal of Business Education* 2, no. 8 (November 2009), p. 55.

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Introduction

Every journey needs a map . . .

Imagine that you are finally able to take a much-needed vacation. If you're like most people, you will take time to plan your trip—the route you'll take, the places you'll stay, the activities you'll experience. You want to get the most out of this opportunity to relax, refresh, and renew.

What if the journey you were about to take were different? Longer? More meaningful? With more impact? Such is the journey to personal development: an exciting journey with a winding path toward an evolving destination and wonderful sightseeing opportunities. Some of the stops might be short visits, while others are like family and good friends who always leave the light on.

As with any planning for a journey, we first need to take time to consider where we've been and where we want to go. Then we envision all the wonderful places we might want to visit, honing in on a place that would bring us the most happiness. Finally, we'd have to create a plan and devise a route for how we would get there. We can take the scenic route, stopping along many points along the way. We could take a train and observe the passing sights or take a plane and go directly to our destination. Before we leave, we will also need to select from numerous lodging options and make reservations.

This journey of interpersonal skills is no different. In Unit 1, we offer an opportunity for you to assess what (skills, values, traits) you have. By taking inventory, we are better equipped to select where we want to be (clarifying target areas for improving personal and professional effectiveness). The different stops along the way—Units 2, 3, and 4—offer an assortment of options that, individually and collectively, promise to provide an interesting and enlightening journey on your way to personal and professional success.
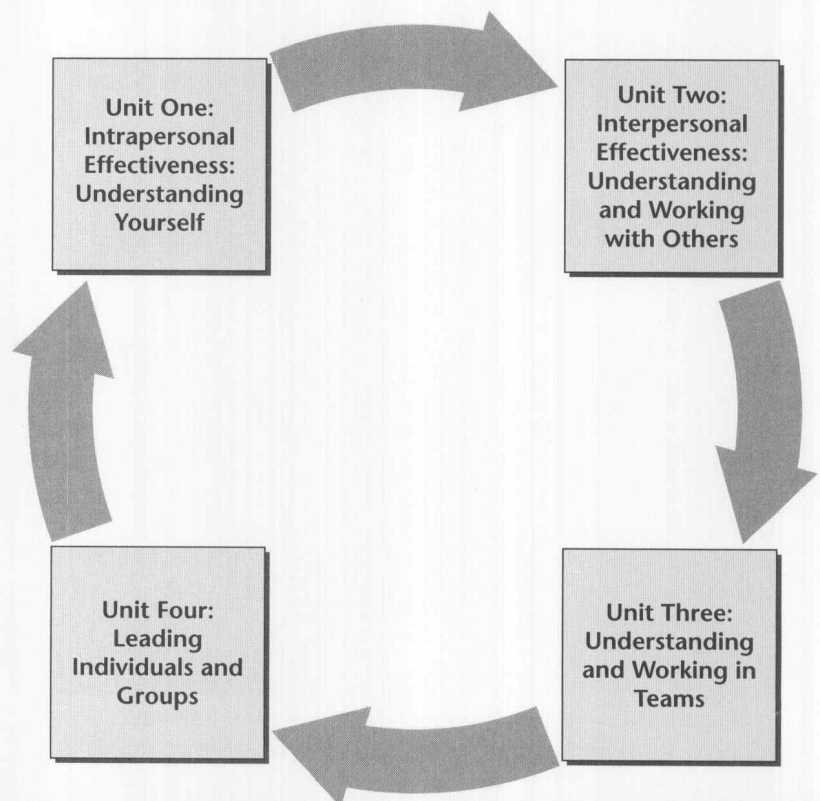
Unit One:
Intrapersonal
Effectiveness:
Understanding
Yourself

Unit Two:
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and Working
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Unit Three:
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