

Industrial/Organizational Psychology SCIENCE & PRACTICE

**Frank E. Saal
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PREFACE

Most college students have already participated in the paid work force, either by holding down summer jobs or by working full time. Almost all of them will join that work force in the not-too-distant future. The field of industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology focuses on women's and men's work behavior, and is therefore relevant to every student, regardless of major field of study, curriculum, or career aspirations. You might expect, then, that students would find any textbook devoted to I/O psychology to be inherently interesting. Unfortunately, this is just not so.

Discussions with many of our students have convinced us that I/O psychology textbooks typically suffer from one or more of three serious ailments: (1) prose that is either highly sophisticated and laden with technical jargon, or far too simplistic for a post-secondary school audience; (2) discussions that overemphasize some aspects of I/O psychology and treat other aspects too lightly, and that fail to integrate the many issues and concerns that make up the field; and (3) presentations that are dry and overly abstract because they fail to take advantage of the obviously applied nature of the discipline. Our decision to write this book evolved from our conviction that these pitfalls are not inevitable, from our enthusiasm for and fascination with a field that addresses problems that concern every working woman and man, and from our desire to describe it in a way that allows students to share our enthusiasm and fascination.

PEDAGOGICAL FEATURES

Terminology and Prose Style

Most of our readers will be undergraduate or beginning graduate students in courses offered by psychology departments or business schools. Some will have taken several other psychology courses, and perhaps a statistics course or two, and some will not. Given this diversity, we have tried not to presume any specialized knowledge or expertise. When we introduce new terms or ideas, we either define them extensively in the text, or provide a definition in the running glossary that appears on the same page as the new term or concept. Our prose is

purposefully informal. This style reflects our belief that readability need not be sacrificed to academically sound scholarship, and that a text can be readable without trivializing the research and theory that it describes.

We also make a concerted effort to avoid using sexist language. We believe this is particularly important because I/O psychology has historically been one of the notorious male bastions within the field of psychology. Happily, “the times they are a’changin.’ ” As more and more women enter graduate programs in I/O psychology, our field is becoming more representative of the population at large. Our balanced use of masculine and feminine proper names and personal pronouns is specifically intended to support this constructive trend.

Balance and Integration

Although in the first half of the book we examine material that is traditionally considered to be “personnel psychology,” and in the latter half we focus on topics associated with “organizational psychology,” we have refrained from dividing the book into two explicitly separate sections. More significantly, we frequently point out how the material under discussion ties in with material that appears elsewhere in the book. Throughout, we emphasize how the various subjects that constitute I/O psychology fit together. Finally, the two halves of the book are approximately equal in length. This balance reflects our belief that each set of topics contains valuable contributions to our current understanding of people’s behavior at work.

Application

We are most excited by our effort to avoid the abstraction common to I/O textbooks. The most widely used strategies for illustrating the applied nature of I/O psychology have been to interrupt each chapter with a box or two containing brief descriptions of workaday applications, or to append a relevant case study to the end of each chapter (or to completely ignore the issue!). Our solution is to create a fictional organization, Peter’s Pan Pizza, Inc., with an industrial/organizational psychologist, Dr. Jennilyn A. MacKeven, on staff.

Each chapter begins with a memo that describes a specific problem or issue confronting our make-believe company. Throughout the chapter we examine our topic in terms of how it might (or might not) contribute to our I/O psychologist’s efforts to respond to that situation. For example, in the chapter on work motivation our discussion is related to a manager’s observation that a group of employees don’t seem to be expending an appropriate amount of effort on their jobs. Motivation theories and relevant empirical research results are presented and analyzed with regard to how they might shed some light on the problem, and the kinds of solutions they might suggest.

At the conclusion of each chapter is a memo from Dr. MacKeven, responding to the memo that opened the chapter. She describes her thoughts about the current problem or issue, and offers tentative plans for solving that

problem or clarifying the issue, using an approach drawn from the contents of the chapter. Dr. MacKeven's response, of course, is only one of many alternatives that an I/O psychologist might choose. At the very least, her decision can serve as a jumping-off point for further discussion of the chapter's content, and for presentation and discussion of other possible responses. After each closing memo is a list of review or "thought" questions that assist in summarizing the chapter's content and inspire further discussion and analysis of Dr. MacKeven's resolution of the problem at hand. The overall structure of the book thus brings the subject matter of I/O psychology to life, and shows its relevance to the everyday concerns of working women and men.

Our strategy also has the advantage of providing an element of continuity throughout the text. As readers progress through the chapters, they learn more and more about our fictional company. In each chapter we can present new material quickly and efficiently, without having to acquaint the reader with new organizational contexts, situations, and personnel. As readers come to know our I/O psychologist better, and perhaps empathize with her as she tackles challenging tasks, we hope that their interest in I/O psychology will become more personal, and that their appreciation of the exciting and relevant nature of the field will grow accordingly.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Frank E. Saal

Although this textbook bears our names, we could neither have undertaken nor completed this project without the efforts of a number of other individuals. Professor Joseph M. Madden at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, inspired me with his enthusiasm and love for the field of I/O psychology, and instilled an appreciation for excellence that continues to serve as a guiding beacon. Professor Frank J. Landy at Pennsylvania State University taught me the meaning of professional commitment, and convinced me that there is precious little that cannot be accomplished if one works hard enough (with the possible exception of playing a decent game of tennis!). Professors James L. Farr and Charles N. Cofer (then at Penn State) provided examples of patience, friendship, and scholarship, and the late Don Trumbo rescued a struggling graduate student on many an occasion. Professor E. Jerry Phares, my department head at Kansas State University, was a constant source of encouragement and much-needed advice from the very beginning of this project. So was my coauthor Pat, whose knowledge of the field, writing skills, dependability, and good humor are largely responsible for the modicum of sanity that is still mine.

Closer to home, I wish to express my love and gratitude to my wife Cathie, whose constructive criticism of every word of every draft was invaluable, whose support and understanding made it possible for me to devote so many hours to this project, and whose love makes my life worth living. And to my children, Kiersten, Kaele, and Kevin, who brighten my days, and who were willing to share their Daddy with the demands of this project, my thanks and love.

Patrick A. Knight

I would like to thank Professor Neal Schmitt at Michigan State University, who introduced me to the field of I/O psychology, and whose guidance and encouragement helped focus my career aspirations. Professor Howard M. Weiss at Purdue University, through dedication to sound research, thorough scholarship, and good humor, demonstrated that I/O psychology is a dynamic, responsive science, and that it is the responsibility of those in the field to define its boundaries. These lessons have served to keep my day-to-day work fresh and exciting, and I thank him especially for that. I also wish to thank the other faculty at Purdue, especially Professors Daniel R. Ilgen (now at Michigan State), Ernest J. McCormick, and Kay Deaux, whose excellent teaching and counsel were invaluable during my graduate school days. Also invaluable was the support and camaraderie of my 23 fellow members of the Purdue Association of Graduate Students in Industrial Psychology (PAGSIP). It is difficult to imagine not having been part of PAGSIP.

I strongly echo my coauthor's appreciation for the support given to us throughout this project by E. Jerry Phares. I also offer my personal thanks to Skip Saal himself. Although we shared writing responsibilities equally, this book was his brainchild and vision, and he attended to all of the pesky administrative details that popped up on a regular basis. I owe you one, Skip.

Finally, I want to express my thanks and love to my wife Diane, whose love and patience have been a sustaining force for years, and who put up with more than she could have ever expected while this book was being written; and to my sons Malachi and Mikeile, who have also learned to be patient, and of whom I am very proud.

Both of us express our appreciation to the many people at Brooks/Cole who transformed our ideas and our manuscript into the book you now hold in your hands. Jonelle C. Calon originally brought us to the attention of Brooks/Cole, and creatively borrowed a name for our fictional company from the first author's favorite childhood story. John Bergez and Jody Larson edited the first drafts of several of our chapters in ways that were both instructive and encouraging. Carline Haga helped us obtain permission to draw from the work of others in preparing this text, and Lisa Torri coordinated much of the art work. Designer Vernon Boes created the crisp and functional look of the text and cover. Penelope Sky ran the anchor lap in our race to the final deadline by carefully coordinating the many stages of production.

The manuscript was reviewed by Milton Davis, Portland State University; William Deeds, Moravian College; Patrick James Devine, Kennesaw College; Dan Farrell, Western Michigan University; Donald L. Grant, University of Georgia at Athens; Kenneth Heilman, University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire; Charles Hulin, University of Illinois at Champaign; Leon Meggison, Mobile College; John E. Nangle, Western Michigan University; James S. Phillips, University of Houston; Loriann Roberson, New York University; and Walter Vernon, Illinois State University, Normal.

In a class by herself is our editor, C. Deborah Laughton, who had the vision to see the merits of this project from the very beginning, the ability to convince us that Brooks/Cole was the company to publish it, the patience to stick with us as early deadlines came and went with no sign of a preliminary manuscript, and the courage to come to Manhattan, Kansas, in the middle of November to ensure that the final deadline for producing a revised manuscript would be treated with more respect. To C. Deborah, and to all who made this project possible, our heartfelt thanks.

FRANK E. SAAL
PATRICK A. KNIGHT

A WORD TO THE READER

Welcome to the field of industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology! We hope you will find our way of describing and presenting our subject both interesting and informative. As you will see, we have adopted a unique approach in our efforts to emphasize the relevance and potential for application that characterize the discipline. The cornerstone of our strategy is a fictional organization, Peter's Pan Pizza, Inc., which we use both as a context and as a source of continuity that should facilitate your understanding of the material. We refer you to the Preface for a more detailed discussion of our approach.

As you read the memo at the end of each chapter, in which the I/O psychologist at Peter's Pan Pizza describes her tentative plan for solving the problem posed in the chapter's opening memo, remember that Dr. MacKeven's decision is only one of several that might be made after mastering the material presented in the chapter. One way to assess your understanding of that material is to constructively criticize our I/O psychologist's plan, and to suggest one or more alternative approaches to solving the problem(s) at hand. We also urge you to attend to the "thought" or review questions at the end of each chapter. If you can answer them thoroughly and accurately, the chances are good that you have gained a satisfactory understanding of the material in that chapter. They will also help you to identify gaps in your knowledge that can be eliminated with further study and review.

Because some of our readers will have a greater number of psychology and statistics courses under their belts than others, we have tried to presume no specialized knowledge or expertise on your part. When we introduce a new word or concept, we either define it clearly right in the text itself, or we provide you with a clear definition in a running glossary on the same page that contains the new idea. Reviewing your knowledge of those new terms and concepts can also be a diagnostic exercise and a guide for further study.

One of our goals has been to emphasize the high degree of integration that can (and should) be inherent in the varied topics that make up I/O psychology. Although those topics are separated into chapters for purposes of clarity and organization, you should resist the temptation to consider them as relatively independent issues and concerns. Instead, we urge you to see how they fit

together. To help you in this endeavor, we have included frequent cross-references throughout the text to material that appears either earlier or later in the book. We encourage you to pursue those references, especially those that allude to topics that you have already studied, so that you might appreciate the overall integration of I/O psychology's subject matter.

An additional piece of advice is in order before you begin. Because more people work in service industries than in traditional manufacturing and production jobs, we decided to locate our imaginary company within the service sector. As you proceed through the text, you should remain sensitive to instances when our choice of this specific industry might influence the ways in which the subject matter could be applied. In most cases, however, we are confident that focusing your attention on a particular type of industry should not detract from your appreciation of how I/O psychology can contribute to greater productivity and stronger feelings of satisfaction among the men and women whose labor fuels our economy.

Enjoy yourself!

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