PLANNING AHEAD — CHAPTER 15 STUDY QUESTIONS

- How do we understand people at work?
- What should we know about work attitudes and behavior?
- What are the alternative approaches to job design?
- How can jobs be enriched?
- How can work be scheduled to improve work-life balance?

STUDY Q.1: WHAT IS THE NATURE OF LEADERSHIP?

Organizational behavior: the study of individuals and groups in organizations.
- Major foundations of OB:
  - Interdisciplinary body of knowledge.
  - Use of scientific methods.
  - Focus on practical applications.
  - Contingency thinking.
- Person-job fit:
  - A very important contingency issue.
  - Having a good match of individual interests and capabilities with job characteristics.

STUDY Q.1: HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND PEOPLE AT WORK?
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- Psychological contract:
  - Person-job fit begins here.
  - A set of expectations held by an individual about what will be given and received in the employment relationship.
  - An ideal work situation is one with a fair psychological contract.
  - Balance of contributions and inducements.

- Quality of work life (QWL):
  - The overall quality of human experiences in the workplace.
  - An important component of quality of life.
  - Poor management practices can diminish QWL and overall quality of life.
  - Managers should create work environments wherein people have positive experiences and perform well.

- Other personality traits that affect work behavior:
  - Locus of control:
    - The extent to which people believe they are in control of their destinies versus believing that what happens to them is beyond their control.
  - Authoritarianism:
    - The degree to which a person defers to authority and accepts status differences.
  - Machiavellianism:
    - The extent to which someone is emotionally detached and manipulative in using power.

- "Big Five" personality traits:
  - Extroversion: The degree to which someone is outgoing, sociable, and assertive.
  - Agreeableness: The degree to which someone is good-natured, cooperative, and trusting.
  - Conscientiousness: The degree to which someone is responsible, dependable, and careful.
  - Emotional stability: The degree to which someone is relaxed, secure, and unworried.
  - Openness: The degree to which someone is curious, receptive to new things, and open to change.

- Other personality traits that affect work behavior (continued):
  - Problem-solving styles:
    - The ways people gather and evaluate information for decision making.
  - Self-monitoring:
    - The degree to which someone is able to adjust and modify behavior in response to the situation and external factors.
STUDY Q.1: HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND PEOPLE AT WORK?

• Big Five personality test:
  • http://www.outofservice.com/bigfive/

STUDY Q.1: HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND PEOPLE AT WORK?

• Figure 15.2 The “Big Five” and five more personality dimensions that influence human behavior at work.

STUDY QUESTION 2: WHAT SHOULD WE KNOW ABOUT WORK ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR?

STUDY Q.2: WHAT SHOULD WE KNOW ABOUT WORK ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR?

• Attitude:
  • A predisposition to act in a certain way toward people and things in one’s environment.
  • Components of attitudes:
    • Cognitive component.
    • Affective or emotional component.
    • Behavioral component.
  • Cognitive dissonance:
    • The discomfort a person feels when attitudes and behavior are inconsistent.

• Job satisfaction:
  • The degree to which an individual feels positively or negatively about various aspects of work.
  • Common aspects of job satisfaction:
    • Pay.
    • Coworkers.
    • Supervision.
    • Work setting.
    • Advancement opportunities.
    • Workload.
STUDY Q.2: WHAT SHOULD WE KNOW ABOUT WORK ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR?

- Strong and positive relationship between satisfaction and absenteeism and turnover.
- Satisfaction-related concepts having quality of work life implications:
  - Job involvement:
    - The extent to which an individual is dedicated to a job.
  - Organizational commitment:
    - Loyalty of an individual to the organization.

STUDY Q.2: WHAT SHOULD WE KNOW ABOUT WORK ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR?

- Job performance:
  - The quantity and quality of task accomplishments by an individual or group at work.
- Individual performance equation:
  - Performance begins with ability.
  - Performance requires support.
  - Performance involves effort.

Performance = Ability x Support x Effort

STUDY Q.3: WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO JOB DESIGN?

- Job:
  - A collection of tasks performed in support of organizational objectives.
- Job design:
  - The process of creating or defining jobs by assigning specific work tasks to individuals and groups.
  - Jobs should be designed so that both performance and satisfaction result.

STUDY Q.3: WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO JOB DESIGN?

- Job design alternatives:
  - A good job provides a good fit between the individual worker and task requirements.
  - Vary along a continuum ranging from high to low task specialization.
    - High specialization ⇒ job simplification
    - Moderate specialization ⇒ rotation and enlargement
    - Low specialization ⇒ job enrichment

Figure 15.3 A continuum of job design alternatives.

- Job Scope
  - Variety of tasks:
    - Narrow
    - Wide
- Job Depth
  - Extent of planning, evaluation, responsibility:
    - Low
    - Moderate
    - High
- Task Specialization
  - How narrow job is defined:
    - High
    - Moderate
    - Low
STUDY Q.3: WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO JOB DESIGN?

- **Job simplification:**
  - Standardizing work procedures and employing people in well-defined and highly specialized tasks.
  - Simplified jobs are narrow in job scope and low in job depth.
  - Automation.
    - Total mechanization of a job.
    - Most extreme form of job simplification.

- **Potential advantages of job simplification:**
  - Easier and quicker training of workers.
  - Workers are less difficult to supervise.
  - Workers are easier to replace.
  - Development of expertise in doing repetitive tasks.

- **Potential disadvantages of job simplification:**
  - Productivity suffers.
  - Cost increases due to absenteeism/turnover of unhappy workers.
  - Poor performance may result from worker boredom/alienation.

- **Job rotation and job enlargement expand job scope.**
  - **Job rotation:**
    - Increases task variety by periodically shifting workers among jobs involving different task assignments.
  - **Job enlargement:**
    - Increases task variety by combining two or more tasks previously assigned to separate workers.
    - Horizontal loading.

- **Checklist for enriching jobs:**
  - Remove controls that limit people’s discretion in their work.
  - Grant people authority to make decisions about their work.
  - Make people understand their accountability for results.
  - Allow people to do “whole” tasks or complete units of work.
  - Make performance feedback available.

STUDY Q.4: HOW CAN JOBS BE ENRICHED?

- **Core characteristics model:**
  - Contingency approach to job design
  - Model focuses on:
    - Core job characteristics
    - Critical psychological states
    - Job outcomes
    - Moderating variables
  - A job high in the core characteristics is enriched.
STUDY Q.4: HOW CAN JOBS BE ENRICHED?

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Core characteristics:
- Skill variety.
- Task identity.
- Task significance.
- Autonomy.
- Feedback.

Critical psychological states:
- Experienced meaningfulness of work.
- Experienced responsibilities for work outcomes.
- Knowledge of actual results of work activities.

Job outcomes:
- High internal work motivation.
- High growth satisfaction.
- High general job satisfaction.
- High work effectiveness.

Moderating variables:
- Growth-need strength (GNS):
  - People with high GNS will respond most positively to enriched jobs.
  - Knowledge and skills.
  - Context satisfactions.

Figure 15.4: Job design and individual work outcomes using the core characteristics model.
STUDY Q.4: HOW CAN JOBS BE ENRICHED?

- Improving core job characteristics:
  - Form natural units of work.
  - Combine tasks.
  - Establish client relationships.
  - Open feedback channels.
  - Practice vertical loading.

STUDY Q.4: HOW CAN JOBS BE ENRICHED?

- Technology and job enrichment:
  - Socio-technical systems:
    - Job design that uses technology to best advantage while still treating people with respect, and allowing their human talents to be applied to the fullest potential.
  - Robotics:
    - Use of computer controlled machines to completely automate work tasks.

STUDY Q.4: HOW CAN JOBS BE ENRICHED?

- Questions for reflecting on job enrichment:
  - Is it expensive to do job enrichment?
  - Will people demand more pay for doing enriched jobs?
  - Should everyone’s job be enriched?
  - What do the unions say about job enrichment?

STUDY Q.5: HOW CAN WORK BE SCHEDULED TO IMPROVE WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

- Compressed workweek:
  - Any work schedule that allows a full-time job to be completed in less than the standard 5 days of 8-hour shifts.
  - Benefits — more leisure time, lower commuting costs, lower absenteeism, and potentially improved performance.
  - Disadvantages — increased fatigue, family adjustment problems, increased scheduling problems, possible customer complaints, and union opposition.

STUDY Q.5: HOW CAN WORK BE SCHEDULED TO IMPROVE WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

- Flexible working hours:
  - Any work schedule that gives employees some choice in the pattern of their daily work hours.
  - Core time — all employees must be at work.
  - Flextime — allows employees to schedule around personal and family responsibilities.
STUDY Q.5: HOW CAN WORK BE SCHEDULED TO IMPROVE WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

- Potential benefits of flexible working hours:
  - People have greater autonomy in work scheduling while ensuring maintenance of work responsibilities.
  - Organizations can attract and retain employees who have special non-work responsibilities.
  - Worker morale may be improved.

- Job sharing:
  - One full-time job is split between two or more persons.
- Work sharing:
  - An agreement between employees to cut back their work hours to avoid layoffs or termination.

- Telecommuting:
  - A work arrangement that allows a portion of scheduled work hours to be completed outside of the office.
  - Hoteling: telecommuters come to the central office and use temporary office facilities.
  - Virtual offices: at home, in vehicles, etc.

STUDY Q.5: HOW CAN WORK BE SCHEDULED TO IMPROVE WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

Figure 15.5 A sample flexible working hours schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flexime</th>
<th>Core time*</th>
<th>Flexime</th>
<th>Core time*</th>
<th>Flexime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 A.M.</td>
<td>9 A.M.</td>
<td>11 A.M.</td>
<td>1 P.M.</td>
<td>3 P.M.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample Schedules
- Early schedule: 7:00-2:00
- Standard schedule: 8:00-4:30
- Late schedule: 9:00-5:30
*Everyone must work during “core” time.

- Potential advantages of work sharing:
  - Trained and loyal workers can be retained while temporarily cutting labor costs.
  - Continued work — but with reduced earnings — for those who would otherwise be laid off.
- Potential disadvantages of work sharing:
  - Employees who might otherwise be protected by seniority may suffer an income loss.

- Potential advantages of telecommuting:
  - Freedom from:
    - Constraints of commuting.
    - Fixed hours.
    - Special work attire.
    - Direct contact with supervisors.
    - Increased productivity.
    - Fewer distractions.
    - Being one’s own boss.
    - Having more personal time.
Potential disadvantages of telecommuting:
- Working too much.
- Having less personal time.
- Difficulty in separating work and personal life.
- Less time for family.
- Feelings of isolation.
- Loss of visibility for promotion.
- Difficulties supervising work-at-home employees from a distance.

STUDY Q.5: HOW CAN WORK BE SCHEDULED TO IMPROVE WORK-LIFE BALANCE?

Part-time work:
- Work done on any schedule less than the standard 40-hour workweek and does not qualify person as a full-time employee.
- Contingency workers:
  - Part-time workers who supplement the full-time workforce, often on a long-term basis.
  - Now constitute 30 percent of the American workforce.

Implications of part-time work:
- Provides employers with flexibility in controlling labor costs and dealing with cyclical labor demands.
- Temporary workers may lack commitment and be less productive.
- Contingency workers are often paid less and don’t receive important fringe benefits.