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Chapter 1
Organizational Behavior and You

Opening Case: Questions to Consider

Serious about People, Crazy about Chocolate: The Case of Tony's Chocolonely

1. **How do you think Tony's Chocolonely's origin story influences its employees?**

   Tony's Chocolonely's origin story puts the emphasis on trying to fix the injustices in the cocoa industry—this likely gives employees a greater sense of purpose and motivation. This shared commitment to the company's mission creates an engaging and positive work environment.

2. **Do you believe that Tony's Chocolonely should be addressing ethical issues within the chocolate industry? Why or why not?**

   Tony's Chocolonely should be addressing these issues—it makes the company stand out and this sets a standard for the industry.

3. **How effective do you think the appointment of "mission guardians" is in preserving Tony's Chocolonely's mission and values? What are the potential drawbacks of this approach?**

   The appointment of "mission guardians" can be an effective way of preserving the company's mission and values as it grows—they probably provide a certain amount of accountability to prevent the company from deviating from their values. A potential drawback is that this could slow down decisions and limit flexibility if there are conflicts.

4. **What do you think Tony's Chocolonely means when they say they are serious about people, crazy about chocolate?**
   This phrase speaks to the company's dedication to practicing ethically and creating high-quality chocolate, appealing to customers who care about social responsibility.

5. **Reflect on the broader implications of Tony's Chocolonely's success for other companies. What lessons can they learn from its business model and ethical practices?**
   Students' answers may vary. Lessons can include how it shows that companies who take a stand can strengthen brand loyalty and also attract new customers who have the same values; and a business that builds a clear mission can inspire employees and create an energetic and dynamic company culture.

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I. Discussion Questions

A. Section 1.2: Understanding Organizational Behavior

Answers to Putting Common Sense to the Test—All are False

What Do *You* Think?

1. **Which type of organizations did you have the most experience with? How did that affect your understanding of the issues in this chapter?**

   Students will most likely have had experience with organizations in education (school and classroom environment) working with their peers, as well as in introductory employment positions working for a manager. These experiences shape how students understand the importance of communication, leadership and team dynamics which constitute organizational behavior.

2. **Which skills do you think are the most important ones for being an effective employee?**

   Student answers will vary here. Some will say that putting their head down and working hard while paying attention to detail is the most important part of being an effective employee. Others may argue that having good communication skills with their employer, coworkers, and customers is more valuable.

3. **What are the three key levels of analysis for OB?**

   These are individual, group, and organization. Topics such as personality, individual motivation, stress, and emotions are individual level topics. Team dynamics, communication, and leadership are examples of group level variables. Organizational culture and structure are regarded as organization level variables.

4. **What is the problem with the idea that OB is common sense?**
   Organizational Behavior is not just common sense but, instead refers to the systematic study and application of knowledge about how individuals and groups act within the organizations where they work. Organizational behavior may appear easy to understand and may seem to make sense, but research on decision making shows the reverse. In fact, this assumption can easily lead to faulty conclusions resulting from poor memories, noticing certain things and ignoring others, and the framing approach used by individuals.

5. **How do you plan on using the OB Toolboxes in this book? Creating a plan now can help to make you more effective throughout the term.**

   The OB Toolbox features throughout this book will give students suggestions as to how to apply the material covered to their daily professional and personal lives.

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B. Section 1.3: Trends Influencing Organizational Behavior

AI Insights: Navigating the Future of Work

1. **How can organizations leverage AI technologies to enhance communication, collaboration, and employee well-being, while also mitigating potential negative consequences for interpersonal dynamics and job satisfaction?**

   AI technologies can be leveraged to streamline workflows, provide real-time support, and foster transparency—for example, chatbots can answer common queries, which would allow employees to focus on more difficult tasks; and to promote well-being, predictive analytics can identify early signs of disengagement or burnout, which an enable interventions like mental health support and redistributing the workload.

2. **How can we advocate for responsible AI use in organizations to uphold ethical principles and protect employee rights?**

   To advocate for responsible AI use, organizations should set clear ethical guidelines, which could focus on fairness, accountability, and transparency and include the following practices—ensuring data privacy, having committees to oversee how AI tools are being used, discussing ethical usage with employees and having them voice any concerns.

3. **What role does education and awareness play in ensuring that future leaders are equipped to navigate the ethical implications of AI on organizational behavior, and how can universities and educational institutions support this preparation?**

   Education and awareness are extremely important. Universities and educational institutions can integrate AI ethics into curricula and offer courses that address the impact of AI on privacy, work culture, and decision-making. Preparing students is critical so that our future leaders are equipped to use AI responsibly, ethically, and in a way that enhances the workplace experience.

C. Section 1.4: Research Instruments, Measurement, and AI Tools

What Do *You* Think?

1. **Create a hypothesis about people at work. Now that you have one in mind, which method do you think would be most effective in helping you test your hypothesis?**

   Here is an example of a possible answer:
   Hypothesis: Newcomers who have a good relationship with their managers are likely to stay longer at a company.

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A hypothesis like this could be tested using a survey. You might survey all newcomers to an organization at a specific time after they start their new jobs (such as after three or six months). The questions newcomers answer would be about the quality of their relationship with the manager. Then, three years from the start, you may look to see how long each employee stayed at that company. There may still be people who are employed by the same organization, but three years would give the researcher time for several employees to quit their jobs. The researcher would also control for alternative explanations. For example, it is possible that employees left not because of their poor relations with the managers, but because of relations with peers, or low performance. Statistically examining the relationship between newcomer/manager relationship and turnover would be one way of supporting or rejecting this hypothesis. Of course, any single study will have its limitations. Therefore, multiple studies in different industries and using different research designs would strengthen the conclusions.

2. **Have you used any of the OB research methods before? If not, what can you do to become more familiar with them?**

   Some students may be familiar with the survey method or case studies. These methods may be used as part of an OB class or other classes they may be taking, such as marketing or management. Students who assist actively researching faculty may gain valuable experience with a wide variety of techniques. Reading published journal articles in sources such as *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Personnel Psychology*, or *Academy of Management Journal* may introduce students to the different research methods being used in OB. Although it is difficult to generalize about organizational situations, case studies are a valuable resource for students interested in learning more about organizational behavior. Encourage students to seek out case study articles, or to even begin researching and creating their own case studies about their experience within different organizations, or based on research they have done.

3. **Give an example of a reliable and a valid measure.**

   Asking someone how many years of work experience he or she has is likely a reliable measure, because even if you ask the question to the same person several times during the same day, you should get the same answer. The answer does not depend on the person's mood, or how you ask the question. In contrast, a question such as "describe your work ethic" is likely lower in reliability because every time the question is asked, the interviewee may answer in a slightly different manner.

   Let's say you are trying to measure someone's physical endurance. Asking the person to run a certain distance within a certain time, or do push-ups and sit-ups are likely to be valid measures because they capture the intended variable of physical endurance. In contrast, asking the person whether they are physically fit may not really be a valid measure for physical endurance because people may overestimate or underestimate their fitness and endurance levels.

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4. **How can you know if a relationship is causal or correlational?**
   Causality is detected in laboratory studies and in experimental designs. Let's say you are examining whether participative teaching is positively related to student learning outcomes. In a correlational design, you would capture whether the teacher is participative, and the level of student learning. If there were a correlation between the two, the hypothesis would be supported. Yet, how do you know that participative teaching is actually causing student learning? Maybe students who are already engaged are leading to more participation on the part of the teacher, so the student's engagement may be causing both teacher participativeness and student learning. Instead, in an experimental design you would manipulate the teacher's style, while employing a control group. The same teacher would be told to act participatively in one class and behave less participatively in a different class. This way, we would know that teacher participativeness is not naturally occurring. The use of a control group would also help eliminate alternative explanations.

5. **Which technology tools do you use regularly?**

   Students' answers will vary.

6. **Your boss asks you to see if job satisfaction is related to turnover and sends you data from the latest annual opinion survey, which was 10 months ago, and the turnover reports for the last six months. Which type of analytics will you use to answer this question?**

   Student responses are likely to vary for this question. Analyzing the data via causal and correlational techniques can be used to answer whether job satisfaction is related to turnover. Correlational analyses can be used to determine if the data on the annual opinion survey is associated with the data in the turnover reports. For instance, if the annual opinion survey contains information about levels of job satisfaction and the turnover reports include information about levels of turnover, then associations between the two data sets can be examined. Given that the two sets of data are separated by 10 months, it is also possible to examine causality. Tests of causality will determine the extent to which changes in levels of turnover can be explained by changes levels of job satisfaction.

D. Section 1.5: Learning and Retention

What Do *You* Think?

1. **What strategies do you normally use to help you learn new information? In what ways are they effective or ineffective?**

   Student answers are likely to vary for this question.

2. **What new ideas did you get from this section? How might you try them out?**

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Students' answers will likely vary for this question. Students can focus on improving memory by chunking information, repetition (overlearning), and meaning and motivation and maximize their learning success with effective notetaking, quizzing, and internships and practicums.

3. **Reflect on a time when you used one of the memory aids mentioned in this section. What were the takeaways from your experience?**

   Students' answers will vary depending on the memory aid chosen. Students can choose to discuss chunking, repetition (overlearning), or meaning and motivation. All of these aids become more efficient as they are practiced over time.

4. **What are some challenges for learning remotely/online?**

   Student answers are likely to vary for this question. One of the challenges associated with learning remotely/online is the lack of social interaction with peers. Students have fewer opportunities to engage with peers in classroom settings and in student social and service groups. A second challenge associated with learning remotely/online is technology. Problems with Internet connectivity and obsolete computers make it difficult for students to stay on schedule and keep up with classmates. A third challenge associated with learning remotely/online is motivation. Finding the drive to stay focused on task and following a set online schedule may be difficult for some students. Students may also become strained or fatigued from looking at a monitor for long periods of time.

E. Section 1.6: The Power of the People: The Case of Cayuga Collection

Case Discussion Questions

1. **The Cayuga Collection places great value on feedback and insight from employees. What unique perspective can employees provide that might not necessarily be available from an outside party?**

   Cayuga Collection employees have a unique perspective since they understand the organization's internal culture and they also have internal opportunities to suggest innovative ideas that are useful for blending luxury and sustainability.

2. **The Cayuga Collection has won numerous awards while also attracting high-profile guests. What are some other metrics that could be used to quantify this organization's success?**

   In order to quantify Cayuga Collection's success, evaluator might also include contribution of creative and innovative ideas and solutions, extent to which resources are used efficiently, and efforts to conserve the natural environment.

3. **The Cayuga Collection has become successful by simultaneously prioritizing people, profit, and the planet, also known as the "triple bottom line"**

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approach. In your opinion, what are some of the barriers organizations may face when attempting to adopt this approach?

While focusing on efforts to empower their employees, the Cayuga Collection may focus less on its efforts to effectively influence the local communities and surrounding ecosystems. If the Cayuga collection spends time on persuading their guests to think differently about eco-tourism, they may spend less time and effort on programs aimed to help local schools and communities.

4. **If you were the CEO of the Cayuga Collection, would you, in any way, try to redefine what it means to do business "The Cayuga Way"? If so, please describe the changes you would make.**

   Answers will vary here.

5. **The Cayuga Collection focuses on the luxury segment of the market. Do you think their model could be implemented in non-luxury vacation markets? Please explain.**

   The Cayuga Collection model could be implemented in a non-luxury vacation market. Non-luxury travelers might be interested in rainforest protection efforts. Non-luxury markets might also focus on eco-tourism, the efficient use of resources and conserving the natural environment.

II. Section 1.8: Exercises (End-of-Chapter Materials)

A. Ethical Dilemma

Lack of Employee Engagement

Studies suggest that fostering engagement, a concept related to passion, in employees has a significant impact on the corporate bottom line. Gallup, for instance, has been on the forefront of measuring the impact of what is called employee engagement. **Employee engagement** is a concept that is generally viewed as managing discretionary effort; that is, when employees have choices, they will act in a way that furthers their organization's interests. An engaged employee is a person who is fully involved in and enthusiastic about their work.

Engaged employees are those who are performing at the top of their abilities and happy about it. According to statistics that Gallup has gathered, 87 percent of employees worldwide are not engaged at work. In 2023, 33 percent of U.S. workers were engaged while 16 percent were actively disengaged. This is unfortunate on both a personal level for those employees and in terms of profitability as companies with highly engaged workforces outperform their peers. In their global study of engagement, Gallup analyzed findings from nearly 82,000 business units across forty-nine industries and seventy-three countries and found that overall, engagement was related to higher profitability, productivity, sales, safety, and customer metrics as well as fewer quality defects, lower turnover, and lower absenteeism.

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What Do *You* Think?

1. **What strategies can organizations implement to improve employee engagement based on the findings presented?**

   Some strategies can include opportunities for professional development, building strong leadership, allowing employees more control over their work, recognition and appreciation, and clear communication of goals and expectations.

2. **Discuss the potential ethical implications of organizations prioritizing profitability over employee engagement. How can companies balance the need for financial success with the well-being and satisfaction of their employees?**

   Prioritizing profitability at the expense of employee engagement can lead to lower job satisfaction, burnout, and decreased well-being. To balance financial success with well-being of their employees, companies can promote work-life balance, maintain open communication to build trust, and focus on long-term, rather than short-term goals.

3. **Explore the role of leadership in promoting employee engagement. How can leaders inspire and motivate their teams to perform at their best while also addressing individual needs and concerns?**

   Leaders play a very important role in fostering engagement, and they can set an example by actively listening to employee concerns and addressing their needs; promoting a positive and inclusive culture; providing a vision and purpose; and offering employees the tools they need to succeed.

B. Individual Exercises

Create an Action Plan for Developing Your OB Skills

1. Hopefully you have already completed reading this chapter. If not, wait until you've done so to complete this individual exercise.

2. In addition, please be sure you have reviewed the table of contents for this organizational behavior textbook.

3. **What themes do you see? How do you think these topics affect your interactions with others? How might the information on learning and retention affect how you'll approach this course? Studying in general?**
   Students' answers will vary.

4. **Now, write down five action steps that you plan to take as you work through this book. Refer to these steps throughout the term and modify them as needed.**

   Students' answers will vary—an example of actions steps:

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1) Set multiple small goals throughout the semester to create individual motivation in even the smallest tasks.

2) Work on managing stress level, find things that will help during stressful situations.

3) Practice leadership by initiating conversations with colleagues/ peers and organize group activities.

4) Ask questions that will help develop OB skills.

5) Take the general concepts and apply them to specific instances in daily activities.

C. Group Exercise

Best Job–Worst Job

1. **Think about the best and worst jobs you have ever had. If you have never had a job, think of a school project instead. What made the job or project great or horrible?**
   There are many factors that can make a job good or bad. These factors can vary by individual. For example, one person might find a job enjoyable because it is easy, while another finds the easy job boring and lacking stimulation. Additional factors might include other people, the environment, the task itself, associated deadlines, work hours, role ambiguity, role conflict, pay, or opportunities available.

2. Next, gather into a small group of students and share your experience with them.

3. Listen to what others are saying and see if any themes emerge. For example, what are the most common features of the best jobs? What are the most common features of the worst jobs?

III. Relevant TED Talks for Bringing Course Concepts to Life

A. Listen, learn... then lead by Stanley McChrystal
https://www.ted.com/talks/stanley_mcchrystal
Synopsis: After spending many years in the military, Stanley speaks of learning many lessons in leadership. He explains how someone can build a sense of purpose within a variety of people through listening and learning.

B. Title: How to run a company with (almost) no rules by Ricardo Semler
https://www.ted.com/talks/ricardo_semler_radical_wisdom_for_a_company_a_school_a_life
Synopsis: "Semler practices a radical form of corporate democracy, rethinking everything from board meetings to how workers report their vacation days (they don't

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have to). It's a vision that rewards the wisdom of workers, promotes work-life balance — and leads to some deep insight on what work, and life, is really all about."

C. Title: Beware Online "Filter Bubbles" by Eli Pariser
https://www.ted.com/talks/eli_pariser_beware_online_filter_bubbles
Synopsis: Eli Pariser talks about how we are confined within a "filter bubble" because web companies customize our news and search results based on our personal preferences—because this limits our exposure to information that might expand how we think, he argues that this will be harmful to both democracy and to individuals.

D. Title: Techniques to Enhance Memory and Learning by Nancy D. Chiaravalloti
https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=JbLAGpQ9RXg
Synopsis: Dr. Chiaravalloti talks about how we learn and discusses techniques such as mSMT (modified Story Memory Technique) and structured treatment protocol, for how to improve learning and memory.

Additional Reading

I. Almeida (2024). *Responsible AI in the age of generative models: Governance, ethics, and risk management.* Now Next Later AI.

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Peter Ferdinand Drucker (2006). *Innovation and entrepreneurship.* Collins Business.

Thomas L. Friedman (2008). *Hot, flat, and crowded.* NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Marshall Goldsmith (2007). *What got you here won't get you there.* NY: Hyperion.

Patrik Ian Meyer (2023). *The 4 pillars of critical thinking: 103 techniques & hacks to improve your work and personal life*. Mind Mentor.

Shane Parrish (2023). *Clear thinking: Turning ordinary moments into extraordinary results.* Portfolio.

Daniel Pink (2018). *When: The scientific secrets of perfect timing. Riverhead* Books.

Jeffrey Pfeffer and Robert I. Sutton (2006). *Hard facts, dangerous half-truths and total nonsense: Profiting from evidence-based management.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

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Julie Zhuo (2019). *The making of a manager: What to do when everyone is looking to you.* Portfolio.

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