CHAPTER 4

Individual Behavior and Differences

Chapter Overview

This chapter addresses the six major variables that influence individual behavior/performance:

* Abilities
* Skills
* Perception
* Attitudes
* Attributions
* Personality

A model of individual variables and behavior/performance is shown in Figure 4‑1.

Chapter 4 provides definitions of two important individual variables (abilities and skills) and management's task of matching an individual's abilities and skills with job requirements. Important demographic variables (i.e., cultural diversity, gender, and race) are also discussed in the context of effectively managing individual differences.

Perception is defined, and the ways in which perception influences behavior are discussed. Factors that influence perception are presented:

* Stereotyping
* Selective perception
* The manager's characteristics
* Situational factors
* The perceiver's needs and emotions

The psychological process of attribution is considered next. Two basic types of attributions are discussed (dispositional and situational), along with several attributional errors and biases.

Discussion of attitudes centers on the three major components of attitudes (affect, cognition, and behavior), the sources of attitudes, the requirements for achieving attitude change, and the relationship between attitudes and values. Job satisfaction is presented as a major attitude, its components are summarized, and the relationship between job satisfaction and performance is discussed (the three predominant views are explained), as well as the affect of job satisfaction on customer satisfaction.

The chapter continues with a discussion of personality that includes a definition, an explanation of the major forces that influence personality, and an overview of three major theories of personality (trait theories, psychodynamic theories, and humanistic theories). The importance of the “Big Five” personality dimensions is presented, followed by a discussion of four major personality variables: locus of control, self-efficacy, Machiavellianism, and creativity (including five techniques organizations may use to boost creativity: buffering, intuition, organizational time-outs, innovative attitudes, and innovative organizational structures).

The chapter concludes with a description of psychological contracts and a discussion of ways in which employees may perceive that the psychological contracts with their employers have been violated.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the chapter, students should be able to:

1. **Define** *perception* and explain its role in understanding and coping with organizational life.

2. **Describe** how self-efficacy can influence an employee’s behavior.

3. **Discuss** why the increasing diversity of the workforce will require the adoption   
of a different approach/style of managing employees.

4. **Compare** the meaning of the psychological contract from the employee and the employer perspective.

5. **Explain** why it’s difficult to change a person’s attitude.

Lecture Outline

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|  | Managers spend considerable time judging the fit between individuals, job tasks, and effectiveness. Both the manager’s and the subordinate’s characteristics typically influence such judgments. Without some understanding of behavior, decisions about who performs what tasks in a particular manner can lead to irreversible long-run problems.  Employees differ from one another in many respects. A manager needs to ask how such differences influence subordinates’ behavior and performance. This chapter highlights individual differences and dispositions that can make one person a significantly better performer than another person. In addition, the chapter addresses several crucial individual differences that managers should consider. |

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|  | The manager’s observation and analysis of individual behavior and performance require consideration of variables that directly influence individual behavior, or what an employee does (e.g., produces output, sells cars, services machines). The individual variables include abilities and skills, background, and demographic variables. As Figure 4.1 shows, an employee’s behavior is complex because it’s affected by a number of environmental variables and many different individual factors, experiences, and events. Such individual variables as abilities/skills, personality, perceptions, and experiences affect behavior.  Whether any manager can modify, mold, or reconstruct behaviors is a much-debated issue among behavioral scientists and managerial practitioners. Although they usually agree that changing any individual psychological factor requires thorough diagnosis, skill, patience, and understanding on the part of a manager, there’s no universally agreed-upon method managers can use to change personalities, attitudes, perceptions, or learning patterns. On the other hand, it is recognized that people’s behavior patterns do change, albeit slightly, sometimes when managers would prefer that they remain stable. Managers must recognize the inherent difficulty in trying to get people to do and think about the things that are desirable to the organization. |
|  | Figure 4.1 suggest that effective management requires that individual behavior differences be recognized and, when feasible, taken into consideration while managing organizational behavior. To understand **individual differences** managers must (1) observe and recognize the differences, (2) study variables that influence individual behavior, and (3) discover relationships among the variables. For example, managers are in a better position to make optimal decisions if they know employees’ attitudes, perceptions, and mental abilities as well as how these and other variables are related. It is also important to know how each variable influences performance. Being able to observe differences, understand relationships, and predict linkages facilitates managerial attempts to improve performance. |

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|  | Behavior, as outlined in Figure 4.1, is anything that a person does. Talking to a manager, listening to a co-worker, filing a report, inputting a memo into a computer, and placing a completed unit in inventory are behaviors. So are daydreaming, reading this book, and learning how to use a firm’s accounting system. The general framework indicates that behavior depends on the types of variables shown in Figure 4.1. Thus, as Kurt Lewin originally proposed, B = f (I, E): an employee’s behavior (B) is a function of individual (I) and environmental (E) variables.The behavior that results on the job is unique to each individual, but the underlying process is basic to all people.  After years of theory building and research, it’s generally agreed that  1. Behavior is caused.  2. Behavior is goal directed.  3. Behavior that can be observed is measurable.  4. Behavior that’s not directly observable (e.g., thinking and perceiving) is also important in accomplishing goals.  5. Behavior is motivated. |
|  | Focusing their attention on performance-related behaviors, managers search for ways to achieve optimal performance. If employees aren’t performing well or consistently, managers must investigate the problem.  These questions and their answers again call attention to the complexity of individual differences and performance. They also indicate that when performance problems are identified, some form of managerial action is required |

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|  | Some employees, although highly motivated, simply don’t have the abilities or skills to perform well. Abilities, skills, and other factors play a role in individual behavior and performance.An ability is a trait (innate or learned) that permits a person to do something mental or physical. Skills are task-related competencies, such as the skill to negotiate a merger or operate a computer or the skill to clearly communicate a group’s mission and goals. In this book, the terms are used interchangeably in most cases. Remember that B= f (I, E). Table 4.1 identifies 10 mental abilities that make up what’s commonly referred to as intelligence.Intelligence is often the best predictor of job success, but “best” does not mean “only,” and many other factors play a role in performance.Thus, managers must decide which mental abilities are required to successfully perform each job |
|  | Every job is made up of two things: people and job tasks. Matching people with jobs suited for their abilities and skills is often a problem.Why do people end up in jobs in which they aren’t productive, satisfied, or fulfilled? |
|  | The effort to match jobs involves the following activities: employee selection, training and development, career planning, and counseling. To be successful in matching a person’s abilities and skills to the job, a manager must examine *content, required behaviors,* and *preferred behaviors.* Content is the “what” of the job—the job description, responsibilities, goals and objectives, and specific tasks. Required behaviors are the “how” of the job—how it must be done in terms of quantity, quality, cost, and timing. |

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|  | Table 4.1 |
|  | Table 4.2 |
|  | Among the most important demographic classifications are gender and race. Cultural diversity can also affect work situations. |

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|  | As a more diverse workforce enters organizations, it will become mandatory to not base decisions, prescriptions, and techniques on white male research results.Generalizing from a research dominant group (white males) to women, African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and other groups isn’t sound. Faulty generalization can lead to making improper assumptions; presenting inadequate solutions; and implementing inaccurate reward, performance evaluation, and team-building programs. Similarly, minority-based study results are also unlikely to be generalizable to a majority group.  Managers aren’t yet as diverse as the rest of the workforce. To manage the increasingly culturally diverse workforce will require flexibility, recognition of individual differences, and increased awareness of cultural background differences. |
|  | Unraveling the complexity of psychological variables such as personality, perception, attitudes, and values is a challenge for even experienced managers. Even psychologists have a difficult time agreeing on these variables’ meaning and importance, so our goal is to provide meaningful information about them that managers can use in solving on-the-job behavior and performance problems. The manager must continually observe individuals because what goes on inside a person can be easily hidden or masked. |
|  | Individuals use five senses to experience the environment: sight, touch, hearing, taste, and smell. Organizing the information for the environment so that it makes sense is called perception. |

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|  | Perception, as Figure 4.2 shows, is a cognitive process. Perception helps individuals select, organize, store, and interpret stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world. Because each person gives her own meaning to stimuli, different individuals “see” the same thing in different ways.The way an employee sees a situation often has much greater meaning for understanding behavior than does the situation itself. |
|  | Because perception involves acquiring specific knowledge about objects or events at any particular moment, it occurs whenever stimuli activate the senses. Because perception involves cognition (knowledge), it includes the interpretation of objects, symbols, and people in the light of pertinent experiences. In other words, perception involves receiving stimuli, organizing them, and translating or interpreting the organized stimuli to influence behavior and form attitudes.  Each person selects various cues that influence his perceptions of people, objects, and symbols. Because of these factors and their potential imbalance, people often misperceive another person, group, or object. To a considerable extent, people interpret the behavior of others in the context of the setting in which they find themselves. |
|  | Managers must recognize that perceptual differences exist. Figure 4.3 illustrates how perception works. Suppose the worker in this example has been told that he has the freedom to make decisions about how the job is to be designed. Note that the manager and the employee perceive the job design freedom in different ways; they have different perceptions of the employee’s amount of freedom. |

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|  | Rensis Likert’s classic and still informative research study clearly showed that managers and subordinates often have different perceptions. He examined the perceptions of superiors and subordinates to determine the amounts and types of recognition that subordinates received for good performance. Both supervisors and subordinates were asked how often superiors provided rewards for good work. The results (Table 4.3) show significant differences in what the two groups perceived. Each group viewed the type of recognition given at a different level. In most cases, subordinates reported that very little recognition was provided by their supervisors and that rewards were infrequent. The supervisors saw themselves as giving a wide variety of rewards for good performance. Likert’s study illustrates how marked differences may exist between superiors’ and subordinates’ perceptions of the same events. |
|  | The manner in which managers categorize others often reflects a perceptual bias. A **stereotype** is an over generalized, oversimplified, and self-perpetuating belief about people’s personal characteristics. For example, many people stereotype used-car salespeople, men stereotype women executives, managers stereotype union stewards, and female workers stereotype male managers. Most people engage in some form of stereotyping, both of other people and of occupations.Stereotypes are self-perpetuating because people tend to notice things that fit their stereotype and not notice things that don’t.  Age has been the basis for stereotyping employees. Researchers have found that managerial actions against older workers are influenced by stereotyping. The inaccuracy of stereotyping can result in unfair programs for promotion, motivation, job design, or performance evaluations. |

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|  | It can also result in not selecting the best person for a position. In an era of shortages of highly skilled job talent, organizations will suffer from stereotyping that results in the rejection of a limited pool of candidates. Age, race, gender, ethnicity, and lifestyle stereotyping can prove extremely costly in terms of lost talent, jury judgments against the firm, and the loss of goodwill and sales from customers in the stereotyped categories. |
|  | Attribution theory provides insight into the process by which we assign cause or motives to people’s behavior. Why did something such as “exceptional performance” or “not submitting a budget on schedule” occur? By knowing how people decide among various explanations of behavior, we get a view of how causes of behavior are assessed. Observing behaviors and drawing conclusions is called *making an* **attribution**. |

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|  | When causes of behavior are presented, they’re usually explained in terms of individual or personality characteristics or in terms of the situation in which it occurred. **Dispositional attributions** emphasize some aspect of the individual such as ability, skill, or internal motivation. Explaining a behavior in terms of something “within” the person such as aggressiveness, shyness, arrogance, or intelligence indicates a dispositional attribution.  A **situational attribution** emphasizes the environment’s effect on behavior. Explaining that a new worker’s low performance was the result of a typical adjustment period in learning the ropes is an example of making a situational attribution. Tardiness at work can be explained by traffic jams or car trouble, which are examples of situational attributions.  In attempting to decide whether a behavior should be attributed to the person or to the situation, Kelley proposed using three criteria:  1. *Consensus.* Would most other people say or do the same thing in the situation? If so, we’re likely to attribute the behavior (e.g., low-quality production) to the person’s unique qualities.  2. *Distinctiveness.* Is the behavior unusual or atypical for the person? If so (high distinctiveness), then we infer that some situational factor must be responsible. But if the person behaves this way often, we tend to make a personal attribution.  3. *Consistency.* Does the person engage in the behavior consistently? When behavior occurs inconsistently, we tend to make situational attributions.  In many situations, managers have information about employee consensus, distinctiveness, and consistency. |
|  | Attribution example. |

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|  | Despite guarding against attribution errors, most individuals have certain biases that can result in making errors. An *attributional bias* is making a judgment with only limited information about the person or situation. Not making a judgment with incomplete information would often be the best action. Research suggests that individuals are more likely to explain others’ actions in terms of internal causes rather than external causes. For example, completing a budget late is likely to result in this type of attribution: he doesn’t like the budgeting process and puts it off rather than stating that the manager didn’t submit the needed information until three hours before the budget was due.  The fundamental attribution error occurs because it is easier to explain behavior in terms of traits (e.g., procrastinator) than to a manager’s style, system, or situation. The trait-based explanations can be harmful. The individual can be labeled or singled out in negative terms, which can then result in poor career progress because of the inaccurate judgments.  ***Other Attributional Bias***  Most people tend to make positive evaluations of others. This is referred to as a *general positivity* or *Pollyanna principle.* We generally have an inclination to be positive. Also, people have a tendency to take credit for successful work and deny responsibility for poor work. This is called a *self-serving bias*. Individuals tend to have egocentric recall, in which they keep in mind and recall the good things that were contributed on a project and ignore bad or failed contributions. The excuses people make generally are to blame the problem behaviors on something in the environment instead of something within the individuals.  Making excuses for oneself often has positive effects because they lower anxiety and keep a person’s self-esteem high. |

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|  | Attitudes are determinants of behavior because they’re linked with perception, personality, and motivation. An attitude is a positive or negative feeling or mental state of readiness, learned and organized through experience that exerts specific influence on a person’s response to people, objects, and situations. This definition of *attitude* has certain implications for managers. First, attitudes are learned. Second, attitudes define our predispositions toward given aspects of the world. Third, attitudes provide the emotional basis of our interpersonal relations and identification with others. And fourth, attitudes are organized and are close to the core of personality. Some attitudes are persistent and enduring; yet, like each of the psychological variables, attitudes are subject to change.  Attitudes are intrinsic parts of a person’s personality. Several theories attempt to account for the formation and change of attitudes. One such theory proposes that people “seek a congruence between their beliefs and feelings toward objects” and suggests that the modification of attitudes depends on changing either the feelings or the beliefs.The theory further assumes that people have structured attitudes composed of various affective and cognitive components. These components’ interrelatedness means that a change in one precipitates a change in the others. When these components are inconsistent or exceed the person’s tolerance level, instability results. Instability can be corrected by (1) disavowal of a message designed to influence attitudes, (2) “fragmentation” or breaking off into several attitudes, or (3) acceptance of the inconsistency so that a new attitude is formed.  The theory proposes that affect, cognition, and behavior determine attitudes and that attitudes, in turn, determine affect, cognition, and behavior.  1. **Affect**. The emotional, or “feeling,” component of an attitude is learned from parents, teachers, and peer group members. One study illustrates how the affective component can be measured. A questionnaire was used to survey the attitudes of a group of students toward the church. The students then listened to tape recordings that either praised or disparaged the church. As the tapes played, students’ emotional responses were measured with a galvanic skin response (GSR) device. Both pro-church and anti-church students responded with greater emotion (displayed by GSR changes) to statements that contradicted their attitudes than to those that reflected their attitudes.  2. **Cognition**. The cognitive component of an attitude consists of the person’s perceptions, opinions, and beliefs. It refers to the thought processes, with special emphasis on rationality and logic. An important element of cognition is the evaluative beliefs held by a person. Evaluative beliefs are manifested as the favorable or unfavorable impressions someone holds toward an object or person.  3. **Behavior**. The behavioral component of an attitude refers to a person’s intention to act toward someone or something in a certain way (e.g., friendly, warm, aggressive, hostile, or apathetic). Such intentions could be measured or assessed to examine the behavioral component of attitudes. |

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|  | Figure 4.4 presents the three components of attitudes in terms of work factors such as job design, company policies, and fringe benefits. These stimuli trigger affective (emotional), cognitive (thought), and behavioral intentions. In essence, the stimuli result in the formation of attitudes, which then lead to one or more responses (affective, cognitive, or behavioral).  The theory of affective, cognitive, and behavioral components as determinants of attitudes and attitude change has a significant implication for managers. They must be able to demonstrate that the positive aspects of contributing to the organization outweigh the negative aspects. Many managers achieve effectiveness by developing generally favorable attitudes in their employees toward the organization and the job. |
|  | The term cognitive dissonance describes a situation where there’s a discrepancy between the cognitive and behavioral components of an attitude.Any form of inconsistency is uncomfortable so individuals attempt to reduce dissonance. Dissonnance, then, is viewed as a state within a person that, when aroused, elicits actions designed to return the person to a state of equilibrium. |
|  | Cognitive dissonance has important organizational implications. First, it helps explain the choices made by an individual with attitude inconsistency. Second, it can help predict a person’s propensity to change attitudes. If individuals are required, for example, by the design of their jobs or occupations to say or do things that contradict their personal attitudes, they may change those attitudes to make them more compatible with what they’ve said or done. |

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|  | Managers often face the task of changing employees’ attitudes because existing attitudes hinder job performance. Although many variables affect attitude change, they can all be described in terms of three general factors: trust in the sender, the message itself, and the situation.  Employees who don’t trust the manager won’t accept the manager’s message or change an attitude. Similarly, if the message isn’t convincing, there’s no pressure to change. |
|  | Values are linked to attitudes in that a value serves as a way of organizing attitudes. Values are defined as “the constellation of likes, dislikes, viewpoints, shoulds, inner inclinations, rational and irrational judgments, prejudices, and association patterns that determine a person’s view of the world.”Certainly, a person’s work is an important aspect of his world. Moreover, the importance of a value constellation is that once internalized, it becomes (consciously or subconsciously) a standard or criterion for guiding one’s actions. The study of values, therefore, is fundamental to the study of managing. There’s evidence that values are also extremely important for understanding effective managerial behavior. |
|  | Figure 4.5  Day-to-day activities create numerous situations in which managers must relate to others with different views of what’s right or wrong. Conflicts between managers and workers, administrators and teachers, and line and staff personnel have been documented and discussed in the literature of management. The manner in which these conflicts are resolved and integrated is particularly crucial to the organization’s effectiveness. |

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|  | **Job satisfaction** is an attitude that individuals have about their jobs. It results from their perceptions of their jobs, based on factors of the work environment, such as the supervisor’s style, policies, and procedures, work group affiliation, working conditions, and fringe benefits. While numerous dimensions have been associated with job satisfaction, five in particular have crucial characteristics.  1. *Pay*. The amount received and the perceived equity of pay.  2. *Job*. The extent to which job tasks are considered interesting and provide opportunities for learning and for accepting responsibility.  3. *Promotion opportunities*. The availability of opportunities for advancement.  4. *Supervisor*. The supervisor’s abilities to demonstrate interest in and concern about employees.  5. *Co-workers.* The extent to which co-workers are friendly, competent, and supportive. |
|  | Figure 4.6  In some studies, these five job satisfaction dimensions have been measured by the job descriptive index (JDI). Employees are asked to respond to yes, no, or (can’t decide) as to whether a word or phrase describes their attitudes about their jobs. The JDI attempts to measure a person’s satisfaction with specific facets of the job. Other measures of job satisfaction, such as the Brayfield-Rothe measures, are more general. |

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|  | Figure 4.7  One of the most debated and controversial issues in the study of job satisfaction is its relationship to job performance.For years, many managers believed that a satisfied worker was a high-performing employee. But most research studies find no clear link between satisfaction and performance. Some workers are satisfied with work and are poor performers. Of course, there are employees who aren’t satisfied but are excellent performers.  The determination of which variable is affecting the other is difficult when performance and satisfaction are positively related, and it has resulted in three viewpoints: (1) satisfaction causes performance; (2) performance causes satisfaction; and (3) rewards intervene, and there’s no inherent relationship. The first two views are supported weakly by research. A review of 20 studies dealing with performance–satisfaction relationships found a low association between performance and satisfaction.Thus, evidence is rather convincing that a satisfied worker isn’t necessarily a high performer: managerial attempts to satisfy everyone don’t yield high levels of production. Likewise, the assumption that a high-performing employee is likely to be satisfied isn’t supported. The third view, that factors such as rewards mediate the performance– satisfaction relations, *is* supported by research findings. This means that performance isn’t a consequence of satisfaction, or vice versa. |
|  | The Prottas and Thompson findings suggest that the self-employed (no employees) group was older and reported higher levels of job satisfaction and lower job stress than the other two groups.The independent owners indicated higher levels of job autonomy satisfaction and lower levels of job pressure than small-business owners (e.g., have employees) and organizational employees.  The self-employed (e.g., have employees) reported the greatest amount of job pressure and worked the longest hours. However, they also had the highest levels of income. The independent owners worked the fewest hours of the three groups studied. If autonomy satisfaction is important, the results of this study suggest that self-employment, either as an owner or an independent, is a better career choice than organizational employment. |

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|  | More than 75 percent of all businesses in the United States and in other developed countries are service oriented, where it is necessary for employees to interact with customers. It is important for service-oriented organizations to satisfy customers so that they return. To accomplish a goal of high customer satisfaction, employees have to be happy or satisfied with their own jobs. |
|  | Why are some people concerned about the quality of the job they do while others aren’t? Why are some people passive and others very aggressive? The manner in which a person acts and interacts is a reflection of his personality. |
|  | **Personality** is influenced by hereditary, cultural, and social factors. Regardless of how it’s defined, however, psychologists generally accept certain principles:  1. Personality is an organized whole; otherwise, the individual would have no meaning.  2. Personality appears to be organized into patterns that are to some degree observable and measurable.  3. Although personality has a biological basis, its specific development is also a product of social and cultural environments.  4. Personality has superficial aspects (such as attitudes toward being a team leader) and a deeper core (such as sentiments about authority or the Protestant work ethic).  5. Personality involves both common and unique characteristics. Every person is different from every other person in some respects while being similar to other persons in other respects.  These five ideas are included in this definition of personality:  An individual’s personality is a relatively stable set of characteristics, tendencies, and temperaments that have been significantly formed by inheritance and by social, cultural, and environmental factors. This set of variables determines the commonalities and differences in the behavior of the individual. |

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|  | A review of the determinants shaping personality (Figure 4.8) indicates that managers have little control over them. But no manager should conclude that personality is an unimportant factor in workplace behavior simply because it’s formed outside the organization. An employee’s behavior can’t be understood without considering the concept of personality. In fact, personality is so interrelated with perception, attitudes, learning, and motivation that any attempt to understand behavior is grossly incomplete unless personality is considered. |
|  | Three theoretical approaches to understanding personality are the trait approach, the psychodynamic approach, and the humanistic approach.  ***Trait Personality Theories*** Just as the young child always seems to be searching for labels by which to classify the world, adults also label and classify people by their psychological or physical characteristics. Classification helps to organize diversity and reduce the many to a few.  Gordon Allpost was the most influential of the trait theorists. In his view, traits are the building blocks of personality, the guideposts for action, the source of the individual’s uniqueness. Traits are inferred predispositions that direct the behavior of an individual in consistent and characteristic ways. Furthermore, traits produce consistencies in behavior because they’re enduring attributes, and they’re general or broad in scope.  For decades, psychologist Raymond B. Cattell has studied personality traits, gathering many measures of traits through behavioral observation, records of people’s life histories, questionnaires, and objective tests.On the basis of his research, Cattell has concluded that 16 basic traits underlie individual differences in behavior. The research resulted in the development of Cattell’s 16 PF (16 personality factors) questionnaire, which measures the degree to which people have these traits. Among the traits he identified are reserved– outgoing, practical–imaginative, relaxed–tense, and humble–assertive. All 16 of Cattell’s traits are bipolar; that is, each trait has two extremes (e.g., relaxed–tense).  Trait theories have been criticized as not being real theories because they don’t explain how behavior is caused. The mere identification of such traits as tough-minded, conservative, expedient, reserved, or outgoing doesn’t offer insight into the development and dynamics of personality. Furthermore, trait approaches haven’t been successful in predicting behavior across a spectrum of situations, due to the fact that situations (the job, the work activities) are largely ignored in trait theories. |

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|  | ***Humanistic Personality Theories*** Humanistic approaches to understanding personality emphasize the individual’s growth and self-actualization and the importance of how people perceive their world and all the forces influencing them. Carl Rogers’s approach to understanding personality is humanistic (people centered).His advice is to listen to what people say about themselves and to attend to those views and their significance in the person’s experiences. Rogers believes that the human organism’s most basic drive is toward *self-actualization*—the constant striving to realize one’s inherent potential.  It’s hard to criticize theories that are so people centered. Some critics complain, however, that the humanists never explain clearly the origin of the mechanism for attaining self-actualization. Other critics point out that people must operate in an environment largely ignored by the humanists; an overemphasis on self neglects the reality of having to function in a complex environment.  Each major theoretical approach improves our understanding of personality. Trait theories provide a catalog that *describes* the individual. Psychodynamic theories integrate the characteristics of people and *explain* the dynamic nature of personality development. Humanist theories emphasize the *person* and the importance of self-actualization to personality. Each approach attempts to highlight the unique qualities of an individual that influence her behavior patterns.  ***Psychodynamic Personality Theories*** The dynamic nature of personality wasn’t addressed seriously until Sigmund Freud’s work was published. Freud accounted for individual differences in personality by suggesting that people deal with their fundamental drives differently. To highlight these differences, he pictured a continuing battle between two parts of personality, the id and the superego, moderated by the ego.  The *id* is the primitive, unconscious part of the personality, the storehouse of fundamental drives. It operates irrationally and impulsively, without considering whether what’s desired is possible or morally acceptable. The *superego* is the storehouse of an individual’s values, including moral attitudes shaped by society. The superego, which corresponds roughly to conscience, is often in conflict with the id: the id wants to do what feels good, while the superego insists on doing what’s “right.” The *ego* acts as the arbitrator of the conflict. It represents the person’s picture of physical and social reality, of what leads to what and of which things are possible in the perceived world. Part of the ego’s job is to choose actions that gratify id impulses without having undesirable consequences. |

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|  | Often the ego has to compromise, to try and satisfy both id and superego. This sometimes involves using ego defense mechanisms—mental processes that resolve conflict among psychological states and external realities. Table 4.5 presents some of the ego defense mechanisms used by individuals. |
|  | **Personality tests** measure emotional, motivational, interpersonal, and attitudinal characteristics. Hundreds of such tests are available to organizations. One of the most widely used, the **Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)**, consists of statements to which a person responds true, false, or cannot say. MMPI items cover such areas as health, psychosomatic symptoms, neurological disorders, and social attitudes, as well as many well-known neurotic or psychotic manifestations such as phobias, delusions, and sadistic tendencies.  Managers in organizations aren’t enthusiastic about using the MMPI. It’s too psychologically oriented, is associated with psychologists and psychiatrists, and has a reputation of being used to help people with problems. |
|  | The **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)**, is briefly described in the accompanying OB in the Real World feature. There is little empirical-based evidence that has dampened the use of the MBTI in organizations. More than 2 million people a year in the United States complete the MBTI. |

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|  | As a review of the literature indicates, there are many different dimensions of personality that can be used to describe people. Organizational researchers have studied a cluster of factors now designed as the “Big Five” personality dimensions:  **Conscientiousness.** The hardworking, diligent, organized, dependable, and persistent behavior of a person. A low score on this dimension depicts a lazy, disorganized, and unreliable person.  **Extraversion–introversion.** The degree to which a person is sociable, gregarious, and assertive versus reserved, quiet, and timid.  **Agreeableness.** The degree of working well with others by sharing trust, warmth, and cooperativeness. People who are low scorers on this dimension are cold, insensitive, and antagonistic.  **Emotional stability.** The ability a person displays in handling stress by remaining calm, focused, and self-confident, as opposed to insecure, anxious, and depressed.  **Openness to experience.** A person’s range of interest in new things. Open people are creative, curious, and artistically sensitive, as opposed to being closed-minded.  Through a growing number of studies, researchers are finding that the “Big Five” play an important role in workplace behaviors.67 For example, highly conscientious employees perform better than their low-in-conscientiousness counterparts. There is also evidence that sales personnel and managers with higher extraversion scores are more effective than peers who score lower on extraversion. |
|  | The **locus of control** of individuals determines the degree to which they believe that their behaviors influence what happens to them. Some people believe that they’re autonomous—that they’re masters of their own fate and bear personal responsibility for what happens to them. They see the control of their lives as coming from inside themselves. Rotter called these people *internals*.Rotter also held that many people view themselves as helpless pawns of fate, controlled by outside forces over which they have little, if any, influence. Such people believe that the locus of control is external rather than internal. Rotter called them *externals.* |

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|  | When individuals acquire an internal control orientation that leads them to set goals and develop action plans to accomplish them, they develop a sense of **self-efficacy**. Bandura discusses the self-efficacy concept as a part of social learning theory.He contends that self-efficacy is a belief that we can perform adequately in a particular situation. People’s sense of capability influences their perception, motivation, and performance. Most individuals don’t even try to do things, such as accept a promotion or use a computer, when they expect to be ineffectual. People avoid others and situations in which they feel inadequate.  Bandura believes that perceptions of one’s abilities are best thought of as a host of specific evaluations.Individuals evaluate their past and actual accomplishments, the performance of others, and their own emotional stress. Besides influencing a person’s choice of activities, tasks, and situations, these evaluations also influence how much effort is expended and how long the person continues to try to succeed. |
|  | Figure 4.9 displays a model of self-efficacy based on Bandura’s work. The behaviors of a person with high self-efficacy are positive, success driven, and goal oriented. When they need assistance, they look for tangible aid and not reassurance or emotional support. On the other hand, a person with low self-efficacy sees problems and worries and thinks in terms of failing or not being able to do a high-quality job. |
|  | **Machiavellianism**, a concept derived from the writings of Italian philosopher and statesmen Niccolo Machiavelli (1469–1527), helps answer the question. Machiavelli was concerned with the manipulation of people and with the orientations and tactics used by manipulators versus nonmanipulators.*Machiavellianism* (a term with negative connotations) is associated with being a political maneuverer and power manipulator.  From anecdotal descriptions of power tactics and the nature of influential people, various scales have been constructed to measure Machiavellianism. One scale organizes questions around a cluster of beliefs about tactics, people, and morality.  In the money allocation game just discussed, the individuals who get the lion’s share are those who score high on this scale, the LOW MACH scorers get only slightly less than would be expected by a fair, one-third split. In a job situation, Machiavellianism does seem to have an effect on job performance.HIGH MACH scorers would probably be suited for activities such as selling, negotiating, and acquiring limited resources. LOW MACH scorers would seem to be better suited for structured, routine, and nonemotional situations. They would seem to better suited for planning, conceptualizing, and working out details. |

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|  | *Creativity* Many organizations feel that creativity and innovativeness are not only desirable but also should be core competencies and a consistent feature of their cultures.Creativity is the generation of novel ideas that may be converted into opportunities. It is the first step in the innovation process. |
|  | Many studies have examined creativity. Life histories, personality characteristics, and tests are often scrutinized to determine a person’s degree of creativity. In a typical test, subjects might be asked to examine a group of drawings and then answer what the drawings represent. Figure 4.10 is a line drawing test used to determine young children’s creativity. |
|  | Organizations can help develop creativity by  *Buffering*. Managers can look for ways to absorb the risks of creative decisions.  *Organizational time-outs.* Give people time off to work on a problem and allow them to think things through.  *Intuition.* Give half-baked or unsophisticated ideas a chance.  Continued on the next slide. |
|  | *Innovative attitudes.* Encourage everyone to think of ways to solve problems.  *Innovative organizational structures.* Let employees see and interact with many managers and mentors.  Managerial interest in developing creativity seems worthwhile. A review of research findings indicates that creative individuals share important characteristics. They are self-confident and motivated to succeed, they approach life enthusiastically, and they push on even when they must overcome obstacles. |

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|  | The psychologist Daniel Goleman introduced into the discussion of mental abilities the concept of emotional intelligence (EQ). A person’s EQ refers to the ability to accurately perceive, evaluate, express, and regulate emotions and feelings.Emotions are difficult to measure. However, Goleman and others suggest that these are five components of EQ: *self-regulation,* the ability calm down anxiety, control impulsiveness, and react appropriately to anger; *motivation,* a passion to work for reasons that go beyond money or status; *empathy,* the ability to respond to the unspoken feelings of others; *self-awareness,* an awareness of one’s own personality or individuality; and *social skill,* a proficiency to manage relationships and build networks. |
|  | When an individual accepts a job with an organization, an unwritten psychological contract is established. Because of differences in perception, attribution, attitudes, values, general personality, and emotions, individuals form a personal view of the expectations inherent in the psychological contract. The psychological contract is not a written document between a person and the organization, but it is an implied understanding of mutual contributions. |
|  | A **psychological contract violation** is defined as the perception of the person that his or her organization has failed to fulfill or has reneged on one or more obligations. As described by Morrison and Robinson, the perception has a cognitive portion and an emotional or feeling portion. A violation by an employer may affect not only the beliefs of the person but also what he or she feels obligated to provide or contribute to the organization. The majority of research on psychological contracts has not focused on violations of the perceived obligations among parties. |

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|  | Table 4.6 lists a number of possible organizational violations and offers quotes from the perspective of the employee. These types of violations of the psychological contract can seriously undermine the feelings of goodwill and trust held by employees toward the organization.  The seven examples of violation in Table 4.6 indicate how trust is undermined, how the bond between an employer and employee can be weakened, and how perception plays a significant role in psychological contracts.Rousseau believes that violation of a relational contract can produce intense feelings that can result in moral outrage. Minor violations are not so intensely felt. However a major violation could result in withholding good performance, sabotaging work, absenteeism, or quitting. A sequential pattern of responses to violations has been identified.The first response is *voice:* the person voices concern about the violation and attempts to restore the psychological contract. If unsuccessful, voice is followed by *silence*. Silence connotes compliance with what the employer wants or is doing, but with no commitment. Silence is followed by *retreat,* which is shown by negligence, shirking of responsibility, and passivity. *Destruction* can follow silence. In this stage the employee can retaliate through slowdown of work, sabotage, hiding papers or tools, theft, or even violence. Finally, of course the employee can exit or quit the firm.  This discussion has focused on the psychological contract from the employee’s side. This is because most of the research and conjecture in the organizational behavior and management literature are from the employee’s perspective. We need to increase our understanding and research from the employer’s perspective. There is also the need to examine individual, group, and organizational effectiveness in situations, settings, and projects where both employees and employers believe and perceive that the expectations of the psychological contract have been met. Are there unique attributes, techniques, or methods that have a high probability of the psychological contract being achieved? Managers need to be aware of the importance of the psychological contract in committing the employer and employees to a trusting and developing relationship over time. |
|  | Review objectives. |

Below find some applied questions/answers to reinforce your learning when you study the content and before doing your assignments.

* 1. Joan is an accountant who opposes the introduction of a new financial control system. For 15 years she has worked with the old, manual system. Now the firm is introducing a new, computer‑based system. How would you attempt to change Joan's attitude about the new system?

Changing attitudes and perceptions is a very difficult job. Attitudes are formed over a period of time. The manager needs to examine his/her relationship with Joan. Does Joan trust the manager? This is the first avenue of approaching Joan. In this case listening to Joan's reasons for resisting the change and then analyzing these reasons is important. A manager needs to carefully listen and then develop a response to what the employee states. Is Joan feeling left out, anxious about the change, or does she believe that the change will not help her performance? Listening and then addressing the resistance is the way to proceed. Another way to bring about a softening of Joan's attitude is to win over some of her closest work colleagues. A person doesn't like to be standing alone when resisting a change. Convincing colleagues about the positive features of the change may be easier than moving Joan initially.

* 1. In the selection of job candidates, what should a manager know about the self-efficacy concept?

Self-efficacy can be an important variable in the selection process because research indicates that high self-efficacy individuals are more motivated to perform at high levels than low self-efficacy individuals. However, organizations must use this variable cautiously. Some researchers have argued that individuals from various cultural and minority groups may have developed low levels of self-efficacy due to inadequate role models and relevant experiences. Thus, in light of these findings, an organization should consider providing training to increase self-efficacy for those who need it rather than using the self-efficacy variable as a selection tool.

* 1. What's the meaning of the notion that, even when differences between the sexes exist, there's overlap between them? Explain this in terms of absenteeism rates and turnover rates.

With respect to absenteeism rates, the data suggest that female workers, on the average or as a group, are absent more than males as a group. However, taking into account the notion of overlap between males and females means that on an individual level, there will always be cases where a male is absent more often than a comparable female worker. Thus, it is dangerous to apply group level data when making judgments about individual workers.