

Individuals, Job Design, and Stress

Basic Background on Work

- Work can be a “turn-on” or a “turn-off.”
- People are the foundations of high performance in the workplace.
- Valuing people and creating jobs and work environments that respect people’s needs and potential will benefit everyone.

Meaning of Work

- Psychological contract
 - An informal understanding about what an individual gives to and receives from an organization as part of the employment relationship.
 - A person has a healthy psychological contract in the ideal work situation.

Meaning of Work

- Work and the quality of life
- Quality of work life
 - The overall quality of human experiences in the workplace.
 - An important component of quality of life.
- Work-life balance
 - Fit between one's job or work responsibilities and personal or family needs.
 - The goal is to achieve a productive & satisfying balance between work and personal life.

Satisfaction, Performance, 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.
- Goals of job design
 - High levels of job satisfaction.
 - High levels of job performance.

Satisfaction, Performance, Job Design

- Job satisfaction
 - The degree to which an individual feels positively or negatively about various aspects of the job.
 - Common aspects of job satisfaction:
 - Pay
 - Tasks
 - Supervision
 - Coworkers
 - Work setting
 - Advancement opportunities

Satisfaction, Performance, Job Design

- 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

Satisfaction, Performance, Job Design

- Job performance
 - The quantity and quality of tasks accomplished by an individual or group at work.
 - Performance is a cornerstone of productivity.
 - Effective managers design jobs that help people achieve both satisfaction and high performance.

Satisfaction, Performance, Job Design

- Individual performance equation
 - Performance begins with ability
 - Performance requires support
 - Performance involves effort

Performance = Ability x Support x Effort

Job Design Alternatives

- A good job design provides a good fit between the worker and the task requirements.
- Vary along a continuum ranging from high to low task specialization.
 - High specialization \Rightarrow job simplification
 - Moderate specialization \Rightarrow rotation & enlargement
 - Low specialization \Rightarrow job enrichment

Job Simplification

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

Job Simplification

Potential advantages:

- 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:

- Low satisfaction
- Occasional tardiness and absenteeism
- Worker boredom
- High error rates

Job Rotation & Job Enlargement

- 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

Job Enrichment

- Building more opportunities for satisfaction into a job by expanding its content
- Expands both job scope and job depth
- Frequently accomplished through vertical loading

Job Enrichment

- 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 to those doing the work.

Job Enrichment

- 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.

Job Enrichment

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

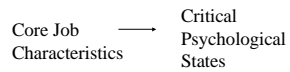
Job Characteristics Model

Core Job
Characteristics

Job Enrichment

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

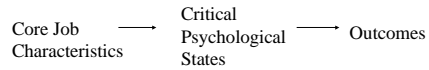
Job Characteristics Model



Job Enrichment

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

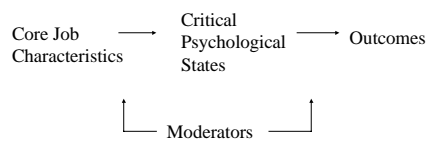
Job Characteristics Model

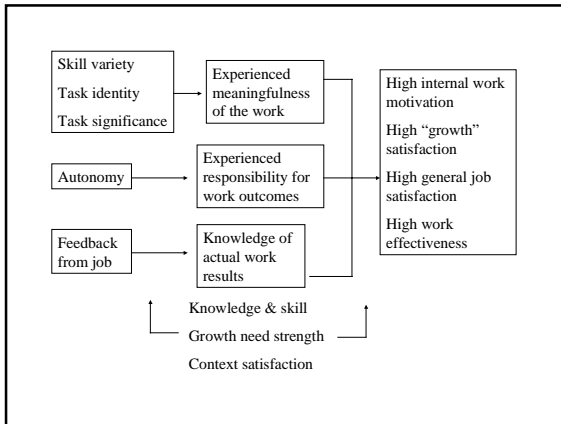


Job Enrichment

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

Job Characteristics Model





Job Enrichment

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

Job Enrichment

- 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.

Job Enrichment

- 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?

Alternative Work Arrangements

- 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, and union objections.

Alternative Work Arrangements

- 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.

Alternative Work Arrangements

- 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.

Alternative Work Arrangements

- 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.

Alternative Work Arrangements

- Telecommuting
 - A work arrangement that allows a portion of scheduled work hours to be completed outside of the office.
- Work-at-home
 - A telecommuting option that is facilitated by information technology and computer links to clients or customers and a central office.

Alternative Work Arrangements

- Potential advantages of telecommuting:
 - Freedom from ...
 - Constraints of commuting
 - Fixed hours
 - Special work attire
 - Direct contact with supervisors
 - Increased productivity
 - Fewer work distractions
 - Being one's own boss
 - Having more personal time

Alternative Work Arrangements

- 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

Alternative Work Arrangements

- Part-time work
 - Work done on any schedule less than the standard 40-hour workweek and does not qualify employee as full-time.
 - 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.

Stress

- Stress
 - A state of tension experienced by individuals facing extraordinary demands, constraints, or opportunities.
 - Job-related stress goes hand-in-hand with the dynamic and sometimes uncertain nature of managerial work.

Sources of Stress

- Work factors:
 - Excessively high or low task demands
 - Role conflicts or ambiguities
 - Poor interpersonal relationships
 - Too slow or too fast career progress
- Personal factors:
 - Needs
 - Capabilities
 - Personality
- Non-work factors:
 - Family events
 - Personal affairs
 - Economics

Stress

- Stressful behavior patterns of the Type A personality:
 - Always moving, walking, and eating rapidly.
 - Acting impatient, hurrying others, disliking waiting.
 - Doing, or trying to do, several things at once.
 - Feeling guilty when relaxing.
 - Trying to schedule more in less time.
 - Using nervous gestures such as a clenched fist.
 - Hurrying or interrupting the speech of others.

Consequences of Stress

- Constructive stress
 - Acts as a positive influence.
 - Can be energizing and performance enhancing.
- Destructive stress
 - Acts as a negative influence.
 - Breaks down a person's physical and mental systems.
 - Can lead to job burnout and/or workplace rage.

Stress

- Reasons why managers should be skilled at dealing with workplace stress ...
 - Humanitarianism
 - Productivity
 - Creativity
 - Return on investment

Stress

- Personal wellness
 - The pursuit of personal and mental potential through a personal health-promotion program.
 - A form of preventative stress management.
 - Enables people to be better prepared to deal with stress.

Stress

- Guidelines for coping with workplace stress:
 - Take control of the situation
 - Pace yourself
 - Open up to others
 - Do things for others
 - Exercise
 - Balance work and recreation

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