SUBJECT

INTRODUCTION TO INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

SESSION 5

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Task design

Main article: Job design

A fundamental question in team task design is whether or not a task is even appropriate for a team. Those tasks that require predominantly independent work are best left to individuals, and team tasks should include those tasks that consist primarily of interdependent work.[55] When a given task is appropriate for a team, task design can play a key role in team effectiveness (Sundstrom, et al., 2000).

The Job Characteristics Theory of motivation identifies core job dimensions that provide motivation for individuals and include: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). These dimensions map well to the team environment. Individual contributors that perform team tasks that are challenging, interesting, and engaging are more likely to be motivated to exert greater effort and perform better than those team members that are working on those tasks that do not have these characteristics.[55]

Interrelated to the design of various tasks is the implementation method for the tasks themselves. For example, certain team members may find it challenging to cross train with other team members that have subject matter expertise in areas in which they are not familiar. In utilizing this approach, greater motivation is likely to result for both parties as the expert becomes the mentor and trainer and the cross-training team member finds learning new tasks to be an interesting change of pace. Such expansions of team task assignments can make teams more effective and require teams to spend greater amounts of time discussing and planning strategies and approaches for completing assigned tasks (Hackman, et al., 1976).

Organizational resources[edit]

Organizational support systems impact the effectiveness of teams (Sundstrum, et al., 1990) and provide resources for teams operating in the multi-team environment. In this case, the provided resources include various resource types that teams require to be effective. During the chartering of new teams, organizational enabling resources are first identified. Examples of enabling resources include facilities, equipment, information, training and leadership.[55]

Also identified during team chartering are team-specific resources (e.g., budgetary resources, human resources). Team-specific human resources represent the individual contributors that are selected for each team as team members. Intra-team processes (e.g., task design, task assignment) are sufficient for effective utilization of these team-specific resources.

Teams also function in multi-team environments that are dynamic in nature and require teams to respond to shifting organizational contingencies (Salas, et al., 2004). In regards to resources, such contingencies include the constraints imposed by organizational resources that are not specifically earmarked for the exclusive use of certain teams. These types of resources are scarce in nature and must be shared by multiple teams. Examples of these scarce resources include subject matter experts, simulation and testing facilities, and limited amounts of time for the completion of multi-team goals. For these types of shared resources inter-team management processes (e.g.: constraint resource scheduling) must be provided to enable effective multi-team utilization.

Team rewards[edit]

Organizational reward systems are a driver for strengthening and enhancing individual team member efforts that contribute towards reaching collective team goals (Luthans & Kreitner, 1985). In other words, rewards that are given to individual team members should be contingent upon the performance of the entire team (Sundstrom, et al., 1990).

Several design elements of organizational reward systems are needed to meet this objective. The first element for reward systems design is the concept that for a collective assessment to be appropriate for individual team members, the group's tasks must be highly interdependent. If this is not the case, individual assessment is more appropriate than team assessment (Wageman & Baker, 1997). A second design element is the compatibility between individual-level reward systems and team-level reward systems (DeMatteo, Eby, & Sundstrom, 1998). For example, it would be an unfair situation to reward the entire team for a job well done if only one team member did the great majority of the work. That team member would most likely view teams and team work in a negative fashion and not want to participate in a team setting in the future. A final design element is the creation of an organizational culture that supports and rewards employees who believe in the value of teamwork and who maintain a positive mental attitude towards team-based rewards (Haines and Taggar, 2006).

Team goals[edit]

Goals for individual contributors have been shown to be motivating when they contain three elements: (1) difficulty, (2) acceptance, and (3) specificity (Lock & Latham, 1990). In the team setting, goal difficulty is related to group belief that the team can accomplish the tasks required to meet the assigned goal (Whitney, 1994). This belief (collective efficacy) is somewhat counterintuitive, but rests on team member perception that they now view themselves as more competent than others in the organization who were not chosen to complete such difficult goals. This in turn, can lead to higher levels of performance. Goal acceptance and specificity is also applicable to the team setting. When team members individually and collectively commit to team goals, team effectiveness is increased and is a function of increased supportive team behaviors (Aube & Rousseau, 2005).

As related to the team setting, it is also important to be aware of the interplay between the goals of individual contributors that participate on teams and the goals of the teams themselves. The selection of team goals must be done in coordination with the selection of goals for individuals. Individual goals must be in line with team goals (or not exist at all) to be effective (Mitchell & Silver, 1990). For example, a professional ball player that does well in his/her sport is rewarded individually for excellent performance. This individual performance generally contributes to improved team performance which can, in turn, lead to team recognition, such as a league championship.

Job satisfaction and commitment[edit]

Main article: Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction reflects an employee's overall assessment of their job, particularly their emotions, behaviors, and attitudes about their work experience. It is one of the most heavily researched topics in industrial–organizational psychology with several thousand published studies. Job satisfaction has theoretical and practical utility for the field of psychology and has been linked to important job outcomes including attitudinal variables, absenteeism, employee turnover, and job performance. For instance, job satisfaction is strongly correlated with attitudinal variables such as job involvement, organizational commitment, job tensions, frustration, and feelings of anxiety. A 2010 meta-analyses found positive relationships between job satisfaction and life satisfaction, happiness, positive affect, and the absence of

negative affect.[94] Job satisfaction also has a weak correlation with employee's absentee behaviors and turnover from an organization with employees more likely to miss work or find other jobs if they are not satisfied. Finally, research has found that although a positive relationship exists between job satisfaction and performance, it is moderated by the use of rewards at an organization and the strength of employee's attitudes about their job.

Productive behavior[edit]

Productive behavior is defined as employee behavior that contributes positively to the goals and objectives of an organization.[55] When an employee begins a new job, there is a transition period during which he or she is not contributing positively to the organization. To successfully transition from being an outsider to a full-fledged member of an organization, an employee typically needs job-related training as well as more general information about the culture of the organization. In financial terms, productive behavior represents the point at which an organization begins to achieve some return on the investment it has made in a new employee.[55] Industrial–organizational psychologists are typically more focused on productive behavior rather than simple job or task performance because of the ability to account for extra-role performance in addition to in-role performance. While in-role performance tells managers or researchers how well the employee performs the required technical aspects of the job, extra-role performance includes behaviors not necessarily required as part of the job but still contribute to organizational effectiveness. By taking both in-role and extra-role performance into account, industrial–organizational psychologists are able to assess employees' effectiveness (how well they do what they were hired to do), efficiency (their relative outputs to relative inputs), and their productivity (how much they help the organization reach its goals). Jex & Britt outline three different forms of productive behavior that industrial–organizational psychologists frequently evaluate in organizations: job performance; organizational citizenship behavior; and innovation.[55]

Job performance[edit]

Main article: Job performance

Job performance represents behaviors employees engage in while at work which contribute to organizational goals.[95] These behaviors are formally evaluated by an organization as part of an employee's responsibilities.[95] In order to understand and ultimately predict job performance, it is important to

be precise when defining the term. Job performance is about behaviors that are within the control of the employee and not about results (effectiveness), the costs involved in achieving results (productivity), the results that can be achieved in a period of time (efficiency), or the value an organization places on a given level of performance, effectiveness, productivity or efficiency (utility).[55]

To model job performance, researchers have attempted to define a set of dimensions that are common to all jobs. Using a common set of dimensions provides a consistent basis for assessing performance and enables the comparison of performance across jobs. Performance is commonly broken into two major categories: in-role (technical aspects of a job) and extra-role (non-technical abilities such as communication skills and being a good team member). While this distinction in behavior has been challenged[96] it is commonly made by both employees and management.[97] A model of performance by Campbell breaks performance into in-role and extra-role categories.[95][98] Campbell labeled job-specific task proficiency and non-job-specific task proficiency as in-role dimensions, while written and oral communication, demonstrating effort, maintaining personal discipline, facilitating peer and team performance, supervision and leadership and management and administration are labeled as extra-role dimensions.[55] Murphy's model of job performance also broke job performance into in-role and extra-role categories.[99] However, task-orientated behaviors composed the in-role category and the extra-role category included interpersonally-oriented behaviors, down-time behaviors and destructive and hazardous behaviors.[55] However, it has been challenged as to whether the measurement of job performance is usually done through pencil/paper tests, job skills tests, on-site hands-on tests, off-site hands-on tests, high-fidelity simulations, symbolic simulations, task ratings and global ratings.[100] These various tools are often used to evaluate performance on specific tasks and overall job performance.[55] Van Dyne and LePine developed a measurement model in which overall job performance was evaluated using Campbell's in-role and extra-role categories.[97] Here, in-role performance was reflected through how well "employees met their performance expectations and performed well at the tasks that made up the employees' job."[101] Dimensions regarding how well the employee assists others with their work for the benefit of the group, if the employee voices new ideas for projects or changes to procedure and whether

the employee attends functions that help the group composed the extra-role category.

To assess job performance, reliable and valid measures must be established. While there are many sources of error with performance ratings, error can be reduced through rater training[102] and through the use of behaviorally-anchored rating scales. Such scales can be used to clearly define the behaviors that constitute poor, average, and superior performance.[95] Additional factors that complicate the measurement of job performance include the instability of job performance over time due to forces such as changing performance criteria, the structure of the job itself[99] and the restriction of variation in individual performance by organizational forces. These factors include errors in job measurement techniques, acceptance and the justification of poor performance and lack of importance of individual performance.

The determinants of job performance consist of factors having to do with the individual worker as well as environmental factors in the workplace. According to Campbell's Model of The Determinants of Job Performance,[95][98] job performance is a result of the interaction between declarative knowledge (knowledge of facts or things), procedural knowledge (knowledge of what needs to be done and how to do it), and motivation (reflective of an employee's choices regarding whether to expend effort, the level of effort to expend, and whether to persist with the level of effort chosen).[55] The interplay between these factors show that an employee may, for example, have a low level of declarative knowledge, but may still have a high level of performance if the employee has high levels of procedural knowledge and motivation.

Regardless of the job, three determinants stand out as predictors of performance: (1) general mental ability (especially for jobs higher in complexity); (2) job experience (although there is a law of diminishing returns); and (3) the personality trait of conscientiousness (people who are dependable and achievement-oriented, who plan well).[55] These determinants appear to influence performance largely through the acquisition and usage of job knowledge and the motivation to do well. Further, an expanding area of research in job performance determinants includes emotional intelligence.[103][104]

Organizational citizenship behavior[edit]

Main article: Organizational citizenship behavior

Organizational citizenship behaviors ("OCBs") are another form of productive behavior, having been shown to be beneficial to both organization and team effectiveness. Dennis Organ is often thought of as the father of OCB research and defines OCBs as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization."[105] Behaviors that qualify as OCBs can fall into one of the following five categories: altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue.[105][106][107]

Researchers have adapted, elaborated, or otherwise changed Organ's (1988) five OCB categories, but they remain popular today. The categories and their descriptions are as follows:

- Altruism

Sometimes referred to as "prosocial behavior" altruistic OCBs include helping behaviors in the workplace such as volunteering to assist a coworker on a project.

- Courtesy

These behaviors can be seen when an employee exhibits basic consideration for others. Examples of courteous OCBs include "checking up" on coworkers to see how they are doing and notifying coworkers of commitments that may cause you to be absent from work.

- Sportsmanship

Unlike other forms of OCBs, sportsmanship involves not engaging in certain behaviors, such as whining and complaining about minor issues or tough work assignments.

- Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness is basically defined as self-discipline and performing tasks beyond the minimum requirements. Conscientious OCBs involve planning ahead, cleanliness, not "slacking off," adhering to the rules, punctuality, and being an overall good citizen in the workplace.

- Civic virtue

Civic virtue differs from other OCBs because the target of the behavior is the group or organization as a whole, rather than an individual coworker. Civic virtue OCBs include being a good representative of the organization and supporting the organization, especially in its efforts outside of its major business objectives. Examples of civic virtue OCBs are participating in charitable functions held by the organization and defending or otherwise speaking well of the organization.[105]

OCBs are also categorized using other methods. For example, Williams and Anderson categorize OCBs by their intended target, separating them into those targeted at individuals ("OCBIs"), supervisors ("OCBSs"), and those targeted at the organization as a whole ("OCBOs").[108] Additionally, Vigoda-Gadot uses a sub-category of OCBs called CCBs, or "compulsory OCBs" which is used to describe OCBs that are done under the influence of coercive persuasion or peer pressure rather than out of good will.[109] This theory stems from debates concerning the reasons for conducting OCBs and whether or not they are truly voluntary in nature.

Jex & Britt offer three explanations as to why employees engage in organizational citizenship behavior.[55] One relates to positive affect; for example, an overall positive mood tends to change the frequency of helping behavior to a higher rate. This theory stems from a history of numerous studies indicating that positive mood increases the frequency of helping and prosocial behaviors.[110]

A second explanation, which stems from equity theory, is that employees reciprocate fair treatment that they received from the organization. Equity theory researchers found that certain forms of fairness or justice predict OCB better than others. For example, Jex & Britt mention research that indicates that interactional justice is a better predictor than procedural justice, which is in turn a better predictor than distributive justice.

A third explanation Jex & Britt offer is that, on the one hand, some employees hold personal values that tend to skew their behavior positively to participate in organizational citizenship activities. On the other hand, Jex & Britt's interpretation of research results suggest that other employees will tend to perform organizational citizenship behavior merely to influence how they are viewed within the organization, not because it reflects their personally held values. While these behaviors are not formally part of the job description, performing them can certainly influence performance appraisals.[55] In contrast to this view,

some I–O psychologists believe that employees engage in OCBs as a form of "impression management," a term coined by Erving Goffman in his 1959 book The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. Goffman defines impression management as "the way in which the individual ... presents himself and his activity to others, the ways in which he guides and controls the impression they form of him, and the kinds of things he may and may not do while sustaining his performance before them."[111] Researchers such as Bolino have hypothesized that the act of performing OCBs is not done out of goodwill, positive affect, etc., but instead as a way of being noticed by superiors and looking good in the eyes of others.[112] The key difference between this view and those mentioned by Jex & Britt is that the intended beneficiary of the behavior is the individual who engages in it, rather than another individual, the organization, or the supervisor.[55]

With this research on why employees engage in OCBs comes the debate among I–O psychologists about the voluntary or involuntary nature of engaging in OCBs. Many researchers, including the "father of OCB research," Dennis Organ have consistently portrayed OCBs as voluntary behaviors done at the discretion of the individual.[105] However, more recently researchers have brought attention to potential underlying causes of OCBs, including social pressure, coercion, and other external forces. For example, Eran Vigoda-Gadot suggests that some, but not all, OCBs may be performed voluntarily out of goodwill, but many may be more involuntary in nature and "may arise from coercive managerial strategies or coercive social pressure by powerful peers."[109] As mentioned previously, Vigoda-Gadot categorizes these behaviors in a separate category of OCBs as "compulsory OCBs" or CCBs, which he suggests are a form of "abusive supervision" and will result in poorer organizational performance, similar to what has been seen in other research on abusive supervision and coercive persuasion.[109]