

MBA 636
Organizational Behavior
Walsh University

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Course Overview

Description:

Organizations exist to fulfill a purpose. Organizational Behavior is the study of how organizations “behave” as they carry out their purpose. As far as behavior goes, one can argue that there is bad behavior resulting in such outcomes as low performance, poor quality, low morale, absenteeism, conflict and the like. Then there is good behavior resulting in such outcomes as effective decision making and problem solving, clear strategy and execution, high morale and innovative culture and of course, financial success. Our goal is to gain a greater appreciation of and means to realize the good behavior.

Objectives:

This course is designed to introduce you to the combined theories of organizational behavior and organizational structure, appreciating the impact at the personal, group and organizational level. At the completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Provide an understanding and reflective demonstration of knowledge of how organizations work and how to personally be effective within them.
- Provide a functional and practical understanding of how individuals, groups and organizational structures impact organizational effectiveness.
- Review and analyze an organizational situation and apply OB theory, concepts and methods to postulate improvement in organizational effectiveness.

You are encouraged to also tract tangential outcomes like communication, problem framing and analysis as well as quality of thought in general.

Assignments:

1. **Class Participation.** Being present and engaging with the material and your classmates is the most important thing can do for your learning. This means actively reading the material before class, generating questions, participating in class discussion and reflecting after class to assimilate your learning.
2. **Group Assignment.** Stories have been used throughout ancient times to transmit wisdom, knowledge, beliefs and values. A story is a narrative account of a real or

imagined event that nevertheless is rooted in truth. The group assignment involves:

- a. Organizing into groups of threes to define and refine a story.** The purpose of the story is to gain insight into organizations, entertain, and lead. Stories inspire and move us, hence you should search deep within your collective psyche and experience for such a story. How you choose the story is up to you, but it must be rooted in truth (however, this does not mean that every detail must be factual). In fact you may be inspired by a story that did not turn out so well, that is okay, just flip the script so that the story moves you in some positive way.
- b. Prepare a performance to present, i.e. tell, your story to the class.** How you tell your story is up to you, you will have a total of 25 minutes to get your story across to the class. You are encouraged to be your most creative adventurous selves to perform the story. This may include the use of props, scripting, etc.
- c. Submit a written narrative of your story.** This of course will aid you in the performance of your story. The written narrative can be of whatever length necessary to tell the story and most importantly to elucidate the purpose of the story and the action it is meant to inspire.

3. Individual Assignments.

- a. Learning Paper** – This is an opportunity to review and reflect on your learning in the course so far. Comment on any insights gained regarding you, your organization, or organizations in general, etc. The paper should be 2-3 pages and should reflect your personal experience in the course, for example, comments on material you found most useful and how and material you found least useful and why. Also, feel free to comment on any course corrections or added attention would seek that might enrich your learning.
- b. Book Report** – Business books are being written and published all the time. The relevance and depth of them vary considerably. Your task is to review a book and write a report paying particular attention to:
 - i.** Connecting points in the book with topics discussed in class.
 - ii.** Expand on theoretical base of the book and how extended to practice.
 - iii.** Pay particular attention to foundational principles that either you or the book's author feel will contribute to organizational effectiveness
 - iv.** Prepare what ever material you feel is needed to lead a 10-15 minute class discussion on the book

- c. Reflective Paper on group project and overall experience in the course. Here you are expected to reflect on the experience in the group. How did the group function, what was your role, did you see any dynamics discussed in class play out in your group. What contributed to your group's effectiveness, what subtracted from its effectiveness. Comment on your experience in the course. Did it meet your expectations, what was the highlight of your learning? Most importantly, comment on what you are taking away from the course and how will you continue your learning and development beyond the course.

Text:

Osland, J.S., Kolb, D.A., Rubin, I.M. & Turner, M.E. (2007). *Organizational Behavior: An Experiential Approach*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Dates and topics

Date	Topic	Assignment
January 10	Orientation, LSI, theory to Practice	read Chps 1-3
January 17	Theories, Organizational Learning	read Chps 4,5
January 24	Motivation, Goal setting	read Chps 8,9
January 31	Communication and perception	1. Learning paper due 2. read Chps 10, 11
TBD (Saturday)		
February 7	Working in groups, problems solving	read Chps 12, 14
February 14	Creativity and Diversity Book Discussions	1. Report due 2. read Chps 15, 16
February 21	Culture and Leadership <i>Guess Speaker (tentative)</i>	read Chps 20, 22
February 28	Managing Performance and Change	
TBD (Saturday)	Story Telling Presentations	1. Reflective paper due

Grading:

Course grades follow a straight curve, i.e., 90%+ = **A**, 80-89%= **B...**

Note

A requirement of the Walsh MBA program is that final course grades of a B or better are acceptable towards meeting the requirements for graduation.

Grade Components:

Class Participation	25%
Group Project	
Group Presentation and Written Narrative	25%
Individual Assignments	
Learning Paper	10%
Book Report	20%
Reflective Paper	20%

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Students with documented disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations if needed. If you believe you need accommodations, please see the professor of this course as soon as possible. Accommodations will not be granted retrospectively.

Thank you and I look forward to having a rewarding experience with you.