

Organizational behaviour learnings

Psychology, Behaviorism



Organizational Behaviour Learnings: OB course has given me a better understanding of the behavioural processes in an organization and provided me with a guideline for tackling various situations that I am likely to come across and be better equipped to function as a future manager within any stage of my work-life. During my work life at TCS, I have come across various kind of people. Some of them being arrogant, stern, unapproachable vis-a-vis others who were friendly, helpful and always in high spirits. Initial days the question I kept asking to myself was to do all the work assigned to me by myself or should I seek help from my colleagues.

It was the initial steps I was taking into an unknown corporate jungle and I was full of doubts. One of the learning's I had was how to balance work and life. There were periods of long working hours when we will have to work extra hours and come to office during the weekends. Along with this there was continuous phone calls asking for updates and the likes during the few hours I got to spend away from work. As a beginner I was eager to do more work and take on the added responsibility. But as the pressure mounted it was affecting my physical and mental self.

OB gives us an insight into such a situation upfront and offers on how to tackle them to have a balanced work-life. One other key things one has to learn is to say NO to things. Even if you are the smartest and most hardworking employee on the planet , it is impossible to do everything by yourself. We must learn to turn down the tasks which we logically could conclude that we wont be able to finish within the timeline and also learn to delegate and share work. Pursuit of careergrowth is only one facet of life and we must learn to juggle between the various other roles of life also.

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As I took up the role of leading a team of 20 people, the various uncertainties such as whom to assign what work, how to manage deadlines coming from superiors, learning the art of allocating time between meetings and dealing with various team dynamics as a manager came to life. Task allocation had to be done judiciously, prioritizing the work at hand and assigning it to the right people. I soon had 3-4 team members who were very enthusiastic and ready to take upon more challenging tasks and on the other hand a few who were very laid back and didn't take work seriously.

The trick was in assigning the high priority challenging tasks to the first kind and the mundane tasks to the other. Alongside this I used to talk to all my team members if they were dissatisfied with what they did and how I could make work-life better for them. As we fill into the shoes of a manager, we move from an individual perspective to managing a team wherein each of the team member has to be understood and also the team dynamics. OB learning comes in handy as it teaches us about how the team dynamics differs from an individualistic point of view.

I handled multiple tasks within the project and hence had to work under different people, each having his/her own take on their subordinates and they treated them differently. We should understand the nature of the people we work under and modify the way we present ourselves to them as each one's expectations will be different. This is where Interpersonal communication and relations that we learn in OB helps us to evolve with our Boss. OB also teaches us about how to handle emotions and personality in a work environment.

There were many situations where I got frustrated with my Boss or with my team mates. This naturally happens as we are working on stringent timelines and clash of ideas are likely to happen. Maintaining composure and dealing with such emotionally challenging situations can define your personality among your colleagues. Another vital factor is the motivation we expect from the work – life. Personally I always was focussed on climbing up the corporate ladder and looked forward to new challenges. During initial phases I was subjected to monotonous, time consuming work.

I was going off-course and there wasn't any motivation in me to work. My manager noticed this and after a brief talk, she understood the negative effect it was having on me and further gave me different role and responsibility which instilled new life in me to work and bought back the urge in me to perform. Understanding what you want, your hygiene and motivating factor early will enable you to enjoy your work and hence have a positive effect overall. Also the lure of an onsite was an added motivation that many employees shared in hope of earning big bucks and spending time overseas.

Organizational politics is an unavoidable part for any employee . Its a social work group where biases, favouritism's and down-play rules. I also got entangled and initially caught unaware on which side to take. There are multiple teams in parallel and taking side with one senior or group will irk the other. Here is where tactfulness and being smart counts and here we must also learn to utilise the art of persuasion. A persuader must match his

emotional fervour to the audience's ability to receive the message and use the smarter way of negotiation.

Many a times during my work life I had to convince the team members about the importance of work they are doing and the impact it carries within the project. Also as a team lead I had to persuade and convince the project manager of the additional resources I needed or for extending the timelines. Another aspect that forms the crux of OB is the way of communicating yourself and making yourself being heard. In a MNC with the large work group and complex hierarchies, one must really put in the extra effort to be heard amongst the crowd. For me, I learnt the secret lies in persistence and not giving up when you are ignored.

If you give up no one is going to care about what you told and its brushed aside. On the other hand if you can reason yourself and understand whom to communicate it to within the hierarchy it makes all the difference. Working as a part of an Agile team we used to have daily stand-up meetings with the onsite where each days performance was analysed and commented upon. A manager has to be prompt in explaining his team's daily activities and resolve any conflict that occurs due to clash of ideas. A team goal is defined at the start and objectives are laid which are pursued by the team.

Whilst the manager has to deal with the complexities occurring in the work place, a leader is one who has to deal with the change. We had a leader who kept a watch on the proceedings and kept looking for other alternatives, technology advancements, client requirement changes etc and incorporated some breakthrough changes which redefined the goals and objectives that

was set in initial stages. The drawbacks I found in OB learning was the extend up to which these theoretical learning's could be taken over and practically applied to the ever changing and fast paced workspace.

The theories and case studies are rational and very relevant to the current organizational scenario. But the effectiveness it can deliver as a pure theory subject is what raises my concern. Unless we learn these behavioural norms in an active way like learn it while experiencing it , these theories will remain just as a dormant learning within us. The effectiveness could be brought in by giving more role plays and real life case studies which can be solved by us by creating a virtual organizational simulation inside the four walls of a classroom.