

Intuition in organizational behavior essay



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In today's society, in order for us to function properly in the modern world, we have to take in information from our environment and use it to modify our behavior and actions.

We succeed in doing this with the help of the five senses of hearing sight, smell, touch and taste, as well as, with additional two called pain and proprioception. Each one of them brings information about what is around us. However, we are physically incapable of absorbing all of the potential information that is surrounding us, so we tend to whether consciously or unconsciously acknowledge certain stimuli and ignore others. The process through which all of this occurs is called perception.

This is a mental process that involves the selection, organization, structuring, and interpretation of the given information in order to give meaning to it and provoke certain behavior or action. In the business environment or other organizations, our perceptions serve to make perceive people and make judgments of them, based their appearance, actions or behavior. There are three main categories, whose factors influence perception. The perceiver's past experiences, needs, personality, values and attitudes are crucial in the course of the perceptual process. All these factories are called an individual's perceptual set. The setting and its physical social and organizational factors also tend to influence the perceptual process quite a lot.

The characteristics of the object or person that is perceived, such as contrast, size, intensity and others are also very important in the perceptual process. The process itself consists of four main stages. People are constantly bombarded with more stimuli than they can comprehend. Thus,

attention is required to be focused, but only on the ones we choose. This process is called selective screening.

With its help we ignore the information that we consider insignificant and gather only what we think is important for us. In the times when this choice is made consciously, it is called controlled processing. However, screening takes place without the perceiver's awareness, usually in situations in which our mind is occupied by something else, so the actions that we make rely on our instincts. After we have already selected and gathered the desired information, the organization takes place.

We do this with the help of schemas. These are cognitive frameworks developed through experience (Roy French, 2008). For example, individuals use person schemes to sort out other people into different categories. The terms that represent these categories are "prototype" and "stereotype". Once we have we have selected certain information and organized it with a schema, we have to interpret it. Last, but not least the processed and already interpreted information must be retrieved from the individual's memory and to be able to recall what is being perceived when it is needed.

During the perceptual process there are some mistakes that we unconsciously make and which later affect our judgment of a person or an object. Such inaccuracies are commonly known as distortions. One typical distortion is the so called projection. It is especially likely to occur in the interpretation stage. In this situation, a individual is with the impression that his own personal needs and attributes are equally valid and important for the

others. In that sense one assigns his personal needs and attributes to their people, who do not necessarily share his or her view.

Managers often do that mistake by assuming that what they feel is right for them is right for their colleagues or subordinates. For example, a company has been assigned an important and profitable project, and its manager feels the need and satisfaction to work as much as possible on it, because of the money and recognition that he or she will receive after the task is being successfully finished. Therefore this manager projects his needs and desires onto his or her subordinates, assuming that they, as well as him, are keen to work during the holidays in the sake of fame and money. However, some of them will certainly feel unhappy with their manager's decision, because they want to spend more time with their families and take a deserved break from their workplace.

Also, a manager may have the habit of giving tasks to their subordinates that they find annoying and unpleasant, but in their manager's mind they love what they do, only because he himself likes it very much. Instead, a good manager must pay attention to each of his subordinates' personal needs and attributes, so in that way the individual differences would not be lost. He must be able to see the world through their eyes and view situations as others see it, by ignoring his own perception for a moment. In that way, people will be more motivated and satisfied in their workplace and the work that they do will be of much higher quality. Another major distortion that can cause inaccuracies in the process of perception is the Halo effect.

It occurs when someone's attention is being drawn to a single quality or characteristic of a person or situation and he uses it to form overall impression for the particular object or individual. However, it tends to happen mainly within the interpersonal perception and usually takes place in the organizational part of the perceptual process. At first sight, this distortion resembles very much the stereotyping and the result at the end is often the same. However, stereotyping deals more with generalizations and prejudices connected with sex, race and etc. , where a group of people are assumed to be the same, only because they fell in a certain category.

On the other hand, with the halo effect, an individual's particular trait is taken for an indication that he or she possesses other particular traits, as well. Halo effects are pretty common in our everyday lives. For example, when one sees a person with expensive car, he automatically reaches to the conclusion that this person is wealthy, has a lot of money and lives a very good life, which may not be the case at all. The Halo effect can affect the individual positively, as well as, negatively.

The negative perception based on this distortion is known as the rusty halo phenomenon. For example, in a literature class, one student may always be active and participate in the class discussions, and he may be perceived by the teacher as intelligent. On the other hand, another student from the same class may understand and know a lot about the subject being discussed, but is rarely participates during classes, thus the teacher may be left with the impression that he is less intelligent and not as prepared, as the other one. The Halo effects can easily occur in the workplace, as well, especially in the

performance appraisal process, due to the fact that they tend to influence a lot the managers' evaluation about his subordinates.

For instance, a subordinate that seems to be responsive to his managers' ideas and needs may get more credit for his work and be claimed as very intelligent individual due to only this reason. However, another subordinate that forms the same company, who does not seem to be so cooperative and may be easily marked as not so valuable person. This may very well, turn to be a huge mistake, because the first subordinate may only react this way, because he wants his boss' approval, whereas the second one could see that the manager' s ideas are rather bad for the company and turn out to be the more intelligent of the two. While it has been known for some time that this phenomenon is commonplace, and despite all the effort that is put into training interviewers and appraisers, the problems are still very much in evidence (Jacobs and Kozlowski 1985). Nevertheless, a manager or simply a person should try to avoid this distortion, by carefully observing the individual or object that he is dealing with, and staying objective at all times so that he or she can see the big picture and judge people rightly for all their qualities and flaws.

Sometimes distortions are very difficult to be avoided, especially when interpersonal perception occurs, because we make most of our assumptions unconsciously. However, we must train ourselves as much as we can to sense such potential inaccuracies. In that way we will serve best to us and our surroundings so that when the art of perception is mastered, it will bring knowledge and confidence to us, in every aspect of our life.