Learning Unit 3: Understanding relations within organizations

To understand organizations it is mandatory to acknowledge first that any organization is composed by individuals whose behavior shapes relationships within it, as well as the way the organization relates to other institutions and the environment in which it performs.

Activity 4: Personality, Perceptions and Attributions.

Learning outcomes
By developing this activity, you will learn the key definitions and theories relating to personality, perception and attribution, in order to understand its influence at the workplace. You will also analyze the cultural implications of the studied concepts considering a specific cultural group.

Learning Activities - understanding individual behavior
Every organization is made out of individuals. In order to understand how organizations work, it is required to analyze first the behavior of its individual members.

What is personality? Can you understand why individuals behave in a certain way?

How does perception work? What are the main barriers and elements that influence the perception process?

Do you attribute your behavior to internal or external factors? Why?

Work plan
1. Review the key concepts by reading chapter 3 of the book.
“Organizational Behavior: Science, The Real World and You”. Make sure you have a clear understanding of the key concepts listed below (See the key concepts section).

2. Read the article “Enhanced external and culturally sensitive attributions after extended intercultural contact.” Identify the application of attribution theories and concepts to the study. Keep in mind the following question:
   o Why is that we tend to attribute other’s behavior to internal causes and our own behavior to external causes?

• **Forum**: join the forum named “Attributions and Cultural Sensitivity” and participate actively in the discussion proposed by the tutor.

• **Wiki**: research and write in your wiki about personality, perception and/or attributions in organizations in the context of the specific cultural group assigned for this project. The following questions may be useful when writing in your Wiki:
   ✓ What role does personality play in the organizations?
   ✓ Are stereotypes and perception barriers present in the organizations?
   ✓ Is behavior of individuals attributed to internal or external reasons?

**Key Concepts**

• Personality
  o Trait theory
  o Psychodynamic theory
  o Humanistic theory
  o Integrative approach
  o Locus of control
  o Self-esteem
  o Self-monitoring
  o Positive-negative affect
• Perception
  o Perceiver, target, barriers
  o Selective perception
  o Stereotypes
  o First impression error
  o Self-fulfilling prophecy
  o Impression management

• Attribution
  o Internal attribution
  o External attribution
  o Fundamental attribution error
  o Self-serving bias
  o Ultimate attribution error
  o Correspondence bias

Learning resources


Further Reading


- If you want to reflect about the role of perception in management, read the following article. Takao Inamori, Farhad Analoui, "Beyond Pygmalion effect: the role of managerial perception", Journal of Management Development, Vol. 29 Iss: 4, pp.306 – 321


- Stereotypes impact organizational performance. To learn more about The Stereotype Threat got to http://www.reducingstereotypethreat.org/definition.html [January, 2013]

- Personality can be tested by using the MBTI Test. If you want to know more about it check the following links:
  


References

Activity assessment

Forum

The following criteria will be used to assess your participation in the forum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5,0</th>
<th>4,0</th>
<th>3,0</th>
<th>2,0</th>
<th>1,0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your posts evidence critical analysis; it has professional application, and elicits responses and reflection from other students.</td>
<td>Your posts evidence reading and understanding of the article provided, and shows application of the key concepts of the unit.</td>
<td>Your posts evidence reading and understanding of the article provided, but does not show application of the key concepts of the unit.</td>
<td>Your posts express a personal opinion which does not evidence reading and/or understanding of the article provided.</td>
<td>You create and submit a post for the forum, but your participation is too general or unrelated to the contents of the unit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

- If you do not participate at all in the forum your grade will be 0,0.
- Be aware that you should participate in the forum at least once but no more than twice.

Participating in a forum means far more than just saying “I agree” or “I disagree” to other student’s posts. The following recommendations will guide you when structuring your own posts:

- You should submit your initial post(s) early in the session, and your subsequent responses to the posts of other learners at timely intervals within the duration of the session. Keep in mind the goal is to have a dynamic discussion that lasts throughout the entire session.
- Your posts and responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Just posting an "I agree" or "Good ideas" will not be considered adequate. Support your
statements with examples, experiences, or references. You are, however, encouraged to be brief — keep each post and response to one or two short paragraphs. Keep in mind that your fellow learners will be reading and responding to you, too.

• Make certain to address the discussion prompt(s). This does not mean you should not extend the topic, but do not stray from the topic.

• Discussions occur when there is dialogue. So, build upon the posts and responses of other learners to create discussion threads. Make sure you revisit the discussion forum and respond (if necessary) to what other learners have posted to your initial responses.

• When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, Web sites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate).

• Your contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.


Wiki
The following criteria will be used to assess your individual contributions to the Wiki as a collective creation of knowledge about cultural groups from an organizational perspective.

On the upcoming units of the course, you will find further instructions and activities to be developed on your Wiki.

Please

• A new page should be created for each activity, not for each student.
• The contribution by each student is limited to 500 words.
• The assessment criteria follows and incremental pattern in which you need to fulfill every step in order to achieve the maximum score. (You will not be awarded 5 points unless you fulfill requirements 1 to 5).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Literature review</strong> (60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,0</td>
<td>You reference new sources that add academic value to the Wiki or evidence the practical application of the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,0</td>
<td>You use proper referencing in your contributions including and privileging the use of academic sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,0</td>
<td>Your contributions to the page are meaningful, organized. There is an adequate use of sources and referencing, but you mostly use the sources provided or suggested in the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,0</td>
<td>Your contributions to every page relate directly to the unit of the course in which the activity is proposed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,0</td>
<td>You make contributions to every page based on your common sense adding very little value to the Wiki.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Presentation and Consistency</strong> (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,0</td>
<td>The collective result for each activity (each page) is consistent, organized and provides significant knowledge about the assigned cultural group. 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,0</td>
<td>Your contributions add significant value by including key elements or concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,0</td>
<td>Your contributions are connected to other member’s contributions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,0</td>
<td>You make a minimum contribution to each activity by simply editing or adding superficial pieces of information to each page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,0</td>
<td>Your contributions are isolated or unrelated to the proposed activity for each page.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 5: Attitudes and Values

Learning outcomes

Attitudes and values play a key role in shaping organizational dynamics. If you want to understand what is important to an organization, you need to know first how attitudes are formed and how they influence organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

Learning Activities

This activity will allow you to review the key concepts relating to attitudes and values, and then, use them to understand what are the main attitudes and values that characterize the cultural group assigned for your Wiki Project.

Work plan

1. Review the key concepts by reading chapter 4 of the book “Organizational Behavior: Science, The Real World and You”. Make sure you have a clear understanding of the key concepts listed below (See the key concepts section).

2. Read the article “Another Look at the Impact of Personal and Organizational Values Congruency.” Identify the application of theories and concepts to the study.

   Forum: join the forum named “Personal and Organizational Values” and participate actively in the discussion proposed by the tutor.

   Wiki: research and write in your wiki about attitudes and values attributions in organizations in the context of the specific cultural group assigned for this project. The following questions may be useful when writing in your Wiki:

   ✓ What attitudes are welcomed / unwelcomed in organizations?
   ✓ Common attitudes towards: time, change, leadership, hierarchy, etc.
What is valued by organizations in a given cultural context?

What are the traditional work values for the specific cultural group?

Key Concepts

- Attitudes
  - ABC model of Attitudes (Affect, Behavior and Cognition)
  - Forming attitudes from experience and social learning
  - Attitudes influence on behavior:
    - Specificity
    - Relevance
    - Timing of measurement
    - Personality factors
    - Social constraints
  - Cognitive dissonance
  - The role of attitudes at work:
    - Job satisfaction
    - Organizational commitment (affective, continuance, normative)

- Values
  - Instrumental and terminal values
  - Work values

Learning resources


Further Reading

• Do you know which are your career values?. In this website you will find a free test to learn more about your underlying work values and needs. Available at: http://www.myplan.com/assess/values.php [January, 2014]


Individual values influence organizational performance. This study explores the relationship between manager’s values and the existence of Corporate Social Responsibility actions in organizations.

• To learn more about job satisfaction and organizational commitment, check the following link:
  http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/encyclopedia_entry.php?id=244 [January, 2014]


Does organizational culture influence employee commitment?. This study explores the relationship between these two Concepts in an Indian Software Organization.
• To learn more about how values influences political and sociocultural change, check the web site of “World Values Survey”. Available at: http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/ [January, 2014]

• In the following link you will find a comprehensive check list to analyze the work values that are most important to you: http://www.csd.uwa.edu.au/job/guide/ex_3.htm [January, 2014]

• Check the following link for a simple definition of the Cognitive Dissonance theory: http://tip.psychology.org/festinge.html [January, 2014]

References


Activity assessment

FORUM

The following criteria will be used to assess your participation in the forum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5,0</th>
<th>4,0</th>
<th>3,0</th>
<th>2,0</th>
<th>1,0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your posts evidence critical analysis; it has professional application, and elicits responses and reflection from other students.</td>
<td>Your posts evidence reading and understanding of the article provided, and shows application of the key concepts of the unit.</td>
<td>Your posts evidence reading and understanding of the article provided, but does not show application of the key concepts of the unit.</td>
<td>Your posts express a personal opinion which does not evidence reading and/or understanding of the article provided.</td>
<td>You create and submit a post for the forum, but your participation is too general or unrelated to the contents of the unit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes:

• If you do not participate at all in the forum your grade will be 0.0.

• Be aware that you should participate in the forum at least once but no more than twice.

Participating in a forum means far more than just saying “I agree” or “I disagree” to other student’s posts. The following recommendations will guide you when structuring your own posts:

• You should submit your initial post(s) early in the session, and your subsequent responses to the posts of other learners at timely intervals within the duration of the session. Keep in mind the goal is to have a dynamic discussion that lasts throughout the entire session.

• Your posts and responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Just posting an "I agree" or "Good ideas" will not be considered adequate. Support your statements with examples, experiences, or references. You are, however, encouraged to be brief — keep each post and response to one or two short paragraphs. Keep in mind that your fellow learners will be reading and responding to you, too.

• Make certain to address the discussion prompt(s). This does not mean you should not extend the topic, but do not stray from the topic.

• Discussions occur when there is dialogue. So, build upon the posts and responses of other learners to create discussion threads. Make sure you revisit the discussion forum and respond (if necessary) to what other learners have posted to your initial responses.

• When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, Web sites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate).

• Your contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.
Wiki

The following criteria will be used to assess your individual contributions to the Wiki as a collective creation of knowledge about cultural groups from an organizational perspective.

On the upcoming units of the course, you will find further instructions and activities to be developed on your Wiki.

Please

- A new page should be created for each activity, not for each student.
- The contribution by each student is limited to 500 words.
- The assessment criteria follows an incremental pattern in which you need to fulfill every step in order to achieve the maximum score. (You will not be awarded 5 points unless you fulfill requirements 1 to 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature review (60%)</td>
<td>You reference new sources that add academic value to the Wiki or evidence the practical application of the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You use proper referencing in your contributions including and privileging the use of academic sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Your contributions to the page are meaningful, organized. There is an adequate use of sources and referencing, but you mostly use the sources provided or suggested in the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Your contributions to every page relate directly to the unit of the course in which the activity is proposed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You make contributions to every page based on your common sense adding very little value to the Wiki.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 6: Motivation

Learning outcomes

To study motivation through diverse theories will enable you to understand what moves individuals to behave in a certain way. That, taken to an organizational context will allow you to analyze what motivates employees in different cultural and organizational contexts.

Learning Activities

Taking motivation theories to practical situations: after reviewing the selected motivation theories, you should be able to use them to understand practical situations.

Work plan

1. Review the selected motivation theories by reading chapter 5 of the textbook by Nelson & Quick or/and the article “Employees Motivation Theories Developed at an International Level”. Keep in mind the following questions in order to prepare to participate in the forum:

   ✓ Is every person motivated by the same factors?
✓ Is it important to understand individual needs in order to understand individual behavior?

**Forum:** participate in the forum named “Understanding motivation”:

**Wiki:** research and write in your wiki about the role of motivation at work in the context of the specific cultural group assigned for this project. The following questions may be useful when writing in your Wiki:

- What moves people to behave in a certain way within organizations?
- What are the traditional motivation strategies used by organizations?
- Which theory better explains motivation at work when it comes to the assigned group?

**Key Concepts**

- Motivation
- Theories
  - Internal Needs vs. external incentives
  - The Hawthorne Studies
  - Maslow’s hierarchy of needs
  - Theory X and Y
  - ERG Theory
  - McClelland’s need theory
  - Herzberg’s two-factor theory
  - Expectancy theory
  - Adam’s Equity Theory on Job Motivation

**Learning resources**


- Viorel, Lefter, Manolescu Aurel, Marinas Cristian Virgil, and Puia Ramona Stefania. 2009. "EMPLOYEES MOTIVATION THEORIES DEVELOPED AT AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL." Annals of the University of Oradea,
Further Reading

- Changing Minds Website, offers simplified explanations about many theories relating to motivation:

- Check the following link to read about the relationship about motivation and job performance: http://www.accel-team.com/motivation/index.html [January, 2014]

- To learn more about Maslow’s theory, check the following web site: http://www.abraham-maslow.com/m_motivation/Theory_of_Human_Motivation.asp [January, 2014]

- Join the Virtual Psychology Classroom to review the chapter about Motivation and Emotion: http://allpsych.com/psychology101/emotion.html [January, 2014]

- Are you wondering about the practical application of Herzberg’s theory? Click on the following link to learn how this theory can be used to understand change processes in organizations: http://www.strategies-for-managing-change.com/herzberg-motivation-theory.html [January, 2014]

References

Activity assessment

FORUM

The following criteria will be used to assess your participation in the forum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5,0</th>
<th>4,0</th>
<th>3,0</th>
<th>2,0</th>
<th>1,0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your posts evidence critical analysis; it has professional application, and elicits responses and reflection from other students.</td>
<td>Your posts evidence reading and understanding of the article provided, and shows application of the key concepts of the unit.</td>
<td>Your posts express a personal opinion which does not evidence reading and/or understanding of the article provided.</td>
<td>You create and submit a post for the forum, but your participation is too general or unrelated to the contents of the unit.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

- **If you do not participate at all in the forum your grade will be 0,0.**
- **Be aware that you should participate in the forum at least once but no more than twice.**

Participating in a forum means far more than just saying “I agree” or “I disagree” to other student’s posts. The following recommendations will guide you when structuring your own posts*:

- You should submit your initial post(s) early in the session, and your subsequent responses to the posts of other learners at timely intervals within the duration of the session. Keep in mind the goal is to have a dynamic discussion that lasts throughout the entire session.
- Your posts and responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Just posting an "I agree" or "Good ideas" will not be considered adequate. Support your statements with examples, experiences, or references. You are, however, encouraged to be brief — keep each post and response to one or two short
paragraphs. Keep in mind that your fellow learners will be reading and responding to you, too.

• Make certain to address the discussion prompt(s). This does not mean you should not extend the topic, but do not stray from the topic.

• Discussions occur when there is dialogue. So, build upon the posts and responses of other learners to create discussion threads. Make sure you revisit the discussion forum and respond (if necessary) to what other learners have posted to your initial responses.

• When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, Web sites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate).

• Your contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.

*Source:
http://www.pbs.org/teacherline/courses/common_documents/disc_assess.htm
[January, 2013]

Wiki

The following criteria will be used to assess your individual contributions to the Wiki as a collective creation of knowledge about cultural groups from an organizational perspective.

On the upcoming units of the course, you will find further instructions and activities to be developed on your Wiki.

Please

• A new page should be created for each activity, not for each student.

• The contribution by each student is limited to 500 words.

• The assessment criteria follows and incremental pattern in which you need to fulfill every step in order to achieve the maximum score. (You will not be awarded 5 points unless you fulfill requirements 1 to 5).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature review (60%)</td>
<td>You reference new sources that add academic value to the Wiki or evidence the practical application of the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation and Consistency (40%)</td>
<td>The collective result for each activity (each page) is consistent, organized and provides significant knowledge about the assigned cultural group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 7: Communication**

**Learning outcomes**

Human beings are social beings by nature; meaning that they interact and
communicate constantly with others. To build successful relationships, within an organizational context, which leads to the development to individuals and organizations, communication processes, need to be effective. Through this activity you will learn about the key elements of communication as a process, the common barriers to such process and even some characteristics of effective managers in terms of communication.

Learning Activities

Through this activity you will learn the basics about the communication process and analyze how it impacts organizational performance. When you think about communication, you need to broaden your horizons to include more than words; communication takes place in many ways within organizations: from written notices to body language, there are many ways of effectively communicating a message.

Work plan

1. Review chapter 8 of the textbook about communication and the link about barriers to effective communication (see the learning resources section). Make sure all the key concepts for this activity are covered.

• Forum: Read carefully the article “A Sound Strategy for Intercontinental Hotels”, considering the key concepts previously reviewed, and prepare to participate in the forum named “Communication Strategies: Beyond the Use of Words”.

• Wiki: research and write in your wiki about the traditional communication style of organizations in the context of the specific cultural group assigned for this project. The following questions may be useful when writing in your Wiki:

  ✓ Which are the traditional communication channels in organizations?
  ✓ How do leaders communicate with employees?
  ✓ Is there a relation between the corporate strategy and the communications strategy?
Does the communication style in organizations reflect the way messages are communicated in society outside organizations?

**Key Concepts**

- **Communication**
- **Interpersonal communication**
  - Communicator, receiver, perceptual screens, message
- **Principles of effective communication**
- **Defensive and non-defensive communication**
- **Reflective listening**
- **Effective communication at the workplace**
  - Expressive speakers, empathetic listeners, persuasive leaders, informative managers,
- **Communication barriers**: language, physical and socio-psychological barriers
- **Communication strategy**

**Learning resources**


**Further Reading**

- For some recommendations about reflective listening, go to: http://www.eruptingmind.com/reflective-listening/ [January, 2013]
• You can improve your communication skills just by paying attention to how other people communicate. Let’s take some lessons from the last US election from president: Learning from Obama’s Effective Communication Skills. Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2rp-oBjJzg [January, 2014]

• Video: Coca Cola Enterprises Transforming the Business. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ds8h1ncLxQQ [January, 2014]
When playing it, download the case study “Coca-Cola Enterprises Accelerates Executive Communications” http://www.cisco.com/web/about/ac79/docs/wp/CCE_CS_0905.pdf [January, 2014]

• Active listening? Reflective listening? What’s the difference? The following video will help you clarify these two Concepts: Active Listening vs. Reflective Listening, Do you know the difference?. Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6plWIFSzIs [January, 2014]

• To learn more about how to build a Communications strategy, check the following chapter: Designing a Communications Strategy. Available at: http://www.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/1226604865112265957811Chapter_6%5B1%5D.pdf [January, 2014]

• Effective Communications can become a competitive advantage. Check the following article to learn about it: Effective Organizational Communication: A Competitive Advantage. (2008). HRMagazine, 53(12), 1. Retrieved from EBSCOhost. Available at: http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&sid=2060313e-d572-4f09-b113-9a1327585087%40sessionmgr4001&hid=4203

References
Activity assessment

FORUM

The following criteria will be used to assess your participation in the forum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5,0</th>
<th>4,0</th>
<th>3,0</th>
<th>2,0</th>
<th>1,0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your posts evidence critical analysis; it has professional application, and elicits responses and reflection from other students.</td>
<td>Your posts evidence reading and understanding of the article provided, and shows application of the key concepts of the unit.</td>
<td>Your posts evidence reading and understanding of the article provided, but does not show application of the key concepts of the unit.</td>
<td>Your posts express a personal opinion which does not evidence reading and/or understanding of the article provided.</td>
<td>You create and submit a post for the forum, but your participation is too general or unrelated to the contents of the unit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

- If you do not participate at all in the forum your grade will be 0,0.
- Be aware that you should participate in the forum at least once but no more than twice.

Participating in a forum means far more than just saying “I agree” or “I disagree” to other student’s posts. The following recommendations will guide you when structuring your own posts*:

- You should submit your initial post(s) early in the session, and your subsequent responses to the posts of other learners at timely intervals within the duration of the session. Keep in mind the goal is to have a dynamic discussion that lasts throughout the entire session.
- Your posts and responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Just posting an "I agree" or "Good ideas" will not be considered adequate. Support your statements with examples, experiences, or references. You are, however,
encouraged to be brief — keep each post and response to one or two short paragraphs. Keep in mind that your fellow learners will be reading and responding to you, too.

- Make certain to address the discussion prompt(s). This does not mean you should not extend the topic, but do not stray from the topic.
- Discussions occur when there is dialogue. So, build upon the posts and responses of other learners to create discussion threads. Make sure you revisit the discussion forum and respond (if necessary) to what other learners have posted to your initial responses.
- When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, Web sites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate).
- Your contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.

Source:
http://www.pbs.org/teacherline/courses/common_documents/disc_assess.htm
[January, 2013]

Wiki

The following criteria will be used to assess your individual contributions to the Wiki as a collective creation of knowledge about cultural groups from an organizational perspective.

On the upcoming units of the course, you will find further instructions and activities to be developed on your Wiki.

Please

- A new page should be created for each activity, not for each student.
- The contribution by each student is limited to 500 words.
- The assessment criteria follows an incremental pattern in which you need to fulfill every step in order to achieve the maximum score. (You will not be awarded 5 points unless you fulfill requirements 1 to 5).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literature review (60%)</strong></td>
<td>You reference new sources that add academic value to the Wiki or evidence the practical application of the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation and Consistency (40%)</strong></td>
<td>The collective result for each activity (each page) is consistent, organized and provides significant knowledge about the assigned cultural group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 8: Virtual Teams

Learning outcomes

This activity aims at reviewing and testing your understanding about the functioning of virtual teams, as well as the potential advantages, disadvantages and difficulties resulting from its use within organizations.

Learning Activities

What are they? How do they work? What’s the difference with other teams or groups?

When you consider individuals working for an organization, the fact that they need to work together towards a common purpose is undeniable. Do they form groups or teams? Are team members located geographically close? Or are we talking about a team which involves members in distant locations? Then we are talking about virtual teams.

Work plan

1. Read the article “Virtual Teams: a Literature Review”. Make sure the key concepts are covered and clear. (See the key concepts section). If you need further information, you may want to review other learning resources proposed for this activity. (see the learning resources section)

• Forum: after reviewing the article, watch the video “Building the Virtual Team” available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u997kUDE88Q [January, 2014] and prepare to participate in the forum named “Will Virtual Teams Replace Traditional Teams?”

• Wiki: research and write in your wiki about how teams work in the context of the specific cultural group assigned for this project. The following questions may be useful when writing in your Wiki:
  ✓ What is the role of the leader?
How does the interaction of team members take place?
What are the usual communication channels?
How is performance measured?

For this assignment you may choose to focus on traditional teams, virtual teams to address both.

Key Concepts
• Team
• Tele-work
• Virtual groups / virtual teams
• Key characteristics of virtual teams
• Advantages, disadvantages, difficulties
• Effective virtual teams
• Virtual communities

Learning resources


Further Reading

- Virtual teams offer many potential advantages but they also impose great challenges. Read the following article to learn how to deal with them:

- On the following web site, Effective Meetings shows the findings of a study in the US about the outcomes of using virtual teams. Available at: http://www.effectivemeetings.com/technology/virtualteam/mci10.asp [January, 2014]

- If you want to learn more about virtual communities, review the article “Definitions, Antecedents and Outcomes of Successful Virtual Communities”. Available at: http://www.irma-international.org/viewtitle/48739/


- Virtual teams offer many potential advantages but they also impose great challenges. S Read the following article to learn how to deal with them:

References


• Building the Virtual Team. Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u997kUDE88Q [January, 2014]

Activity assessment

FORUM

The following criteria will be used to assess your participation in the forum:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5,0</th>
<th>4,0</th>
<th>3,0</th>
<th>2,0</th>
<th>1,0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your posts evidence critical analysis; it has professional application, and elicits responses and reflection from other students.</td>
<td>Your posts evidence reading and understanding of the article provided, and shows application of the key concepts of the unit.</td>
<td>Your posts evidence reading and understanding of the article provided, but does not show application of the key concepts of the unit.</td>
<td>Your posts express a personal opinion which does not evidence reading and/or understanding of the article provided.</td>
<td>You create and submit a post for the forum, but your participation is too general or unrelated to the contents of the unit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes:

• If you do not participate at all in the forum your grade will be 0.0.
• Be aware that you should participate in the forum at least once but no more than twice.

Participating in a forum means far more than just saying “I agree” or “I disagree” to other student’s posts. The following recommendations will guide you when structuring your own posts*:

• You should submit your initial post(s) early in the session, and your subsequent responses to the posts of other learners at timely intervals within the duration of the session. Keep in mind the goal is to have a dynamic discussion that lasts throughout the entire session.
• Your posts and responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Just posting an "I agree" or "Good ideas" will not be considered adequate. Support your statements with examples, experiences, or references. You are, however, encouraged to be brief — keep each post and response to one or two short paragraphs. Keep in mind that your fellow learners will be reading and responding to you, too.
• Make certain to address the discussion prompt(s). This does not mean you should not extend the topic, but do not stray from the topic.
• Discussions occur when there is dialogue. So, build upon the posts and responses of other learners to create discussion threads. Make sure you revisit the discussion forum and respond (if necessary) to what other learners have posted to your initial responses.
• When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, Web sites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate).
• Your contributions to the discussions (posts and responses) should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.

*Source:

http://www.pbs.org/teacherline/courses/common_documents/disc_assess.htm
[January, 2013]
Wiki

The following criteria will be used to assess your individual contributions to the Wiki as a collective creation of knowledge about cultural groups from an organizational perspective.

On the upcoming units of the course, you will find further instructions and activities to be developed on your Wiki.

Please

- A new page should be created for each activity, not for each student.
- The contribution by each student is limited to 500 words.
- The assessment criteria follows an incremental pattern in which you need to fulfill every step in order to achieve the maximum score. (You will not be awarded 5 points unless you fulfill requirements 1 to 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature review (60%)</td>
<td>You reference new sources that add academic value to the Wiki or evidence the practical application of the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation and Consistency (40%)</td>
<td>The collective result for each activity (each page) is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consistent, organized and provides significant knowledge about the assigned cultural group.0</td>
<td>elements or concepts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>