OBHR101 MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE AT WORK

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course focuses on managing people in the workplace. Students learn theoretical and conceptual foundations for understanding people, groups, and organizations, and practical tools for accomplishing personal, group, and organizational objectives. Topics include work motivation, decision making, organizational culture, organizational change and stress management, power and politics, personality and individual differences, and work values, attitudes, and emotions, among others.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
• Define key organizational behavior terms
• Identify organizational behavior constructs in organizational settings
• Analyze organizational problems using major organizational behavior theories
• Put organizational behavior theories into practice to address organizational problems

PRE-REQUISITE/ CO-REQUISITE/ MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSE(S)
Please refer to the Course Catalogue on OASIS for the most updated list of pre-requisites / co-requisites for this particular course. Do note that if this course has a co-requisite, it means that the course has to be taken together with another course. Dropping one course during BOSS bidding would result in both courses being dropped at the same time.

ASSESSMENT METHODS
1. Final Exam 35%
2. Class Participation 20%
3. Group Case Presentation 15%
4. Group Project 27%
5. OB Research Participation 3%

1. Final Exam (35%):
The exam will be closed-book and consist of 60 multiple choice questions and 2 short essay questions. There will be no make-up exams, indicating that you must take the exam at the scheduled place and time. Make-up exams will be arranged only with university excused absences, such as being under uncontrollable circumstances (e.g., medical emergencies and death of family members) and you must get a prior approval from me 24 hours before the scheduled exam time. In the case that you take a make-up exam, you must provide me with supporting documents that justify your absence, such as a doctor’s note.

2. Class participation (20%):
This is intended to encourage your class participation. However, you do not have to feel compelled to speak in every class just to give an impression of participation in class discussion. Points will be given for quality and quantity. Specifically, class participation will be evaluated based on 1) attendance
record, 2) participation in discussion, 3) provision of unique insights and ideas, and 4) participation in group project assessed by group members. Please note that your attendance record will be taken to determine your participation score. A significant number of your absence from class will force me to fail you in this course.

3. **Group Case Presentation (15%)**:
Seven cases are assigned (5-6 students per group). Seven groups would be formed where each group will present one of the cases. The presenting group for each case will prepare a 15-20 minute presentation (in powerpoint and only the powerpoint file has to be turned in at the end of class) outlining the issues and possible means of resolving those issues. Alternatively, guiding questions are also provided.

Five of the other seven groups will ask the presenting group at least two questions (to be prepared prior to the class and turned in during class as part of the assessment-asking groups) while the last group will help the presenting group (the helping group). The helping group has to anticipate two potential questions posed to the presenting group and be prepared to handle those two questions as well.

The 15% assessment grade includes the case presentation, the questions posed and the defense provided in all the case sessions.

The following is a schedule of group responsibilities:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>Group 5</th>
<th>Group 6</th>
<th>Group 7</th>
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<tr>
<td>Case 1</td>
<td>Presenter</td>
<td>Asking</td>
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<td>Helping</td>
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<td>Case 2</td>
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<td>Presenter</td>
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<td>Case 3</td>
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<td>Case 4</td>
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<td>Case 5</td>
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<td>Case 6</td>
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<td>Case 7</td>
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<td>Helping</td>
<td>Presenter</td>
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4. **Group Project (27%)**:
Each group has to write a critical case incident within an organizational setting. Group members have to interview key members of the incident for facts and information. The purpose of the project is for students to learn how to analyze the facts presented with a logical theoretical frame derived from this course, hence linking theory with practice. There are THREE steps to this assignment.

**STEP 1: Notes to get you started**
Identify an individual who could provide you with a critical case incident. This individual must have substantial organizational experience.

Interview the identified individual with the following guide:

a) Describe a “dilemma or decision” that happened to you at work in which strong emotions were evoked (e.g. puzzled, confused, shocked, happy etc). Include as many details as you can remember and include as many of the following senses as possible (e.g. sounds, sights, smells, emotions, conversations).

b) Who are the other key players in this incident? Step back and place yourself in these other players’ place. Describe the incident from their perspectives. Describe the key players in terms of demographics and psychosocial issues: age, race, education, gender, work experience with the company, leadership style, personality, beliefs etc.

c) Outline the history that led to the event.

d) Describe the context in which this event happened. That is, for what kind of organization did you and the key players work? How large is the company? What kind of business is the company in?
e) Are there exhibits (e.g., organizational charts, diagram of the office) that you can include in your case incident to help you clarify the case?
f) What happened later after the incident?

STEP 2: Narrative (About 7-10 double-spaced pages)
Next, write the case using the notes from Step 1. The case should be in narrative story form and the group has to weave the facts together in the story. Some pointers while writing the case:

a) Write in PAST tense. Use third person (she/he NOT I/we).
b) Describe the interviewee and the key players from an objective viewpoint.
c) Be truthful, do not make up people or events.
d) Please disguise the case by changing peoples’ names or other identifying information that you do not want others to know about. If you disguise names, please use regular names (e.g., not Mr. Troublemaker, but Mr. Lee).
e) Include enough detail in the case for someone who has no experience with the organization to develop some hypotheses or a list of factors that might explain the behavior.

Suggested format for the narrative:
a) Opening – Write an interesting opening to catch the attention of the reader.
b) Main Body – Include enough detail so that others would understand the problem faced. In particular, describe the industry in which the narrative took place (e.g., small semiconductor manufacturing plant).
c) Conclusion – Conclude the case narrative by leaving the reader “hanging”, wondering what to do.
d) Epilogue – Write what is happening to the company and the main players at this moment in time, or the last you heard about them.

STEP 3: Analysis (About 5-7 double-spaced pages)
Write THREE different types of questions based on one or at most two of the topics listed below. Analyze the case narrative based on theories and principles learnt from class.

After raising each question, answer each question thoroughly. Please use relevant theories to explain case factors or to suggest why an action occurred or a decision was made. How you apply the theories to the case will demonstrate your understanding of the theories. Please use the terms correctly and illustrate the theory appropriately, linking them to the case facts.

Remember to cite appropriate references (author, year, page number) when information is used from the textbook, other books, and articles. This list of references has to be included together with the report. References to or extracts from books, papers, and other sources must be duly acknowledged. Please list the URL of the web pages should your information be obtained from the www. Please also include the name and contact of the person in the organization that you wrote about.

Please turn in only an electronic copy of your final case incident (including exhibits) on eLearn on the due date (to be announced in class).

The total length of the project should not be more than 17 double-spaced pages of font size 12. Appendices and exhibits do not count towards the 17 page limit.

What to do for the Presentation
Each group has to do a 15-minute presentation of your case during the last class session. In your presentation, present a brief outline of the case (5 minutes) and then the main learning points, focusing on the answers to the questions you have developed (10 minutes).

5. OB Research Participation (3%):
As one of your requirements for this course, you are expected to participate in research studies being conducted by the OBHR faculty at SMU. Each student is expected to complete three units of research participation during the term; each unit typically involves one hour of participation. (Therefore, your total requirement is three hours for the term). Each unit of participation is worth 1 percentage point (or 3% for all three units) out of a possible 100% total in this course.

Information regarding research studies will be provided throughout the term on the Business School’s online SPS at https://mercury.smu.edu.sg/SPS. You also sign up for studies conveniently through
the same website. Note that most studies will be offered during the second half of the term, so there is no need to worry if you have not been able to complete all studies by the middle of the term. Be assured that there will be a minimum of four studies over the term. Please note, however, that we cannot guarantee that you will be able to get the full three credits if you are picky about the specific dates and times you sign up for sessions.

In order to enable smooth and efficient data collection, it is important that you show up for study sessions you signed up for. Cancellations need to be made via the SPS as soon as possible and at the latest by the time specified in the SPS for that particular study. Should you fail to show up for a session you signed up for (and did not cancel in time), one percentage point will be deducted from your account.

To make sure you are credited the number of percentage points you deserve, it is your responsibility to check via SPS by the day before finals week that your participation has been correctly recorded in the SPS. If you suspect that there has been a mistake, immediately contact the SPS administrator or your instructor. Any complaint received after that time will be considered only at our absolute discretion as grades may have been submitted already.

Besides contributing to the specific research project, and ensuring that you receive your full participation credit points for MPW, there are several other benefits of participating in research studies. First, note that all the knowledge you will encounter in MPW is derived from research. By participating in research, you are able to contribute back to, and further build, that knowledge base. Second, by participating in research you gain insights into the nature of scientific investigation and the research process, which constitutes a valuable way of learning to improve organizational practices. And third, note that SMU aspires to excellence in teaching and research. For most of you, participating in research is one of the few opportunities you will have to contribute to the research mission of the university.

If for any reason you do not wish to participate in research studies, you can write a short research paper instead. This involves obtaining two scientific articles related to OBHR and that are not related to your other projects in this course. The papers should be written by SMU OBHR faculty (check SMU’s website for their CVs and download the papers from the library databases). These articles should not be completely opinion or discussion, but rather must be articles that describe scientific studies. After you obtain the articles, answer the following questions: What was the purpose of each study? What were the hypotheses? What was manipulated and/or measured? What were the results of this study? What are the implications of this study’s findings? You may discuss the two papers sequentially. The paper needs to be four pages minimum, with 1.5 line spacing. Each paper (each of which reviews two research articles) completed is worth one unit.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All acts of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of exam questions, or tampering with the academic work of other students) are serious offences.

All work (whether oral or written) submitted for purposes of assessment must be the student’s own work. Penalties for violation of the policy range from zero marks for the component assessment to expulsion, depending on the nature of the offence.

*When in doubt, students should consult the course instructor. Details on the SMU Code of Academic Integrity may be accessed at [http://www.smuscd.org/resources.html](http://www.smuscd.org/resources.html).*

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS**

Students learn through a combination of lectures, required readings, group project, interactive discussions, and a range of class activities, such as cases, video-based discussions, self-assessment, etc. You are expected to attend all class meetings, to read the relevant chapters of the textbook and course materials in advance, to participate in class activities, and to finish a group project.
CONSULTATIONS AND TEACHING ASSISTANTS
If you need to see me for consultation, please contact me to make appointment. My office and contact information are listed at the top of this course outline. I am also readily available by email.

CLASS TIMINGS
This course will be taught in 3-hour sessions, once per week.

RECOMMENDED TEXT AND READINGS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week-Session</th>
<th>Date (week starting)</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Preparation/Exercise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1            | Jan 6                | Introduction, The Myth and Reality of Being a Manager | Chapter 1 | | Read: (a) Bob Nardelli is watching – [www.fastcompany.com](http://www.fastcompany.com) and (b) The Bionic Manager – [www.fortune.com](http://www.fortune.com) Fortune 9/19/2005  
Questions:  
(a) Analyze both Nardelli’s and Immelt’s many different faces.  
(b) Of all the “faces” that were displayed, which face is most important to Jack Welch? Why?  
(c) Having had a glimpse of a CEO’s day, how would you rethink the roles played by managers? What do managers really do? |
Class Exercise: Designing a Research Study – to prepare, select a research question and think:  
(a) What type of research strategy (Experiment vs Field) would you adopt?  
(b) Who are the subjects of your study? Why are these subjects appropriate for the above hypothesis?  
(c) What is the independent variable? Dependent variable? How would you measure them?  
(d) What are some potential limitations to your study? |
<p>| 3            | Jan 20               | Perception and Attribution | Chapter 6, pp 200-209 | | MANAGEMENT MYSELF |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter/Section</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>Individual Differences: Values, Ability and Personality</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Bring an orange to class. Read – articles on MBTI, (a) <a href="http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-12-14/national/35847528_1_personality-types-myers-briggs-type-indicator-financial-success">http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-12-14/national/35847528_1_personality-types-myers-briggs-type-indicator-financial-success</a> (b) <a href="http://management.fortune.cnn.com/2013/05/15/mbti-problems/">http://management.fortune.cnn.com/2013/05/15/mbti-problems/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Feb 3</td>
<td>The Experience of Work – Attitudes; Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment and Emotions</td>
<td>Chapters 3, 4</td>
<td>Read: Happier people work Harder <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/04/opinion/sunday/do-happier-people-work-harder.html">http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/04/opinion/sunday/do-happier-people-work-harder.html</a></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>Motivation theories and Application (I)</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Read: Job Satisfaction vs. a Big Paycheck <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/12/jobs/12search.html">http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/12/jobs/12search.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feb 17</td>
<td>Motivation theories and Application (II)</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td>Class Exercise: Decision making exercise on Tan Ah Tiong – to be handed out in class</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Feb 24</td>
<td>Mid-Term Break &amp; Project Consultation</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Mar 3</td>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>Chapter 6, pp 210-220</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mar 10</td>
<td>Organizational Culture</td>
<td>Chapter 16</td>
<td>Write a one-page essay on the following before class: Describe the organizational culture of an organization you would like to work for. Are there aspects of that culture that you are not comfortable with?</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Mar 17</td>
<td>Change Management</td>
<td>Chapter 18</td>
<td>Video on Carlos Ghosn (no preparation needed).</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mar 24</td>
<td>Human Resource Policies and Practices</td>
<td>Chapter 17</td>
<td>Mini HR cases – to be handed out in class</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mar 31</td>
<td>Team Presentations</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Apr 7</td>
<td>Study Week – No class</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Apr 14</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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Case Listings and Questions

NOTE: Please access all of the following articles/readings via the library’s e-journal listings.

Case 1: Two reading assignments:
(b) Harvard Business School Case Study – Gender Equity, New York Times (NYT), Sep 7, 2013
1. From the readings, what are some of the main barriers faced by women in their progress up the management / corporate ladder?
2. Women have been perceived to be less suited for the managerial/leadership function.
   a. To what extent are the issues faced by women perceptual, or are they real?
   b. Where is this issue more prevalent? Asia? Europe? The United States? Or more specifically, Singapore? Why?
3. Suggest solutions to the issues faced by women at the workplace. How can some of these solutions be enacted by (a) the organization, (b) men in organizations and (c) women themselves?

Case 2: What a star, what a jerk, HBR, Sep 2001
Note: you may want to draw on the emotional intelligence literature to help you along.
1. Analyze the personalities of Jane, the supervisor, and her four immediate reports, Caroline, Tom, Jack and Andy.
2. How can Jane best manage her four reports, having analyzed their personalities?
3. Assess Jane’s performance as a supervisor at this point in time. Could she have done anything differently?
4. How does one manage the tradeoff between job performance and team collegiality?

Case 3: Two readings:
(a) After the layoffs, what next? HBR, Sep-Oct 1998
(b) How to cut pay, lay off 8,000 people, and still have workers who love you, Roth, Daniel, Fortune, 2/4/2002, Vol. 145, Issue 3
1. Denton said “That’s not what you told me when we paid $20,000 for that employee attitude survey”; To what extent are attitude surveys representative of true attitudes held by employees?
   a. What is the role of such surveys in the event of restructuring/layoffs?
   b. What is the best use of such surveys in organizations?
2. Emotional outbursts are frequent in layoff situations, as seen in the current case. When Agilent laid off its employees, the emotions that were experienced were different-why?
3. The loss of trust appears to be the most critical issue in the layoffs that Denton has just executed. How can Denton re-build this trust now?
4. What are the other key attitudinal indicators that Denton should keep track of in such a re-building exercise?

Case 4: When a new manager stumbles, who’s at fault? HBR, Mar-Apr 1996
1. What are the skills required of an effective manager? Evaluate Goldstone’s managerial effectiveness over the last six months he took on the job of a manager.
2. Using your knowledge of goal-setting theory, evaluate how goals were set up for Goldstone in Bulwark and its effectiveness.
3. “The people make the place” – evaluate the management development process in Bulwark and recommend how the system(s) can be improved.

Case 5: The best laid incentive plan, HBR, Jan 2003
1. What are the pros and cons of using quantitative indicators as the means of performance appraisal?
2. How does the use of “shame” motivate employees? Does it have a role in motivation, in organization at all?
3. How can motivation theories be used to understand the current system that is in place?
4. Execution appears to the issue here. How can Hiram walk the balance between the design of a great performance appraisal system and its execution?

Case 6: Just trying to help, HBR, June 2006.
1. Describe the organizational culture of Ralston Crane.
2. How are special project groups set up in Ralston? Why did that become an issue?
3. What can Guy do? Where does the problem really lie?
4. What lessons can you draw to help companies in such a situation resolve an issue such as Ralston’s special project team?
Case 7: Why are we losing all our good people, HBR, June 2008.

1. Commentator Anna Pringle puts most of the responsibility of losing talent on Mary Donillo, the Head of HR. Do you agree or disagree with her analysis?
2. What is the role of HR in any organization? And for that matter, in Sambian Partners?
3. Who bears the most direct responsibility for retaining talent in Sambian Partners? Why?
4. Now that you have had an entire semester’s class on organizational behavior, what should the CEO, Helen Gasbarian do to retain talent? Develop a comprehensive action plan for Helen and provide the rationale for your proposal.