Cheat Sheet: Industrial-Organizational Psychology

Essential Concepts

Industrial and Organizational Psychology Basics

- The field of I-O psychology had its birth in industrial psychology and the use of psychological concepts to aid in personnel selection. It includes industrial psychology, organizational psychology, human factors psychology, occupational health psychology, and humanitarian work psychology.

- Both WWI and WWII had a strong influence on the development of an expansion of industrial psychology in the United States and elsewhere—the tasks the psychologists were assigned led to the development of tests and research in how the psychological concepts could assist industry and other areas. This movement aided in expanding industrial psychology to include organizational psychology.

- The Hawthorne studies in the early 20th century explored organizational dynamics and interpersonal relations, leading to the identification of the "Hawthorne effect," which observes that individuals perform better when they know they are being watched.

- Frederick Taylor's work emphasized efficient workplace design, employee training, and time-motion studies to maximize company output and worker benefits.

- Lillian Gilbreth, a pioneering I-O psychologist, innovated time and motion studies to enhance productivity and ergonomics, introduced practical applications like refrigerator door shelves and trash can foot pedals, and made significant contributions to modern management and human factors psychology.

Hiring and Evaluating Employees

- Industrial psychology studies the attributes of jobs, applicants of those jobs, and methods for assessing fit to a job. These procedures include job analysis, applicant

testing, and interviews. It also studies and puts into place procedures for the orientation of new employees and ongoing training of employees.

- The process of hiring employees can be vulnerable to bias, which is illegal, and industrial psychologists must develop methods for adhering to the law in hiring.

- Performance appraisal systems are an active area of research and practice in industrial psychology.

Leadership and Organizational Culture

- Organizational psychology is concerned with the effects of interactions among people in the workplace on the employees themselves and on organizational productivity.

- Job satisfaction and its determinants and outcomes are a major focus of organizational psychology research and practice. Organizational psychologists have also studied the effects of management styles and leadership styles on productivity.

- In addition to the employees and management, organizational psychology also looks at the organizational culture and how that might affect productivity.

- The changing workplace requires organizations to adapt quickly to factors like technology, globalization, and demographics.

- Team structures are increasingly popular, but their productivity varies, and gender-balanced teams tend to perform better.

- Organizational culture, including observable artifacts and espoused values, plays a significant role, and diversity training can help reduce prejudice and improve teamwork. Contact between diverse groups can reduce prejudice, especially under conditions of equal standing, common goals, cooperation, and institutional support.

Workplace Design and Bias

- One aspect of organizational culture is the prevention and addressing of sexual and other forms of harassment in the workplace. Sexual harassment includes language, behavior, or displays that create a hostile environment; it also includes sexual favors requested in exchange for workplace rewards (i.e., quid pro quo).

- Industrial-organizational psychology has conducted extensive research on the triggers and causes of workplace violence and safety. This enables the organization to establish procedures that can identify these triggers before they become a problem.

- Human factors psychology, or ergonomics, studies the interface between workers and their machines and physical environments. Human factors psychologists specifically seek to design machines to better support the workers using them. Psychologists may

be involved in the design of work tools such as software, displays, or machines from the beginning of the design process or during the testing of an already developed product.

- Human factor psychologists are also involved in the development of best design recommendations and regulations. One important aspect of human factors psychology is enhancing worker safety.

- Human factors research involves efforts to understand and improve interactions between technology systems and their human operators. Human–software interactions are a large sector of this research.

Glossary

Americans with Disabilities Act

employers cannot discriminate against any individual based on a disability

bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ)

requirement of certain occupations for which denying an individual employment would otherwise violate the law, such as requirements concerning religion or sex

checklist

method used to reduce workplace accidents

creative teams

teams used to develop innovative possibilities or solutions

diversity training

training employees about cultural differences with the goal of improving teamwork

downsizing

process in which an organization tries to achieve greater overall efficiency by reducing the number of employees

Hawthorne effect

increase in performance of individuals who are noticed, watched, and paid attention to by researchers or supervisors

human factors psychology

branch of psychology that studies how workers interact with the tools of work and how to design those tools to optimize workers' productivity, safety, and health

humanitarian work psychology

works to improve the conditions of individuals who have faced serious disaster or who are part of an underserved population

immutable characteristic

traits that employers cannot use to discriminate in hiring, benefits, promotions, or termination; these traits are fundamental to one's personal identity (e.g. skin color and hair texture)

industrial and organizational (I-O) psychology

field in psychology that applies scientific principles to the study of work and the workplace

industrial psychology

branch of psychology that studies job characteristics, applicant characteristics, and how to match them; also studies employee training and performance appraisal

job analysis

determining and listing tasks associated with a particular job

job insecurity

a state of uncertainty experienced by individuals regarding the stability of their employment

job satisfaction

degree of pleasure that employees derive from their job

job stress (job strain)

stress caused by specific stressors in an occupation

KSAs

knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the job

occupational health psychology (OHP)

deals with the stress, diseases, and disorders that can affect employees as a result of the workplace; concerned with the overall well-being of both employees and organizations

organizational culture

values, visions, hierarchies, norms and interactions between its employees; how an organization is run, how it operates, and how it makes decisions

organizational psychology

branch of psychology that studies the interactions between people working in organizations and the effects of those interactions on productivity

performance appraisal

evaluation of an employee's success or lack of success at performing the duties of the job

problem resolution teams

teams created for the purpose of solving a particular problem or issue

procedural justice

fairness by which means are used to achieve results in an organization

scientific management

a theory of management that analyzes and synthesizes workflows with the main objective of improving economic efficiency, especially labor productivity

sexual harassment

sexually-based behavior that is knowingly unwanted and has an adverse effect on a person's employment status, interferes with a person's job performance, or creates a hostile or intimidating work environment

tactical teams

teams used to execute a well-defined plan or objective

telecommuting

employees' ability to set their own hours allowing them to work from home at different parts of the day

Theory X

assumes workers are inherently lazy and unproductive; managers must have control and use punishments

Theory Y

assumes workers are people who seek to work hard and productively; managers and workers can find creative solutions to problems; workers do not need to be controlled and punished

transactional leadership style

characteristic of leaders who focus on supervision and organizational goals achieved through a system of rewards and punishments; maintenance of the organizational status quo

transformational leadership style

characteristic of leaders who are charismatic role models, inspirational, intellectually stimulating, and individually considerate and who seek to change the organization

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, or genetic information

work–family balance

occurs when people juggle the demands of work life with the demands of family life

workplace violence

violence or the threat of violence against workers; can occur inside or outside the workplace

work team

group of people within an organization or company given a specific task to achieve together