YEAR	TRIPOS	PAPER NO. & TITLE	NAME OF AUTHOR
2013	Engineering Tripos Part IIA	3E6 Organisational Behaviour	Dr Jochen Menges

1. (a) According to the job characteristics model, what characteristics make jobs motivating? [30%]

Students should cite Hackman and Oldham (1976) and identify and explain the five core job dimensions of the Job Characteristics Model:

- Skill variety
- Task identity
- Task significance
- Autonomy
- Feedback

(b) How can jobs be redesigned? [30%]

Students should explain each of the following concepts and give appropriate examples:

- Job rotation
- Job enlargement
- Job enrichment, specifically:
    - Combining tasks increases skill variety and task identity.
    - Forming natural work units increases task identity and task significance.
    - Establishing client relationships increases skill variety, autonomy and feedback.
    - Expanding jobs vertically increases autonomy.
    - Opening feedback channels increases feedback.

(c) What is the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation? Why does that difference matter in the workplace? [40%]

Students should explain and contrast intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Furthermore, students need discuss the benefits and drawbacks of both concepts within the context of work:

- Intrinsic Motivation: The desire to engage in an activity because we enjoy it or find it interesting, not because of external rewards or pressures.

Final Version

- Extrinsic Motivation: The desire to engage in an activity because of external reasons, not because we enjoy the task or find it interesting.
- Intrinsic motivation is inexpensive and effective, but can be weakened by extrinsic rewards.
- Extrinsic motivation is expensive and effective to the extent that it is appropriately channelled. Extrinsic motivation is strengthened by extrinsic rewards.
- Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are not mutually exclusive, but can be combined.

2. (a) What is organisational culture? [20%]

Students should cite relevant work and discuss existing definitions:

- Organisational culture describes "the deep structure of organizations" (Denison, 1996, p. 624). As such, culture is a system of shared values, norms, beliefs, and assumptions "that define appropriate attitudes and behaviors for organizational members (how to feel and behave)" (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1996, p. 160).
- Organisational culture is concerned with how employees perceive an organisation's culture, not whether or not they like it.

(b) Explain the factors that sustain an organisation's culture. [40%]

Students should elaborate on factors such as

- Attraction-selection-attrition
- Socialisation
- Rituals
- Stories
- Material symbols
- Language

(c) Is it better for organisations to have a strong or a weak culture? [40%]

Students should offer a balanced discussion of the benefits and drawbacks of strong cultures:

- In a strong culture, the organisation's core values are both intensely held and widely shared.
- On the upside, strong cultures:
    - have great influence on the employees' behaviour,
    - increase cohesiveness,
    - result in lower employee turnover.

Final Version

- On the downside, strong cultures also constitute a
  - o barrier to change,
  - o barrier to diversity,
  - o barrier to acquisitions and mergers.

3. (a) Describe the characteristics of transactional and transformational leaders. [30%]

Students should cite relevant work such as Bass (1985) and explain the following characteristics:

- Transactional leaders:
  - o Contingent reward
  - o Management by exception, active and passive
- Transformational leaders:
  - o Idealised influence
  - o Inspirational motivation
  - o Intellectual stimulation
  - o Individualized consideration

(b) How does transformational leadership affect employees? [30%]

Students should cite relevant work (e.g., Bass, 1985; Shamir et al., 1993) and elaborate on the mechanisms that explain why transformational leaders are so effective:

- Transformational leaders exert cognitive and affective influence on employees.
- Transformational leaders change employees' self concept.
- Transformational leaders inspire employees to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the organisation.
- Transformational leadership builds on top of transactional leadership and produces levels of employee effort and performance that go beyond what would occur with a transactional approach alone.

(c) Should organisations promote charismatic employees into leadership positions? [40%]

Students should discuss the benefits and drawbacks of giving charismatic people leadership responsibilities. Such a discussion should emphasize the extraordinary effectiveness of charismatic leadership, but also the risk of charismatic leaders leading people into the wrong direction. Particular emphasis should be paid to the ethical aspects of charismatic leadership:

Final Version

- Charismatic people usually make good leaders if they
  - use power to serve others
  - align their vision with followers' needs and aspirations
  - consider and learn from criticism
  - stimulate followers to think independently and to question the leader's view
  - offer open, two-way communication
  - coach, develop, and support followers; share recognition with others
  - rely on internal moral standards to satisfy organisational and societal interests

4. (a) What elicits emotions at work? Describe and discuss affective events theory. [40%]

According to Affective Events Theory by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996), emotions are triggered by daily events that occur within the work environment. Students should explain and critically discuss the theory in detail.

(b) How do emotions affect work outcomes? [30%]

Students can draw on a wide array of research findings and should explain how emotions affect at least four relevant outcomes:

- Job performance
- Creativity
- Leadership effectiveness
- Prosocial behaviour and deviant behaviour
- Turnover / absence
- Decision making
- Negotiation outcomes

(c) To what extent are positive emotions desirable in the work place? [30%]

Students should offer a balanced discussion of the benefits and drawbacks of positive emotions. Such a discussion should acknowledge that positive emotions broaden our thought and action repertoires and build resources. The extent to which positive emotions are desirable in the work place depends on the appropriateness of those emotions. If positive emotions cloud judgements and create comfort when the situation is dangerous, then positive emotions can be damaging.

END OF PAPER

Final Version

- Charismatic people usually make good leaders if they
  - use power to serve others
  - align their vision with followers' needs and aspirations
  - consider and learn from criticism
  - stimulate followers to think independently and to question the leader's view
  - offer open, two-way communication
  - coach, develop, and support followers; share recognition with others
  - rely on internal moral standards to satisfy organisational and societal interests

4. (a) What elicits emotions at work? Describe and discuss affective events theory. [40%]

According to Affective Events Theory by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996), emotions are triggered by daily events that occur within the work environment. Students should explain and critically discuss the theory in detail.

(b) How do emotions affect work outcomes? [30%]

Students can draw on a wide array of research findings and should explain how emotions affect at least four relevant outcomes:

- Job performance
- Creativity
- Leadership effectiveness
- Prosocial behaviour and deviant behaviour
- Turnover / absence
- Decision making
- Negotiation outcomes

(c) To what extent are positive emotions desirable in the work place? [30%]

Students should offer a balanced discussion of the benefits and drawbacks of positive emotions. Such a discussion should acknowledge that positive emotions broaden our thought and action repertoires and build resources. The extent to which positive emotions are desirable in the work place depends on the appropriateness of those emotions. If positive emotions cloud judgements and create comfort when the situation is dangerous, then positive emotions can be damaging.

END OF PAPER

Final Version