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# ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

## MBA640

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Unit # 2

Individual Differences and Perception

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# Unit Introduction

- In this unit, we will begin to explore the psychological and sociological issues that form the foundations of Organizational Behavior.
  - We will also explore how to go about performing competent research into Organizational Behavior topics.
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# Topics we'll cover in this unit

## ■ Chapter 3

- Individual differences
- Diversity
- Abilities vs. Skills
- Attitudes
- Personality
- Locus of control
- Emotional Intelligence

## ■ Chapter 4

- The perceptual process
  - Cognitive biases (grouping errors)
  - Impression management
  
  - Appendix A
    - Research introduction
    - Methods of research
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# Reminders

- As we enter the second unit of our course, we should be:
    - Thinking deeply and critically about the topics that we are learning. Do not just skim the surface, but spend time thinking about how they affect how we manage and treat others.
    - Thinking deeply about the application of Biblical concepts to the course topics that we are learning.
  - At this point you should have selected the organization for your service learning and portfolio project.
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# Biblical Foundation

- I Corinthians 10:31-33 (NIV)

<sup>31</sup> So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. <sup>32</sup> Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— <sup>33</sup> even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

**Treatment of persons should be a paramount concern of a workplace leader employing a Christian worldview.**

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# Variables affecting work behavior

As you think about these variables, think about Psalm 139:13-15



These variables give workplace behavior its complexity and make it interesting.

# Diversity

Diversity: those attributes that make people different from one another.

Primary Dimension	Secondary (Dimensions)
Age	Educational background
Ethnicity	Marital status
Gender	Religious beliefs
Physical attributes	Health
Race	Work experience
Sexual/affectional orientation	

Primary dimensions are usually considered stable or difficult to change

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# Diversity, (cont.)

- Diversity is NOT:
  - Just understanding demographic projections
  - A synonym for equal employment opportunities
  - The same thing as “differences”
- Stop now and watch Dr. Samuel Betances discuss the how diversity and differences are not the same thing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWTtfuWawp8>

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# Diversity, (cont.)

## Benefits of Diversity in the Workplace

Enhanced decision  
quality

Better connection with  
customers

More creative  
innovation

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# Abilities and skills

## Ability

A person's talent to perform a mental or physical task.

- Often thought of as innate or “born with”
- Can be developed

## Skill

A **LEARNED** talent that a person has acquired to perform a task.

- Can be developed
- Development may have a limit or “cap”

Good leaders know they cannot do everything, but capitalize on their strengths and work to overcome any lack of ability or skill.

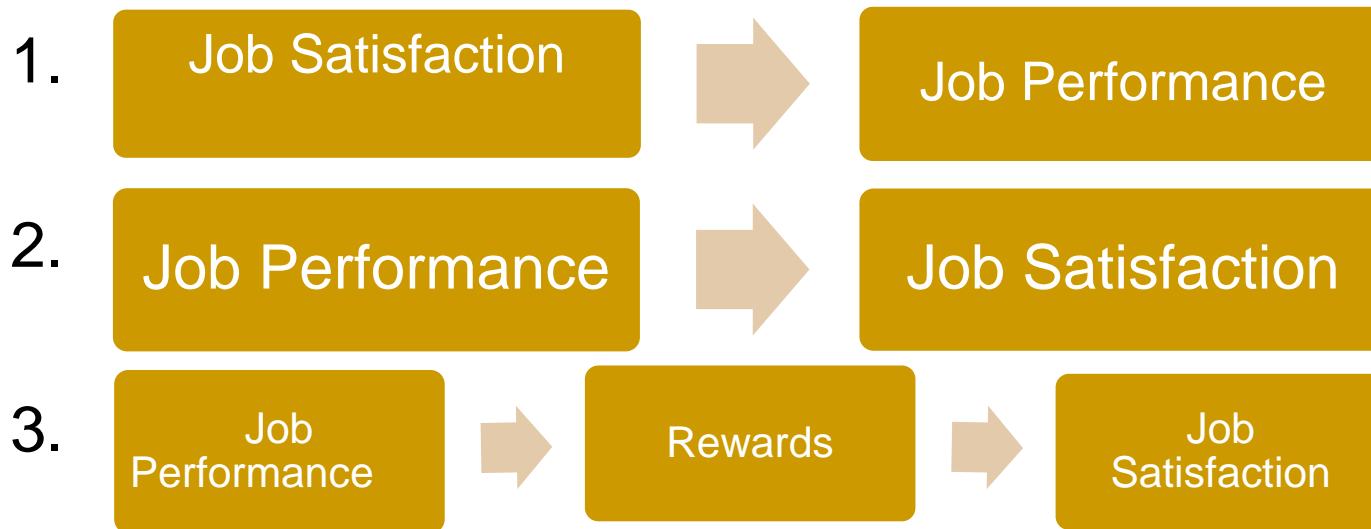
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# Attitudes

- Attitude: a mental state of readiness for need arousal.
  - Key facts:
    - Everyone has attitudes about many things
    - Attitudes define how you are predisposed to think about those things.
    - Attitudes are learned.
    - Attitudes provide the emotional basis for how you interact with others.
    - Attitudes are close to the core of personality.
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# Attitudes, (cont.)

- Attitudes are relatively permanent, but may change.
- Attitudes toward work affect performance, but there are three theories of why.



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# Personality

**Personality:** Relatively stable set of feelings and behaviors that have been significantly formed by genetic and environmental factors.

1. Has observable and measurable patterns.
  2. Has superficial aspects as well as a deeper core.
  3. Involves common and unique characteristics. (People are all different, but have many similarities).
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# Big Five Personality Dimensions

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## Extroversion

Tendency to be sociable, gregarious, talkative, assertive, etc.

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- People high in extroversion tend to enjoy talking and interaction
- People high in extroversion perform well in sales and management
- People high in extroversion tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction.

## Emotional stability

Tendency to experience positive emotional states (calmness, security, serenity).

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- Link to job performance is weak, but links to other work factors are strong.

## Agreeableness

Tendency to be courteous, forgiving, tolerant or trusting.

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- “Gets along with others”
  - Gravitate toward nursing, auditing, sales, social work.
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# Big Five, (cont.)

## Conscientiousness

Characterized by dependability, organization and responsibility

- Tend to exhibit higher levels of job motivation and satisfaction
- Highly valued by all organizations.

## Openness to experience

Extent to which a person has broad interests and is willing to take risks.

- Exhibited by curiosity, broad-mindedness, creativity and imagination.
- Individuals high in this characteristic tend to thrive where innovation and creativity are critical.

What are your Big Five characteristics? Leaders should know this. Go to <http://www.outofservice.com/bigfive/> for a brief interactive Big Five evaluation. Using the results, think about how you can develop the strong higher and strengthen the lower ones.

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# Emotions

**Emotion:** State of physiological arousal accompanied by changes in facial expression, posture, gestures or subjective feelings.

Eight Primary Emotions	
Surprise	Joy
Anticipation	Fear
Acceptance	Sadness
Disgust	Anger

**Mood:** A long-lasting state of emotion.

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# Emotional Intelligence

**Emotional intelligence:** The ability to manage one's own and others' emotions in order to guide one's behavior and achieve goals.

Dimensions of EI:

1. **Self-awareness.** Awareness of one's own thoughts and feelings.
  2. **Social awareness.** Demonstrating empathy or relating to **others.**
  3. **Self-management.** Maintaining self control.
  4. **Relationship management.** Maintaining positive and productive relationships with others.
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# Perception

**Perception:** The process by which a person gives meaning to environmental stimuli. How we interpret what we observe, hear and experience.

Key elements of the perceptual process:

1. Observation
2. Selection
3. Translation

Our senses are continually bombarded by stimuli. The perceptual process helps us filter these stimuli and react to the most important.

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# Perceptual inaccuracies

## ■ Stereotyping

- ❑ A translation step in the perception process
- ❑ Used to classify or categorize events, people or situations
- ❑ A type of mental shorthand
- ❑ Helps us recognize patterns
- ❑ Useful so long as its limitations are recognized.

## ■ Prejudice

- ❑ A special type of stereotype
  - ❑ A stereotype that refuses to change even when presented with information that the stereotype is inaccurate.
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# More perceptual inaccuracies

Selective attention	Giving some messages priority and ignoring others
Divided attention	Dividing one's mental efforts between several competing tasks. Leads to a higher use of stereotypes.
Halo effect	Allowing one noticeable characteristic of another person to bias the evaluation, perception or impression of that person.
Similar-to-me error	Using self as benchmark for judging others
Situational factors	Time limitations that affect the ability to clearly evaluate a situation.

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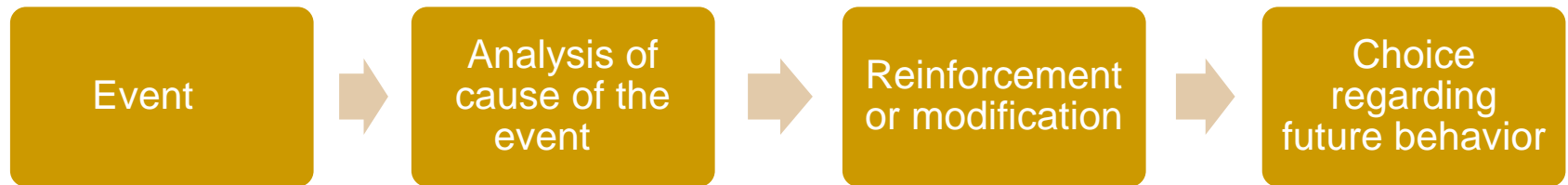
# Attribution theory

Human beings try to explain the reasons for events. **Attribution theory** tells us HOW we do this.

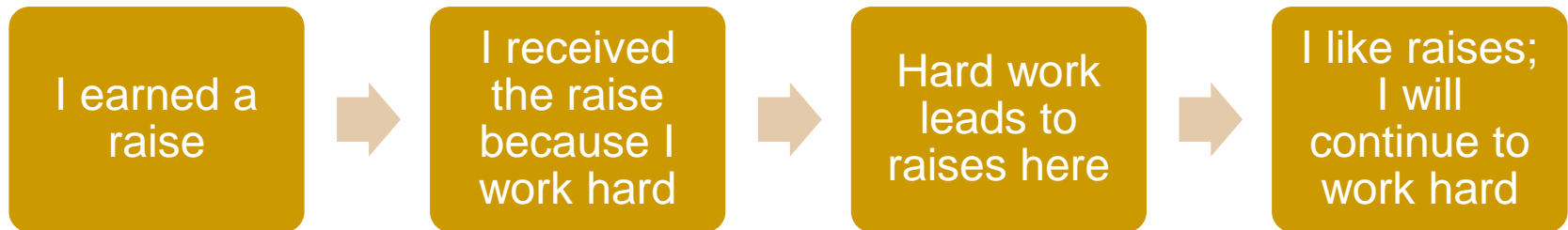
Our brains look for 3 characteristics to help us explain things:

1. **Distinctiveness:** does the person behave this way in other situations
  2. **Consistency:** does the person behave in this manner at other times
  3. **Consensus:** do other people behave like this?
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# Attribution process applied to events



General illustration of attribution process



Application of the general process to the workplace

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# Attribution process applied to behavior

Our brains look for 3 characteristics to help us explain things:

1. **Distinctiveness:** does the person behave this way in other situations
  2. **Consistency:** does the person behave in this manner at other times
  3. **Consensus:** do other people behave like this?
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# Applying attribution to behavior

## Distinctiveness

Yes

Low Distinctiveness

No

High Distinctiveness

## Consistency

Yes

High Consistency

No

Low Consistency

## Consensus

No

Low Consensus

Yes

High Consensus

Yes + Yes + No = Internal Attribution (behavior caused by factors the person can control)

No + No + Yes = External Attribution (behavior caused by factors the person cannot control)

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# Impression management

**Impression management:** the attempt to influence others' perception of you.

1. Everybody does it, some more than others.
  2. Can be done through:
    1. How one talks
    2. How one dresses
    3. Office location and furnishing
    4. Who one selects as employees
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# Researching organizations

- Sources of knowledge about organizations
    - Peer reviewed journals
    - Trade journals
  - History as a way of learning about organizations
    - For instance, our look at Scientific Management and the Hawthorne Studies
  - Experience as a way of learning about organizations
  - Science as a way of learning about organizations
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# Scientific method

- The scientific method is used in the social sciences as well as in the physical sciences.

Characteristics	
Public	The work is done publicly and results are reported so that others can use them.
Precise	Procedures, variables used and results are clearly defined and measured.
Objective	Data collection is objective and free from bias.
Replicable	Other researchers can use, test and reproduce the results.
Systematic and cumulative	Builds on and adds to existing knowledge
Purposes are explanation, understanding and prediction	“Why” and “how” are vigorously pursued.

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# Methods of inquiry

- Case study: useful in diving deep into one incident or situation.
  - Field study: useful in investigating current practices or events.
  - Experiments: Most rigorous, involves manipulation of variables to see what happens.
  - Meta-analysis: rigorously pooling and analyzing the results of multiple research studies to look for aggregated results.
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# Qualitative methods

- Used instead of or in conjunction with experimental designs.
  - Open ended and interpretive.
  - Often adds meaning and depth to other studies.
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# Research is not:

Research is not:

- Just finding things out at random. It is systematic.
  - Just finding support for a position you already have. Research tries to eliminate bias.
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# What's Next

- Complete your detailed reading
  - Answer the discussion questions
  - Complete the writing assignments
  - Take the Unit Quiz
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# References

Souder, Betances and Associates [betancespeaks]. (2013, February 17). Samuel Betances: Confusing Differences with Diversity [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWTtfuWawp8>.

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