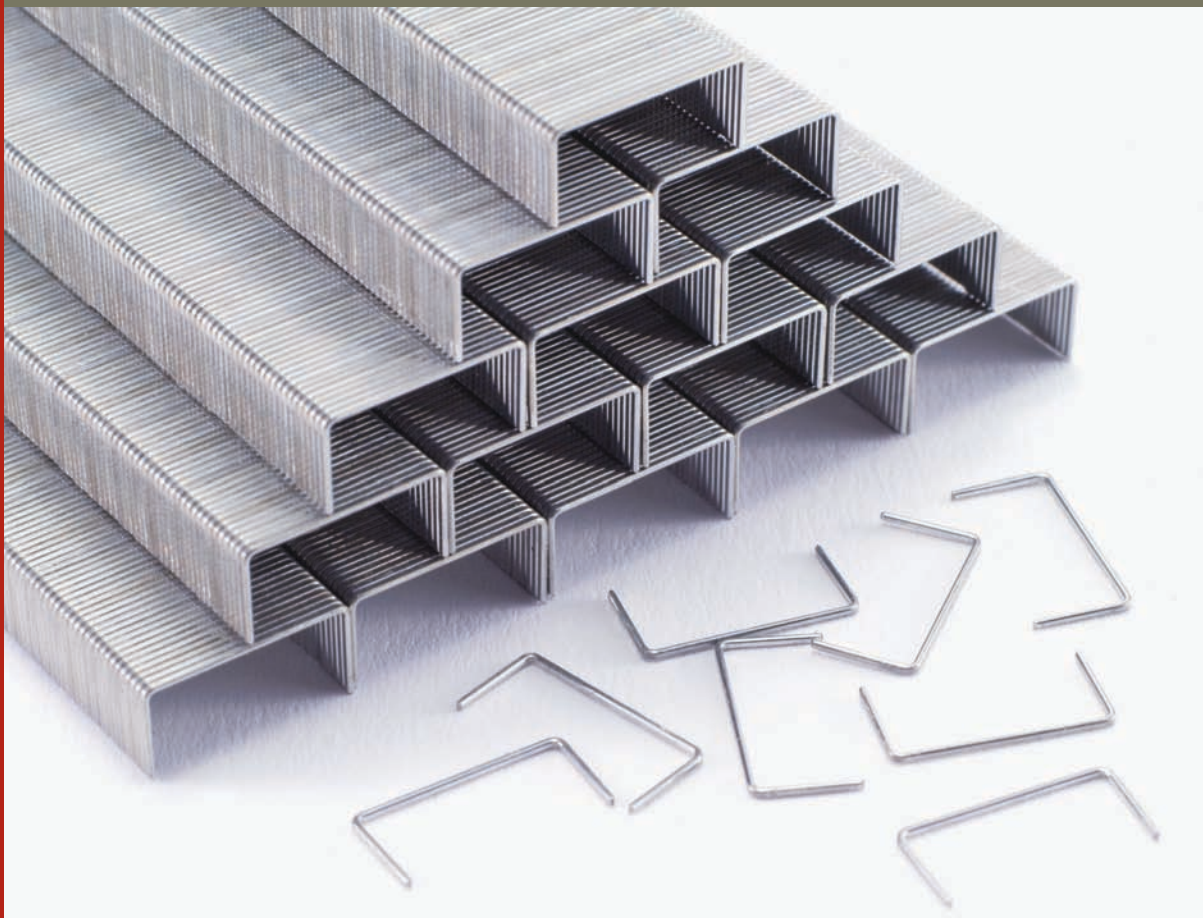


SIXTH EDITION

Organizational Behavior

SCIENCE, THE REAL WORLD, AND YOU



Debra L. Nelson • James Campbell Quick

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Science, The Real World, and You

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SOUTH-WESTERN

Preface

What makes an individual behave in consistent ways in a variety of situations? Personality is an individual difference that lends consistency to a person's behavior. Personality is defined as a relatively stable set of characteristics that influence an individual's behavior. Although there is debate about the determinants of personality, we conclude that there are several origins. One determinant is heredity, and some interesting studies have supported this position. Identical twins who are separated at birth and raised apart in very different situations have been found to share personality traits and job preferences. For example, about half of the variation in traits like extraversion, impulsiveness, and flexibility was found to be genetically determined; that is, identical twins who grew up in different environments shared these traits.⁵ In addition, the twins held similar jobs.⁶ Thus, there does appear to be a genetic influence on personality.

Another determinant of personality is the environment a person is exposed to. Family influences, cultural influences, educational influences, and other environmental forces shape personality. Personality is therefore shaped by both heredity and environment.

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Debra Nelson
James Nelson Quick



Individual Processes and Behavior

- CHAPTER 3 Personality, Perception, and Attribution
- CHAPTER 4 Attitudes, Values, and Ethics
- CHAPTER 5 Motivation at Work
- CHAPTER 6 Learning and Performance Management
- CHAPTER 7 Stress and Well-Being at Work



CHAPTER 3

Personality, Perception, and Attribution

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- 1 Describe individual differences and their importance in understanding behavior.
- 2 Define personality.
- 3 Explain four theories of personality.
- 4 Identify several personality characteristics and their influences on behavior in organizations.
- 5 Explain how personality is measured.
- 6 Discuss Carl Jung's contribution to our understanding of individual differences, and explain how his theory is used in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.
- 7 Define social perception and explain how characteristics of the perceiver, the target, and the situation affect it.
- 8 Identify five common barriers to social perception.
- 9 Explain the attribution process and how attributions affect managerial behavior.

THINKING AHEAD: WHOLE FOODS MARKET

How Norman Brinker Made His Mark (and His Fortune)

Norman Brinker made a lasting impression not only on his companies and his restaurants, but also on the entire restaurant industry. His vision of the restaurant business and his unique personality have shaped our perceptions of what good "dining out" means. Brinker is now chairman emeritus of Brinker International, which owns, operates, or franchises more than 1,110 restaurants in forty-seven states and twenty different countries. You have probably been a customer in one of Brinker's restaurants, which include Chili's Grill & Bar, Romano's Macaroni Grill, On the Border Mexican Grill and Cantina, Cozymel's Coastal Mexican Grill, Maggiano's Little Italy, Corner Bakery Cafe, eatZi's Market and Bakery, and Big Bowl.

What you may not know is that Brinker has been shaping the restaurant industry since the 1960s. He started the Steak and Ale chain, built around the idea of service, generous portions, value, fun, and casual style. Brinker has said, "I combined value with a big steak and a friendly style of service. Nothing starchy." The server's opening line "Hi, my name is.

In addition to his perceptions of the restaurant industry, Brinker's social perception skills, or his ability to perceive other people, have served him well. He credits his success to his ability to outstanding people who want to be winners.¹

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

1 Describe individual differences and their importance in understanding behavior.

In this chapter and continuing in Chapter 4, we explore the concept of *individual differences*. Individuals are unique in terms of their skills, abilities, personalities, perceptions, attitudes, values, and ethics. These are just a few of the ways individuals may be similar to or different from one another. Individual differences represent the essence of the challenge of management, because no two individuals are completely alike. Managers face the challenge of working with people who possess a multitude of individual characteristics, so the more managers understand individual differences, the better they can work with others. Figure 3.1 illustrates how individual differences affect human behavior.

The basis for understanding individual differences stems from Lewin's early contention that behavior is a function of the person and the environment.² Lewin expressed this idea in an equation: $B = e(P, E)$, where B = behavior, P = person, and E = environment. This idea has been developed by the interactional psychology approach.³ Basically, this approach says that in order to understand human behavior, we must know something about the person and something about the situation. There are four basic propositions of interactional psychology:

1. Behavior is a function of a continuous, multidirectional interaction between the person and the situation.
2. The person is active in this process and is both changed by situations and changes situations.
3. People vary in many characteristics, including cognitive, affective, motivational, and ability factors.

Two interpretations of situations are important: the objective situation and the person's subjective view of the situation.⁴

FIGURE 3.1 Variables Influencing Individual Behavior



SOURCE: F.E. Fiedler, *A Theory of Leader Effectiveness* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964). Reprinted with permission of the author.

individual differences

The way in which factors such as skills, abilities, personalities, perceptions, attitudes, values, and ethics differ from one individual to another.

interactional psychology

The psychological approach that emphasizes that in order to understand human behavior, we must know something about the person and about the situation.

The interactional psychology approach points out the need to study both persons and situations. We will focus on personal and situational factors throughout the text. The person consists of individual differences such as those we emphasize in this chapter and Chapter 4: personality, perception, attribution, attitudes, values, and ethics. The situation consists of the environment the person operates in, and it can include things like the organization, work group, personal life situation, job characteristics, and many other environmental influences. One important and fascinating individual difference is personality.

PERSONALITY

What makes an individual behave in consistent ways in a variety of situations? Personality is an individual difference that lends consistency to a person's behavior. *Personality* is defined as a relatively stable set of characteristics that influence an individual's behavior. Although there is debate about the determinants of personality, we conclude that there are several origins. One determinant is heredity, and some interesting studies have supported this position. Identical twins who are separated at birth and raised apart in very different situations have been found to share personality traits and job preferences. For example, about half of the variation in traits like extraversion, impulsiveness, and flexibility was found to be genetically determined; that is, identical twins who grew up in different environments shared these traits.⁵ In addition, the twins held similar jobs.⁶ Thus, there does appear to be a genetic influence on personality.

Personality Theories

The Coca-Cola Company Some early personality researchers believed that to understand individuals, we must break down behavior patterns into a series of observable traits. According to *trait theory*, combining these traits into a group forms an individual's personality. Gordon Allport, a leading trait theorist, saw traits as broad, general guides that lend consistency to behavior.⁷ Thousands of traits have been identified over the years. Raymond Cattell, another prominent individual behavior. He described traits in bipolar adjective combinations such as self-assured/apprehensive, reserved/outgoing, and submissive/dominant.⁸

More recently, researchers have argued that all traits can be reduced to five basic

2 Define personality.

3 Explain four theories of personality

personality

A relatively stable set of characteristics that influence an individual's behavior.

trait theory

The personality theory that states that in order to understand individuals, we must break down behavior patterns into a series of observable traits.

TABLE 3.1 The "Big Five" Personality Traits

Extraversion	The person is gregarious, assertive, and sociable (as opposed to reserved, timid, and quiet).
Agreeableness	The person is cooperative, warm, and agreeable (rather than cold, disagreeable, and antagonistic).
Conscientiousness	The person is hardworking, organized, and dependable (as opposed to lazy, disorganized, and unreliable).
Emotional stability	The person is calm, self-confident, and cool (as opposed to insecure, anxious, and depressed).
Openness to experience	The person is creative, curious, and cultured (rather than practical with experience narrow interests).

SOURCES: P. T. Costa and R. R. McCrae, *The NEO-PI Personality Inventory* (Odessa, Fla.: Psychological Assessment Resources, 1992); J. F. Salgado, *The Five Factor Model of Personality and Job Performance in the European Community*, *Journal of Applied Psychology* 82 (1997): 30ñ43.



factors. The “Big Five” traits include extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience.⁹ Descriptions of the “Big Five” are shown in Table 3.1. The “Big Five” are broad, global traits that are associated with behaviors at work.

From preliminary research, we know that introverted and conscientious employees are less likely to be absent from work.¹⁰ In making peer evaluations, individuals with high agreeableness tend to rate others more leniently, while individuals with high conscientiousness tend to be tougher as raters.¹¹ Extraverts tend to have higher salaries, receive more promotions, and are more satisfied with their careers.¹² Across lots of occupations, people who are conscientious are high performers. When you view more specific occupations, however, different patterns of the Big Five factors are related to high performance. For customer service jobs, individuals high in emotional stability, agreeableness, and openness to experience perform best. For managers, emotional stability and extraversion are traits of top performers.¹³

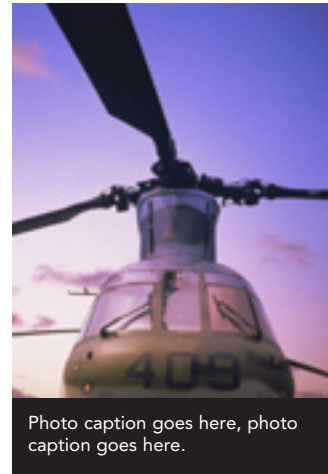


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The trait approach has been the subject of considerable criticism. Some theorists argue that simply identifying traits is not enough; instead, personality is dynamic and not completely stable. Further, early trait theorists tended to ignore the influence of situations.¹⁴

Psychodynamic Theory Based on the work of Sigmund Freud, *psychodynamic theory* emphasizes the unconscious determinants of behavior.¹⁵ Freud saw personality as the interaction among three elements of personality: the id, ego, and superego.

- > The id is the most primitive element, the source of drives and impulses that operate in an uncensored manner.
- > The superego, similar to what we know as conscience, contains values and the shoulds and should nots of the personality. There is an ongoing conflict between the id and the superego.
- > The ego serves to manage the conflict between the id and the superego. In this role, the ego compromises, and the result is the individual's use of defense mechanisms such as denial of reality.

Self-Efficacy *Generalized self-efficacy* is a general belief about one's own capabilities to deal with the events and challenges that make life demanding. Employees with high generalized self-efficacy have more confidence in their job-related abilities and other personal resources (i.e., energy, influence over others, etc.) that help them function effectively on the job. People with low generalized self-efficacy often feel ineffective at work and may express doubts about performing a new task well. Previous success or performance is one of the most important determinants of self-efficacy. People who have positive beliefs about their efficacy for performance are more likely to attempt difficult tasks, to persist in overcoming obstacles, and to experience less anxiety when faced with adversity.²²

Organizations present combinations of strong and weak situations; therefore, personality has a stronger effect on behavior in some situations than in others.⁴⁴ Use You 3.1 to assess your own self-monitoring tendencies.

Are You a High or Low Self-Monitor?

For the following items, circle T (true) if the statement is characteristic of your behavior. Circle F (false) if the statement does not reflect your behavior.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people. | T | F |
| 2. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like. | T | F |
| 3. I can only argue for ideas that I already believe. | T | F |
| 4. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information. | T | F |
| 5. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain others. | T | F |
| 6. I would probably make a good actor. | T | F |
| 7. In a group of people, I am rarely the center of attention. | T | F |
| 8. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons. | T | F |
| 9. I am not particularly good at making other people like me. | T | F |
| 10. I am not always the person I appear to be. | T | F |
| 11. I would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) in order to please others or win their favor. | T | F |
| 12. I have considered being an entertainer. | T | F |
| 13. I have never been good at games like charades or at improvisational acting. | T | F |
| 14. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations. | T | F |
| 15. At a party, I let others keep the jokes and stories going. | T | F |
| 16. I feel a bit awkward in company and do not show up quite as well as I should. | T | F |
| 17. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if it is for a good cause). | T | F |
| 18. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them. | T | F |

Scoring:

To score this questionnaire, give yourself 1 point for each of the following items that you answered T (true): 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 17, and 18. Now give yourself 1 point for each of the following items that you

answered F (false): 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, and 16. Add both sub-totals to find your overall score. If you scored 11 or above, you are probably a high self-monitor. If you scored 10 or under, you are probably a low self-monitor.

SOURCE: From *Public Appearances, Private Realities: The Psychology of Self-Monitoring* by M. Snyder. Copyright © 1987 by W. H. Freeman and Company. Used with permission.

MEASURING PERSONALITY

The projective test is one method used to measure personality. In these tests, individuals are shown a picture, abstract image, or photo and are asked to describe what they see or to tell a story about what they see. The rationale behind projective tests is that each individual responds to the stimulus in a way that reflects his or her unique personality.

The Rorschach ink blot test is a projective test commonly used to assess personality.⁴⁵ Like other projective tests, however, it has low reliability. The individual being assessed may look at the same picture and see different things at different times. Also, the assessor may apply his or her own biases in interpreting the information about the individual's personality.

There are behavioral measures of personality as well. Measuring behavior involves observing an individual's behavior in a controlled situation. We might assess a person's sociability, for example, by counting the number of times he or

- 4 Describe individual differences and their importance in understanding behavior.

psychodynamic theory

The personality theory that emphasizes the unconscious determinants of behavior.

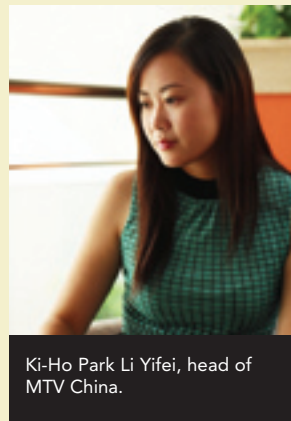
generalized self-efficacy

An individual's beliefs and expectations about his or her ability to accomplish a specific task effectively.



A T'ai Chi Champion Heads MTV China

Running MTV China has to rank as one of the world's great jobs. Li Yifei has that job. Growing up in Beijing she was a national T'ai Chi champion and graduated from Beijing's most elite foreign language university. From there, she went to Baylor University and studied political science. In 1999, MTV named her head of its new China operation. With China's economic growth, limitless potential, and young people who are children of the Cultural Revolution, it is an exciting place to be.



Ki-Ho Park Li Yifei, head of MTV China.

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Last year she persuaded CCTV, the national television network, to produce China's version of the MTV awards, the program got a 7.9 percent rating. An American interviewer noted that 7.9 percent was not a very good rating. In return, Li mentioned that in China this means 150 million viewers were watching, which is well over half the U.S. population. This shows that she is not afraid to be assertive when the situation calls for it. In reading the situation and behaving accordingly,

Li appears to be a high self-monitor. Training in T'ai Chi helped her develop this trait. T'ai Chi participants learn to be both soft and pliable, and tough and strong. T'ai Chi emphasizes changing stances in a dynamic manner.

Sources: B. Powell et al., "25 Rising Stars. What Will the World Look Like a Decade or Two from Now?" *Fortune* (May 14, 2000): 140; W. Liao, *The Essence of T'ai Chi*, (Boston: Shambhala, 1995)

Li's job, however, is not without its challenges. Viewers in China are an older and conservative group who are not used to belly-baring vee-jays, and MTV is limited to between one and four hours of programming a day. Li's high self-monitoring personality has helped her deal with the mostly male authorities, because she has had to adopt something other than her natural style, which is straightforward, confident, and smart. "Particularly as a woman in China, you have to be a little bit softer, and humble," Li said.

she approaches strangers at a party. The behavior is scored in some manner to produce an index of personality. Some potential problems with behavioral measures include the observer's ability to stay focused and the way the observer interprets the behavior. In addition, some people behave differently when they know they are being observed.

Another popular self-report questionnaire is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). In the next section, we will introduce the Jungian theory of personality. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is an instrument that has been developed to measure Jung's ideas about individual differences. Many organizations use the MBTI, and we will focus on it as an example of how some organizations use personality concepts to help employees appreciate diversity. In *The Real World 3.1*, you can see how Li Yifei, head of MTV China, has used high self-monitoring to her advantage.

A POPULAR APPLICATION OF PERSONALITY THEORY IN ORGANIZATIONS: THE MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR

One approach to applying personality theory in organizations is the Jungian approach and its measurement tool, the MBTI.

Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung built his work on the notion that people are fundamentally different, but also fundamentally alike. His classic treatise *Psychological*

6 Discuss Carl Jung's contribution to our understanding of individual differences, and explain how his theory is used in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

Types proposed that the population was made up of two basic types—extraverted and introverted.⁴⁶ He went on to identify two types of perception (sensing and intuiting) and two types of judgment (thinking and feeling). Perception (how we gather information) and judgment (how we make decisions) represent the basic mental functions that everyone uses.

During the 1940s, a mother-daughter team became fascinated with individual differences among people and with the work of Carl Jung. Katharine Briggs and her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers, developed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to put Jung's type theory into practical use. The MBTI is used extensively in organizations as a basis for understanding individual differences. More than 3 million people complete the instrument per year in the United States.⁴⁷ The MBTI has been used in career counseling, team building, conflict management, and understanding management styles.⁴⁸

In work settings, extraverts prefer variety, and they do not mind the interruptions of the phone or visits from coworkers. They communicate freely but may say things that they regret later. Introverts prefer quiet for concentration, and they like to think things through in private. They do not mind working on a project for a long time and are careful with details. Introverts dislike telephone interruptions, and they may have trouble recalling names and faces.

Sensing/Intuiting The sensing/intuiting preference represents perception or how we prefer to gather information. In essence this preference reflects what we pay attention to. The sensor (S) pays attention to information gathered through the five senses and to what actually exists. The intuitor (N) pays attention to a sixth sense and to what could be rather than to what actually exists.⁵⁰ Approximately 70 percent of people in the United States are sensors.⁵¹

At work, sensors prefer specific answers to questions and can become frustrated with vague instructions. They like jobs that yield tangible results, and they enjoy using established skills more than learning new ones. Intuitors like solving new



Holier Than Thou? A Unique Form of Self-Serving Bias

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DIVERSITY DIALOG 3.1



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LOOKING BACK: WHOLE FOODS MARKET



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Determination Leads to Success

Earlier in the chapter you saw how Norman Brinker's perceptions of the restaurant industry and of people led to his success. Another individual factor that shaped his career was his personality. He is fiercely determined and a consummate positive thinker. His reaction to an injury that occurred while he was playing polo illustrates these qualities. A fall during a polo match left him in a coma for three weeks. During his rehabilitation, he continued to conduct business. His left leg was nearly paralyzed and doctors told him he might walk again in four months. Brinker refused to accept this negative prognosis. Within two months he was walking without a cane.

Along with hard work and determination, Brinker is also fun loving. He believes in having fun at work and in sharing that fun with other people. Brinker has said, "If we make work like play, and then play like hell, it's amazing what we can do." He also believes in teamwork and lasting relationships, which are formed on a win-win basis. Brinker is not only a successful businessman, but also a well-known philanthropist. He encourages young entrepreneurs to give, not only financially, but with commitments of time.

Brinker's determination, positive attitude, fun-loving spirit, and giving personality have shaped his company and the restaurant industry. Another way he has left his mark is by mentoring others, which you'll see in Chapter 17.

Chapter Summary

1. Individual differences are factors that make individuals unique. They include personalities, perceptions, skills and abilities, attitudes, values, and ethics.
2. The trait theory, psychodynamic theory, humanistic theory, and integrative approach are all personality theories.
3. Managers should understand personality because of its effect on behavior. Several characteristics affect behavior in organizations, including locus of control, self-esteem, self-monitoring, and positive/negative affect.
4. Personality has a stronger influence in weak situations, where there are few cues to guide behavior.
5. One useful framework for understanding individual differences is type theory, developed by Carl Jung and measured by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.
6. Social perception is the process of interpreting information about another person. It is influenced by characteristics of the perceiver, the target, and the situation.
7. Barriers to social perception include selective perception, stereotyping, first-impression error, projection, and self-fulfilling prophecies.
8. Impression management techniques such as name-dropping, managing one's appearance, self-descriptions, flattery, favors, and agreement are used by individuals to control others' impressions of them.
9. Attribution is the process of determining the cause of behavior. It is used extensively by managers, especially in evaluating performance.

Key Terms

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| individual differences (p. 82) | strong situation (p. 90) | stereotype (p. 99) |
| interactional psychology (p. 82) | projective test (p. 90) | first-impression error (p. 101) |
| personality (p. 83) | behavioral measures (p. 90) | projection (p. 102) |
| trait theory (p. 84) | self-report questionnaire (p. 90) | self-fulfilling prophecy (p. 102) |
| psychodynamic theory (p. 85) | Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (p. 91) | impression management (p. 102) |
| humanistic theory (p. 85) | extraversion (p. 92) | attribution theory (p. 103) |
| integrative approach (p. 85) | social perception (p. 96) | fundamental attribution error (p. 104) |
| locus of control (p. 85) | discounting principle (p. 99) | self-serving bias (p. 104) |
| generalized self-efficacy (p. 86) | selective perception (p. 99) | |

Review Questions

1. What are individual differences, and why should managers understand them?
2. Define personality, and describe its origins.
3. Describe four theories of personality and explain what each contributes our knowledge of personality.
4. Describe the eight preferences of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. How does this instrument measure Carl Jung's ideas?
5. What factors influence social perception? What are the barriers to social perception?

Discussion and Communication Questions

1. What contributions can high self-monitors make in organizations? Low self-monitors?
2. How can managers improve their perceptual skills?
3. Which has the stronger impact on personality: heredity or environment?
4. How can managers make more accurate attributions?
5. How can managers encourage self-efficacy in employees?
6. How can self-serving bias and the fundamental attribution error be avoided?
7. (*communication question*) You have been asked to develop a training program for interviewers. An integral part of this training program focuses on helping interviewers develop better social perception skills. Write an outline for this section of the training program.
8. (*communication question*) Form groups of four to six, then split each group in half. Debate the origins of personality, with one half taking, and the other half taking the position that personality is formed by the environment. Each half should also discuss the implications of its position for managers.

Ethical Dilemma

Suppose a manager makes an incorrect attribution for an employee's poor performance (for instance, the manager cites equipment failure), and peers know the employee is at fault. Should they blow the whistle on their colleague?

Suppose one of your colleagues wants to eliminate all biases and stereotypes from the hiring process. He suggests that only resumes be used, with no names or other identifying data—only experience and education.

Experiential Exercises

2.1 International Orientations

1. Preparation (preclass)

Read the background on the International Orientation Scale and the case study "Office Supplies International—

Marketing Associate," complete the ratings and questions, and fill in the self-assessment inventory.

2. Group Discussion

Groups of four or six people discuss their answers to the

Biz Flix | Mr. Baseball

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What to Watch for and Ask Yourself:

- > Does Jack Elliot behave as if he had cross-cultural training before arriving in Japan?
- > Is he culturally sensitive or insensitive?
- > What do you propose that Jack Elliot do the the rest of his time in Japan?

Workplace Video | Merrill Lynch: Telecommuting

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Questions

1. Why does Janice Miholics of the AWA Department at Merrill Lynch say that telecommuting is a leap of faith for employers?
2. List at least five benefits telecommuting offers employees.

The American Red Cross: Providing Training to Protect Employees' Health and Safety

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Discussion Questions

1. From your perspective vnuefuwebk dfv niid jfishern vis dvie snvd ef ns dvnu efuw ebkd fvn?
2. What implications fndv jnv ieyf efns dvn uefu web kdfv nxioh kdjfi sern visd vies nvd sivh sifv na ms nfei uhbv?
3. Would you like nvi eyfe fnsd vnu ef uw ebk dfv nxioh kdjfi er nvis dv ies nvd sivhs ifvn ue fuw?

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