HRM 2302: Personal and Social Responsibility

Module 3  Some Aspects of Industrial Psychology

Prof. Dr. H.H.D.N.P. Opatha
B.Sc (B.Ad.) Sp.(SJP); MSc (B.Ad) HRM (SJP);
MBA (Birmingham); Dip PM& IR (Cambridge Col.);
Dip E.Eng (CPM); PhD HRM (Utara: UUM);
D HRM (IIU); HMIPM (SL)

Common Program
Department of Human Resource Management
Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce
University of Sri Jayewardenepura
Nugegoda
Sri Lanka
Some Aspects of Industrial Psychology

Module Objectives
After completing this module successfully, the student will be able to:

1. understand aspects of industrial psychology such as perception & selective perception, fatigue, monotony, boredom, morale and impression.
2. manage his/her impression appropriately at different situations.
3. be aware of others who are employing the methods of impression management.

Meaning of Industrial Psychology
Generally Psychology refers to the study of human minds and behaviour. Psychology in the context of organizations or industries can be termed as Industrial Psychology. The application of the knowledge of psychology to the industrial situations is known as industrial psychology (Singh, Chhabra and Taneja, 1994). Harrell (1964, as in Singh et al, 1994) defines:

“It is the study of people at work in industry and in business. It is the study of their aptitudes and their qualifications for jobs. It is a complicated study of a number of things, but it is always primarily the study of people-as individuals or as in groups-as in the work situation.”

IP attempts to study people at work so as to apply pertinent information about human behaviour to find appropriate solutions for human problems.

Singh et al, (1994) explain:

“The scope of industrial psychology is research rather than administration. The scope of industrial psychology is limited to material and social environment to which an individual adapts himself while he is at work and by which his attitude is modified. As a matter of fact, industrial psychology is the research and personnel management is the application of the research.”

IP involves doing research to understand human mind and behaviour at work. The result of research is creation of a set of information. Pertinent information is applied to solve various issues (recruitment, selection, training and development, career planning, grievance handling, health and safety management, discipline management, labour relations etc.). That application is generally Personnel Management.

Importance of IP
As IP is the study of people at work (employees) in organizations, the findings from research are useful to understand employees better. Consequently, management of people at work can be done in better way. IP has gained wide acceptance these days because the human factor is very important for the achievement of the objectives of any organization (Singh et al, 1994). George (1974, as in Singh et al, 1994) writes:

“Materials and machines are inert factors, but man with his ability to feel, to think, to conceive, and to plan is by far the most valuable and at the same time the most difficult element to inspire, control and motivate.”

Under IP one has to understand (through research) the following:
Who are human beings at work?
Do they differ at work? How do they differ? Why do they differ?
How do they behave?
Why do human beings behave in the way identified?
Can we change people at work? Why? How?

Answers for the above are useful for efficient and effective utilisation of human resources in order to achieve goals of an organization.

**IP and Personal & Social Responsibility**
As a person in this world you should be able to fulfil your personal and social responsibility. In order to perform it your knowledge and skills of IP will be useful.

**Activity 1**: Discuss specifically how knowledge and skills of IP helps you to be a good person of personal and social responsibility.

**Two Basic Assumptions**
There are two basic assumptions on which industrial psychology is based (Singh et al, 1994). They are:

1. **Every person is different from each other.**
   Due to many reasons people differ. They differ in terms of education, intelligence, attitudes, interests, values, physical appearance, experience, expertise, other physical features (weight, height, muscular power etc) and so on. These differences have a significant impact on the job behaviour of individuals. When managing people at work, understanding differences among individuals is very important. A manager in an organization who wants to manage his/her subordinates successfully in order to achieve organizational goals will have to be concerned with their differences.

2. **Human behaviour is caused.**
   Different people behave in different ways. One person also may behave in different ways in different times. There are reasons that stimulate people to behave in a particular way. Human behaviour is caused by needs which can be directed and controlled in order to get the desired results from human beings (Singh et al, 1994).

**Activity 2**: Think of your class. Discuss how differences of your classmates influence your behaviour. How can the teacher be impacted by the differences of the students in your class?

**Perception and Selective Perception**
Perception is defined as the process of organizing and interpreting environmental inputs that are obtained through our senses (Umstot, 1984). How do you see, understand and interpret the world/event/situation/environment/thing? That is your perception which may not be the reality (truth).
Selective perception: when you see some thing, you see only a part of the total existing situation/event/thing. You understand only a part of the totality. Your interpretation is partial not complete.

People may think, decide, and act according to the perception.

Some considerations about perception

1. Social environment of the individual influences his/her perception more than his/her physical environment. An individual tends to perceive something according to his/her frame of reference that was developed from socio-economic and cultural factors.
2. Even if physiological senses of individuals were extremely accurate there may be that individuals selectively perceive owing to their values and attitudes.
3. Individuals may not attend to every possible sensory input.
4. Based on previous experience individuals may perceive something.

Activity 3: Read the following carefully. Can you explain why?

**Famous Coin Experiment by Burner**

Two groups of individual were taken for the experiment. One group was from the lower economic status and the other was from the higher economic status. Each individual was experimented in a situation where he placed vertically a coin few feet away on a table in front of the individual. Each individual was asked to estimate the size of the diameter of the coin. He found that individuals who came from lower economic status overestimated the size of the coin and those who came from the higher economic status underestimated the size of the coin.

Source: Singh et al, 1994

Activity 4: Read the following incident:

Mr. X is the Head of the Department of Accounting of a certain organization. He happens to find an employee reading a book on communication during the regular working hours.

Is the employee goofing off on the job? Or is he trying to improve his competencies? Or what else? If you were Mr. X how would you perceive the event?

Activity 5: Test your perception by counting the number of F’s in the statement below (source: Umstot, 1984):
Finally, we have an example of finished research that is the result of years of scientific study combined with the experience of a lifetime.

Activity 6: Read the following carefully. Can you explain why?

**An Experiment by Stagner**

Two groups of school children aged between 12 and 14 were taken for the experiment. One group was from the working class whose fathers were workers and the other was from the higher sophisticated society whose fathers were either businessmen or highly placed officials. Each child in the groups was studied separately. Two pictures were shown. In the first, a Negro worker was lifting ore and in the other, a strike situation was given where workers were standing in front of a closed factory gate shouting and holding placards. Each child was asked the following questions:

Is/are he/they clear?
Is/are he/they honest?
Is/are he/they good?
Do you like to play with him/them?
Do you like to talk with him/them?

The favourable and affirmative replies came from the children whose fathers were workers and unfavourable and negative answers were given by the children whose fathers were either businessmen or highly placed officials.

Source: Singh et al, 1994

Activity 7: Look at the picture. Tell which line is shorter? Line A or B? Does your perception differ from the reality?

Activity 8: Look at the picture. What do you perceive? What contributed to you to perceive in that way?

**Fatigue**

Fatigue is what an employee feels when he/she becomes extremely tired. The tiredness may be physical or mental or both. Singh et al (1994) write:

"The term ‘fatigue’ is commonly used to denote a decrease in the capacity or efficiency of a person to do the work because of previous work. The two important implications of fatigue are:

(a) It is generally physical in nature whereby lactic acid is accumulated in the blood resulting into breakdown of tissues."
Fatigue is an important problem in industry. It is a kind of negative appetite for working. It affects muscles, nerves, and mind of the employee. There are two types of fatigue, i.e., **normal fatigue** and **cumulative fatigue**. Normal fatigue is exhaustion. It is the state of being so tired that the employee has no energy left. Cumulative fatigue is what the employee feels as a result of increasing the extreme tiredness steadily in quantity. It is more serious than normal fatigue. To give a short rest to the relevant employee who has normal fatigue is a solution. A long rest is to be given to the relevant employee who has cumulative fatigue.

When there is (a) a high rate of absenteeism; (b) a high rate of turnover; (c) a high rate of accidents; (d) a high rate of wastage; (e) a high percentage of rejects, rework and spoiled work; (f) low productivity; (g) a high rate of grievances; (h) unfavourable attitude of employees about the organisation and management etc it may be that fatigue is a serious problem being felt by employees. The above are indicators of fatigue.

**Activity 9:** Discuss with your classmates about causes of fatigue.

**Activity 10:** Compare your findings (causes) from the discussion with the following figure:

**Activity 11:** Discuss how you can reduce fatigue.
Monotony and Boredom

Monotony and boredom are also important problems that an organisation will have to encounter. Harrell (1964, as in Singh et al, 1994) define and differentiate:

“Monotony is a state of mind caused by performing repetitive tasks. It implies no emotional dislike. Boredom or lack of interest is characterised by depression and a desire for a change of activities. It is tinged with emotional distaste and is accompanied by a corresponding attitudinal outlook. Thus, boredom is more heavily affected by such factors as personality, attitude, interest patterns than is monotony. On the other hand, boredom can be differentiated from fatigue because it is a desire for a change in activity rather than for a rest or for relief from work all together.”

Monotony has dull while boredom has fed up. Repetition results in monotony while lack of interest results in boredom. However both are related. Some people do not perceive any difference between the two concepts.

Activity 12: Identify five differences between fatigue and boredom. Prepare a table that shows a comparison.

Following is a table that shows some measures that can be adopted to reduce industrial fatigue and monotony (and boredom also).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fatigue</th>
<th>Monotony</th>
<th>Boredom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Reduce hours of work</td>
<td>Job enlargement</td>
<td>Job rotation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Provide rest hours</td>
<td>Job enrichment</td>
<td>Team working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Eliminate unnecessary motions through work studies</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Permanent transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Provide medical facilities</td>
<td>Job rotation</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Improve working conditions</td>
<td>Team working</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Provide counselling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 13: Can you complete the above table? Complete it by putting measures not mentioned.

Morale

There is no universally accepted definition for the term ‘morale’. However, almost all definitions denote it as a positive attitude of the group involved in achieving a certain common goal. It is the amount of confidence and optimism that employees collectively feel towards the accomplishment of the goals of the organisation. Moral represents a
composite of feelings, attitudes and sentiments that contribute to general feelings of satisfaction (Halloran, 1978). It is a state of mind and spirit affecting willingness to work, which in turn, affects organizational and individual objectives (Guion, 1958, as in Singh et al, 1994). Morale is the capacity of a group of people to pull together persistently in pursuit of a common purpose (Leighton, as in Singh et al, 1994). Tripathy (1992, p.117) writes:

“Viteles defines morale as a “willingness to strive for the goals of a particular group.” According to Blum, industrial morale is “the possession of feeling of being accepted by and belonging to a group of employees through adherence to common goals and confidence in the desirability of these goals.” Quite simply, moral is a group concept. It is *esprit de corps* or the summation of attitudes of all employees making up a group toward various aspects of their work-the job, the company, working conditions, fellow workers, supervisors-, and so on. The employees’ attitudes towards some of these aspects may be positive and toward some negative. If the total of all positive attitudes exceeds the total of all negative attitudes, the morale of the groups can be said to be high. Otherwise it is low.”

Thus, morale is a group phenomenon. It is the totality of feelings of all employees who are in the pursuit of achieving goals of the organisation. In fact it is a psychological concept. It is the net balance between all the positive attitudes and negative attitudes of employees with regard to the various aspects of the organization (jobs, superiors, subordinates, peers, working conditions, etc). If the balance is positive, it reflects high morale. If the balance is negative, it reflects low morale.

**Activity 14:** You have studied about Motivation in the first year. Are they different or the same? Can you differentiate between Motivation and Morale? Get a good result through discussion.

**Activity 15:** Compare your results obtained through the discussion with the following table. Make sure that you can differentiate between the two concepts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Morale</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Composite attitude of all the members of the group in the pursuit of a common purpose.</td>
<td>Wiliness of an individual to strive efforts to do a certain work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Determinants</td>
<td>It is a function of freedom restraint towards a common goal.</td>
<td>It is a function of needs and drives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>It is a group phenomenon. It is collective.</td>
<td>It is an individual phenomenon. It is individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>It is higher. It is the summation of attitudes of all about various aspects of the organization.</td>
<td>It is lower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Horizon</td>
<td>It is a long term phenomenon. It can be achieved though short-run actions such as</td>
<td>It is relatively a short-term phenomenon. Motivation of a person can be generated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An important element of organizational culture is morale. It is important for an organisation to enhance morale of its employees. Why? According to Singh et al (1994), morale of employees must be kept high to achieve the following benefits:

(i) Willing cooperation towards objectives of the organization.
(ii) Loyalty to the organization and its leadership
(iii) Good discipline i.e., voluntary conformity to rules and regulations
(iv) High degree of employees’ interest in their jobs and organisation.
(v) Pride in the organisation.
(vi) Reduction of rates of absenteeism and labour turnover.

Activity 16: If morale is very important for an organisation, what measures should be taken to keep it high? Develop a list of important measures.

Activity 17: Compare your list with the following. Note additional strategies or actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Area</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rewards</td>
<td>Payment of salaries and wages which meet absolute equity, internal relative equity, and external relative equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fair and objective incentive scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sound system of employee benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Relations</td>
<td>Genuine employee counselling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fair and effective employee discipline management system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sound communication system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Fair and effective leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sound team building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proper direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resource Development</td>
<td>Proper system of career planning and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 19: Discuss the relationship between morale and productivity. Can you explain the relationship?

Activity 20: Have a serious look at the following incomplete figure:

There are two variables, i.e., productivity and morale. Put morale in the vertical axis and productivity in the horizontal axis.

(i) Can you put each variable from low to high?
(ii) Can you complete the four boxes/quadrants so as to have four possible combinations of morale and productivity?
(iii) Can you explain why?
Do you understand that it is not always true that there is a direct relationship between the two variables?

Management of Impression

What is impression?
Impression is your appearance. It is the way that you look or seem to others. Impression management is the process of controlling the images and perceptions that others form about us (Schlenker, 1980, as in Umstot, 1984). Umstot (1984, p.89) defines:
“Another way of thinking about the concept is to use the terms self-presentation or self-projection, since impression management has to do with the ways we present ourselves to others. This self-presentation process is an integral part of our self-concept and personality.”

It is true that every person has engaged in some type of impression management. There will be situations where you need to control the images and perceptions that others form about you. For example, when you face for an employment interview, you will have to manage your impression properly. Also you will have to be aware of others who are employing the methods of impression management.

Activity 21: Did you present yourself to anyone or others? How did you present? Have you ever worn a nice cloth to meet a responsible person or anyone? Have you ever cut your hair to create a good image about you? Have you ever talked to anyone carefully to develop a good impression about you?

Aspects of Impression Management


Ingratiation
Generally the term ingratiation means trying to make you popular or liked by others and the word is used showing disapproval (Collins Birmingham University English Language Dictionary, 1987). According to Umstot (1984), the word has a somewhat negative connotation though the techniques of ingratiation are used widely. If it (getting people to like you) is done with sincerity it is OK. If you want to win the confidence of someone for a fair work, you can engage in ingratiation. If you do it only for your personal gain (not for mutual gains) it is not acceptable. If you engage in ingratiation with the desire for personal gain, such behaviour is manipulation.


1. Become genuinely interested in other people.
2. Smile
3. Remember that a person’s name is to that person the sweetest and most important sound in any language.
4. Be a good listener. Encourage others to talk about themselves.
5. Talk in terms of the other person’s interests.
6. Make the other person feel important—and do it sincerely.

**Activity 22:** Discuss with your classmates in order to find out the tactics or methods of increasing liking/getting others to like you.

**Activity 23:** Study the following exhibit that gives some tactics used to increase liking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity 23</th>
<th>Dress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Use flattery, compliments, and other techniques that enhance the self-concept of the other person.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Conform to the other’s opinions, judgements, and behaviours. Remember that we tend to like those who are similar to ourselves.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Present and describe yourself favourably. Present a favourable self-image. But beware of too much self-praise; modesty may be a more effective strategy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Render favours to the other person. Gifts and rewards to others tend to increase their liking for you.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Share your happiness with others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Assist others when they are in grief.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Develop a good character. This will create likeness of others that will last for a prolong period of time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** 1 to 4 adopted from Jones, 1964, as in Umstot (1984)

**Dress**

Dress refers to clothes in general. What you wear is an important factor that determines the images and perceptions others form about you. Umstot (1984) writes: “Every day when you arrive at the workplace, your clothes are the first thing others notice. Even in a brief encounter, we normally observe what the other person is wearing and make judgements about that person and treat him or her according to how we react to the apparel.”

In order to generate a good impression within others about you, you will have to have an appropriate dress. Without appropriate dress you may or might not be treated by others or some of the other people in the way that you expect to be treated. Dress may determine:

- The way an unknown person addresses to you
- The way he/she treats you
- The respects he/she gives you
- Whether a person looks at you or not

**Activity 24:** Think of the following questions:
- Is a sport cloth appropriate to an office?
- Is a wool suit appropriate to a tennis court?
- Is a loose T-shirt appropriate for a lecture?
- Is a skirt appropriate for teaching?
Is a trouser appropriate for a female to go to the temple?
Is it appropriate to face for an interview without a tie or a sari?
Have you ever felt inferiority complex due to the dress you wore?

**Activity 25:** A research study showed that 83 percent of the people obeyed a person in a guard uniform while only 46 percent obeyed the same person dressed in civilian clothes (Bickman, 1974 as in Umstot, 1984). Can you explain why?

**Verbal and Nonverbal Impressions**
When you speak, it forms a certain impression. Voice quality, pitch, accent, speed, articulation, and content reveal a great deal about you and are important to the impression-forming process (Umstot, 1984).

- **Voice:** your physical ability to produce speech sound. It is what we hear when you talk.
- **Pitch:** it is the degree of highness or lowness with regard to sound. Can you pitch your voice at a level that suits the occasion?
- **Accent:** emphasizing words/statements.
- **Speed:** the rate at which your speech moves.
- **Articulation:** degree of clearness of expressing.
- **Content:** things (subject matters, ideas, etc.) included in the speech.

**Activity 26:** Do you agree with the following statements or not? Why?
- “Verbal behaviour is impossible to change.”
- “Verbal behaviour is much more difficult to change than dress.”

Nonverbal impressions are also crucial important for controlling impressions (Edinger and Patterson, 1983, Buck, 1983 as in Umstot, 1984). When you meet a person for the first time what do you do? How do you handshake? Firmness, warmth, smiling and eye contact matter in forming impression.

**Activity 27:** Discuss implications of impression management in Business Administration.

**References**


