

Lesson:-17

Individual and Physical abilities.

Dear students, welcome to your next learning module that is behaviour of individuals. We have seen that organizations comprises of people from different cultures. Thus organizations get seriously affected by such individual qualities as ability, perception, learning and motivation. In our subsequent lessons we would try to learn each one separately.

Individual Ability

So students let's see how an individuals ability is related to organizational behaviour;

Organizational behaviour is traditionally considered as the 'study of human behaviour in the work place'. According to this view organisations, representing collective entities of human actions and experiences, are dependent upon the extent to which such actions/ experiences, are effectively coordinated. To understand human action, one needs to have a fundamental understanding of human behaviours and the underlying stimuli. The behaviour of individuals are influenced significantly by their abilities. The following diagram presents the various individual factors affecting the final behaviour of a person.

Behavior Of Individuals

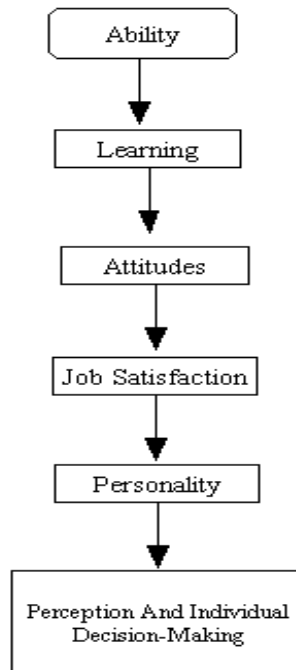


Figure 1.Behaviour of Individuals

ABILITY

Ability refers to an individual's capacity to perform the various tasks in a job. An individual's overall abilities are essentially made up of the following factors:

1. Intellectual Abilities, and
2. Physical Abilities.

Different Types of Abilities

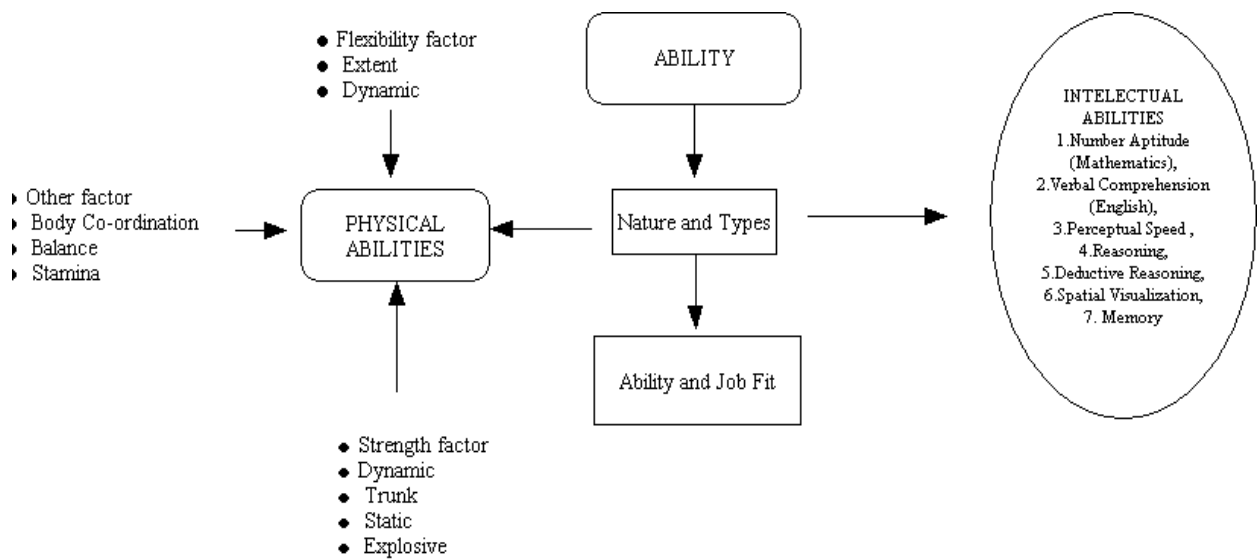


Figure 2. Various types of abilities

INTELLECTUAL ABILITIES:

Intellectual Abilities are those that are needed to perform mental activities. Mental activities can be measured by intelligent quotient (IQ) tests, that are designed to ascertain one's general Mental abilities. Some familiar examples of such tests in are Common Admission Tests (CAT), Management programs admission tests (GMAT), law (LSAT), and medical (MCAT), etc. Usually these tests try to measure and evaluate one's *mental abilities* on various academic areas pertaining to the success in the relevant courses, such as mathematics, English, General knowledge etc.

It is believed that there are a few different dimensions of mental abilities. Some of the most frequently cited dimensions of intellectual capacities are:

1. Number Aptitude (Mathematics),
2. Verbal Comprehension (English),
3. Perceptual Speed,
4. Reasoning,
5. Deductive Reasoning,
6. Spatial Visualization,
7. Memory

Generally speaking, the more information processing is required in a job, the more general intelligence and verbal abilities will be necessary to perform the job successfully. Of course, a high IQ is not a prerequisite for all. In Fact, for many jobs in which employee behavior is highly routine and there are little or no opportunities to exercise discretion, a high IQ may be unrelated to performance. On the other hand, a careful review of the evidence demonstrates that tests that assess verbal, numerical, spatial, and perceptual ability are valid predictors of job proficiency at all levels of jobs. Therefore, tests measure specific dimensions of intelligence have been found to be strong predictors of future job performance.

Exhibit 1: Different Types of Mental abilities

Sr No.	Dimension of intellectual abilities	Description	Job Example
1	Number aptitude	Ability to do speedy and accurate arithmetic	Accountant
2	Verbal Communication	Read write speaking ability	Senior managers
3	Perceptual Speed	Identify similarities and differences quickly and accurately	Investigators
4	Inductive reasoning	Logical sequence drawing	Market Researcher
5	Deductive reasoning	Ability to use logic and assess the implications of the argument	Supervisors
6	Spatial Visualization	Ability to imagine	Interior decorator
7	Memory	Ability to retain and recall past experience	Sales person- Remembering customer's name

PHYSICAL ABILITIES

To the same degree that intellectual abilities play a larger role in complex jobs with demanding information-processing requirements, specific physical abilities gain importance for successfully doing less skilled and more standardized jobs. For example, jobs in which success demands stamina, manual dexterity, leg strength, or similar talents require management to identify an employee's physical capabilities.

Research on the requirements needed in hundreds of jobs has identified nine basic abilities involved in the performance of physical tasks. These are described in Exhibit 2. Individuals differ in the extent to which they have each of these abilities. Surprisingly, there is also little relationship between them: A high score on one is no assurance of a high score on others. High employee performance is likely to be achieved when management has ascertained the extent to which a job requires each of the nine abilities and then ensures that employees in that job have those abilities.

The specific intellectual or physical abilities required for adequate job performance depend on the ability requirements of the job. So, for example, airline pilots need strong spatial-visualization abilities. Beach lifeguards need both strong spatial-visualization abilities and body coordination. Senior Managers need verbal abilities; high rise construction workers need balance; and Journalists with weak reasoning abilities would likely have difficulty meeting minimum job-performance standards.

What predictions can we make when the fit is poor?

Quite obviously, if employees lack the required abilities, they are likely to fail. But when the ability-job fit is out of sync because the employee has abilities that far exceed the requirements of the job, our predictions would be very different. Job performance is likely to be adequate, but there will be organizational inefficiencies and possible declines in employee satisfaction. Given that pay tends to reflect the highest skill level that employees possess, if an employee's abilities far exceed those necessary to do the job, management will be paying more than it needs to. Abilities significantly above those required can also reduce the employee's job satisfaction when the employee's desire to use his or her abilities is particularly strong and is frustrated by the limitations of the job.

Exhibit 2: Different Types of Physical Abilities

Nine Basic Physical abilities			
Strength factor			
1	Dynamic	Exerting muscular strength rapidly and repeatedly	
2	Trunk	Exerting muscular strength rapidly and repeatedly using the trunk muscle	
3	Static	Exert force against external object	
4	Explosive	Exert and expend all force in one or series of explosive acts.	
Flexibility factor			
5	Extent	Ability to bend trunk and back muscle	
6	Dynamic	Ability to bend trunk and back muscle rapidly and repeatedly	
Other factor			
7	Body Co-ordination	Mind and body control	
8	Balance	Ability to maintain equilibrium against external force.	
9	Stamina	Ability to exert force persistently.	

Points to remember

- **Individual Abilities**
Individual abilities are made up of two factors:
 - 1) Intellectual abilities
 - 2) Physical abilities

- **INTELLECTUAL ABILITIES**
The abilities that are needed to perform mental activities (such as logical reasoning, analysis) as per the requirement of the job
- **PHYSICAL ABILITIES**
• some jobs demand certain specific physical abilities for its success (such as stamina, physical dexterity, leg strength)
