

The Open University of Sri Lanka
 Master of Business Administration in Human Resource Management
 Final Examination 2015, Semester I
 MCP2134- Organizational Behaviour
 Duration: 03 Hours



Date: 01st August 2015

Time: From 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

No. of Questions :05

No. of Pages : 04

Instructions: ANSWER **FOUR (04)** QUESTIONS **INCLUDING QUESTION NO. 01**, WHICH IS COMPULSORY.
 ALL ANSWERS SHOULD BE WRITTEN NEATLY AND FOCUSED.

1. Read the following case study and answer the questions given at the end.

Olivia Francic

Jim Markham did not know what to do. The more he tried to analyze the problem, the murkier it became. Normally, Jim felt confident in counseling his students-both past and present-but this time it was different. Olivia Francic had been one of the best students he had ever taught in the MBA programme. She was bright and curious, one of those rare students whose thirst for knowledge was uppermost in her reasons for being in the programme.

She had never disclosed much about her family or her past to him, but he knew from her student file and information sheet, and from bits and pieces of conversations with her, that she had come from a poor, somewhat impoverished neighborhood in St. Louis and had earned her way through college on academic scholarship and part-time jobs. Upon graduation from the MBA programme she left the Midwest, taking a job with a prestigious consulting firm in Los Angeles, and at the time he had felt sure she would travel far in her career. Perhaps that is why her phone call earlier that morning troubled him so.

Awaiting him on his arrival at the office was a message on his answering machine from Olivia. He returned her call and wound up talking to her for an hour. The salient portions of their conversation began to run through his mind again. What had struck him the most the initially was the range and the depth of her emotions. He had never spoken to anyone in his life who had so much rage seething within them. After she had vented the rage, like air slowly being discharge from a balloon, she became almost apathetic, and her resignation to her situation almost frightened him-her only way out, as far as she could see it, was to find another job. Jim could not recall ever being in a situation where he felt he had absolutely no control over what happened to him, where his input was over what happened to him, where his input was meaningless to the resolution of a problem he faced.

Olivia had stated that her first performance appraisal had been below the average, and two weeks ago, her second appraisal was only average. She felt that she had worked hard on her part of the team's projects and believed her work was first rate. The only reason for the appraisals, as far as she could see, was that she was black. She was the only black on the team-in the whole office for that matter. Jim believed her when she said that her work was excellent, for her work had always been excellent as a graduate student and as a research assistant. He had attempted to get her to analyze the situation further, but it was like pulling teeth; she seemed emotionally worn out and just wanted out.

"Surely they gave you more feedback about your performance than that it was below average?" he remembered saying. All she would say is that they mentioned something about her attitude, not being a team player that her work was technically exemplary, but that she was part of a team

and that working with others was as critical as the nature of the work she did by herself. Olivia felt that this was a smokescreen for that fact that she had been dumped on the office by a corporate recruiter with an EEO quota to fill, and that they were trying to get rid of her by using subjective criteria that she couldn't really defend herself against. The frustration came back to Jim as he remembered probing her more information.

"What was the tone of you manager in the fee-back session?"

"Condescending, false sincerity; there was a lot of talk on his part of 'my potential'. It was humiliation, actually."

"How do the other people in your team act towards you. Are they friendly, aloof, or what?"

"Oh, they are friendly on the surface-especially the project leader-but that's about as far as it goes."

"Is the project manager the person who gives you this feedback?"

"No, she is under the group manager. He is a long-time company guy. But, obviously she gives him her evaluation and impression of me, so I am sure that they both pretty much see issues regarding me eye-to-eye."

"Tell me more about the group manager."

"Mr. Bresnan, I don't know much about him to tell you the truth. He oversees five project teams, and each project manager reports to him. He comes in and gives a pep talk from time to time to us. Other than that I never had occasion to really interact with him. He is always cracking jokes, putting people at ease. Kind of a "Theory Y" type-at least on the surface."

"Do you ever go to lunch as a group?"

"Yes, they go to lunch a lot and they invite me along, but all they talk about are things I don't find very interesting-they are kind of a shallow bunch."

"What do you mean, shallow?"

"They could care less about real issues-their discussions range from restaurants to social events around town and recent moves they have seen."

"Does the project manager go to these lunches?"

"Yes, she comes and even plans parties after work too. Her husband is in the entertainment industry, a movie producer. Nothing big, documentaries and that type of thing, they put on airs, if you know what I mean. She is really gregarious and always wants to be of help to people, but she strikes me as putting on a front, a mask-obviously she is not really sincere in wanting to help everyone 'be the best that they can be'; that is one of her little slogans by the way; after all, look what happened to me."

"Why do you think they are prejudiced against you?"

"Well, the poor appraisals for one thing-those are completely unfounded. They do other less obvious things too. Twice I have overheard some of them from behind cubicles relaxing and telling racist jokes about 'wetbacks'."

"It is just a few of them that do this? I can't believe all of them are racist."

"I don't know; I don't enter the cubicles and say, 'Hi guys, tell some more jokes!' But it is not just one or two of them. Look, I obviously don't fit in, do I? It's all so stupid."

"Why is that?"

“The clients always like what we produce, and with a few relatively small adjustments, our work is acceptable to the clients. So, it is like all that wasted energy was needless. We could accomplish so much more if they would just settle down and trust their abilities.”

“How do you act when they are like this?”

“I do my work. I respond to them rationally. I turn my part of the project in on time, and it is good work, Professor Markham. I guess I try to be the stabilizing force in the team by now acting like they do-I guess I just don't find the work pressure to be all that successful.”

“Why not?”

“Oh, I don't know really. Well, maybe I do a little bit. I don't know this or not, but my mother was a single parent with four kids. I was the oldest. She worked and I looked after the kids when I came home from school. She worked two jobs to provide for us. So I would be in charge of the smaller kids sometimes upwards 9 o'clock at night. Doing your homework while talking care of a sick kid with the others listening to the television-that's successful! These people at work-they don't know what stress is. Most of them are single, or if they are married, they don't have any kids. They all seem very self-centered, like the universe revolves around them and their carriers.”

“What kind of behaviour at work seems to get rewarded?”

“I guess doing good work doesn't. What seems to get rewarded is being white, being more or less competent, and being interested in insipid topics. Professor Markham, don't you know of any firms that are more enlightened I can send my resume to? I am looking for a firm that will reward me for the work I do and not for who I am or am not.”

Jim leaned back in his chair pondering what to do next. He had promised Olivia that he would call her back in a day or two with some advice. He sensed that he didn't quite understand her problem, that there was more to it than what appeared on the surface. But he just felt like he didn't have good enough data to analyze it properly. He decided to go for a walk around the neighborhood to clear his mind. As he opened the front door and gazed down his street, he suddenly realized for the first time that his neighborhood was lily-white.

Source: Cohen, A.R., Fink, S.L., Gadon, H., and Willits, R.D., (2001). *Effective Behaviour in Organizations; Cases, Concepts, and Student Experiences*. McGraw Hill Companies Inc., New York.

Questions:

- I. What is/are the major issue/s you have identified in this case? Analyze that/those issues using relevant concepts and theories. (20 marks)
 - II. What would you suggest as remedial course of action/s to deal with the issue/s identified by you? Justify your answer. (20 marks)
2. “Copying strategies for job stress exit for both individual and organizational levels”.
- Discuss what the individual level strategies are and how can job stress be prevailed or managed by individual level strategies. Use practical examples to elaborate your answer (20 marks)

3. "It is said that management cannot implement organizational changes exactly as expected".

Discuss the validity of this statement and show a procedure to be followed in order to implement a proposed organizational change to the desired extent.

(20 marks)

4. I. Discuss how do organizational cultures develop, highlighting four steps that commonly occur.

(10 marks)

- II. "Despite the complexity, significant barriers and resistant to change, it is possible to change organizational culture over time".

Describe how can organizational culture be changed?

(10marks)

5. "There is a positive relationship between the employee job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness".

Discuss the major consequences of employee job satisfaction and how they affect the organizational effectiveness. Use suitable examples to elaborate your answer

(20marks)

-Copyright Reserved-