FEEDBACK TUTORIAL LETTER

1st SEMESTER 2019

ASSIGNMENT 1

INTRODUCTION TO ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
IOP511S
Dear Student

I trust that, by the time you are reading this Feedback Letter of 2019 for IOP51s, you have received and perused your marked Assignment number 1.

It is not easy to study by way of Distance Education. You need to work systematically from the beginning of the semester; otherwise you will be unable to master the subject. Remember that your marks are often a reflection of your attitude; if you try to complete an assignment in the shortest time possible you cannot expect to do well.

The purpose of this feedback letter is, for you to see how your assignment was marked and give a response regarding certain observations with your answers to the questions as contained in the aforesaid assignment.

Firstly, some general comments:

1. Some students tend not to read a question in order to establish exactly what is asked and, as a result, have lost marks.

2. Observe the mark allocation in order to decide how many facts to include in your answer. Watch out that you do not repeat yourself; this wastes time and does not gain you any extra marks. As a rule of thumb, a question counting two marks needs no more than two to three lines, etc.

3. Read your answer! Carelessness costs marks!

4. Make sure that you have answered all the questions; there is no excuse for omitting questions.

5. Keep your answers short and to the point. In the examination the markers do not have time to wade through pages of jumble in order to search for one correct key word. In fact, we do not mark on key words at all; if the context in which you use the words does not show understanding no marks will be allocated.

Secondly, specific comment:
6. Majority of you, struggled to adequately respond to questions with “how” and “why” in them. Particularly the long-structured ones. In future remember this type of questions requires you to: state, explain or motivate your answer. A one-word response does not cut it. For example, Let’s look at the following question as an example.

**Question:** How did the diverse nature of the group affect the committee’s actions? (5 marks)

**Answer:** The diverse nature of the group affected the committee’s actions **positively or negatively** because of a, b, c, d, e….. etc.

Word of advice, I urge you all to practice answering long-structured questions. This is for your advantage.

Practice makes perfect.

In conclusion, I am very proud of the efforts you made in your assignment 01. And wishes you all the best in the upcoming assessments.
Question 1: Multiple Choice (10 Marks)

Based on Unit 3: Personality

Please choose the correct answer. Write your answer as 1 a) or 1 b) for example.

1.) Phenotype refers to (1 mark)
   a) A theory on human biology
   b) Total genetic composition of a person
   c) Observable characteristics of a person

2.) Which of the following is not a feature identified by Louw & Edwards as characteristics that make up personality? (1 mark)
   a) They are largely unconscious
   b) They affect every aspect of our lives
   c) They can be change easily

3.) What pre-natal factor have influence on personality formation? (1 mark)
   a) Rubella
   b) Genetics
   c) Post-natal

4.) One of the criticisms against Sigmund Freud theory is (1 mark)
   a) A negative outlook on life
   b) Overemphasizes on sexuality
   c) His views of the human ego were broad

5.) The following are popular methods used by employers to determine personality of applicants except
(1 mark)

a) Projective techniques

b) Schizotypal personality test

c) Self-rating test

6.) If Fiina’s mother and father both have genes for brown eyes, Fiina will have brown eyes because only the recessive genes for brown eyes is available for transfer. This is an example of: (1 mark)

a) Genotype

b) Age

c) Direct influences

7.) Postnatal environment leads....(1 mark)

a) To no influence on personality development

b) To alcoholism

c) To more drastic differences between individuals than the prenatal environment.

8.) The following factors lead to differences in work behavior except from one.... (1 mark)

a) Motivation

b) Drag race

c) Intelligence

9.) Gender refers to the following... (1 mark)

a) Male and female

b) Sex

c) Social norms

10) Organizational psychology is the... (1 mark)

a) Study of organizational structures and dynamics

b) Study of the physical environment that can affect individuals

c) Study of human behavior in the workplace.

Question 2: Structured Questions (10 Marks)
Based on Unit 4: Frustration and Conflict

1. Distinguish the difference between the following: conflict, aggression and frustration (use relevant examples) (6 marks)

   **Conflict** – incompatible goals, difference of opinion, clash of interest
   - a serious disagreement or argument

   **Aggression** – readiness to attack or confront, forcefulness
   - action of attacking without provocation
   - caused by frustration due to blocked goals.

   **Frustration** – blocking or preventing of purposeful behavior
   - the feeling of being upset or annoyed as a result of being unable to change or achieve something

   **NB:** Students can provide examples that are relevant and practical or are applicable to the following.

2. Mention any 2 sources of work conflict (2 marks)

   - Differences in perception
   - Limited resources
   - Departmentalization and specialization
   - The nature of work activities

   **NB:** Any other relevant and practical responses are welcome

3. As an Organisational Development (OD) Officer describe how you will address those mentioned conflicts. (2 marks)

   Answer depends on the 2 mentioned sources of work conflict in question 2 (1)

**Question 3: Structured Questions (10 Marks)**

Based on Unit 6: Learning Process and Memory

1. Define learning (2 marks)

   Refers to any permanent change in behavior or knowledge, resulting from experience

2. Mention the 3 forms of learning (3 marks)
   - Associative learning
   - Cognitive learning
3. Why is learning and/or training important for an organization? (2 marks)

Following reasons or answers applies:
- Efficiency
- Increased productivity
- Increased profits
- Personal mastery
- Mental models
- Shared values
- Decreased employee turnover

4. What is positive reinforcement? (1 mark)

Giving something to the subject when they perform the desired action, so they associate it with the reward and do it more often, e.g: Employee of the month award

5. As an OD Officer how will you encourage life-long learning amongst employees in your organization or company? (2 marks)

Ways to encourage life-long learning:
- Recognize learning as an achievement (Salary increase, promotion, added responsibilities etc)
- Offer financial support to employees (Bursaries, scholarships, loans & Grants)
- Build a learning resource center (Library)
- Create opportunities for Social learning
- Offer support (Study leave)
- Allow employees to self-direct their learning
- Make learning goals as important as performance goals
- Connect employees with inspirational mentors
Question 4: Case Study (20 Marks)

Based on Unit 9: Groups and Group Dynamics

A Difficult Task Force

José has been appointed chair of a steering task force to design the primary product line for a new joint venture between companies from Japan, the United States, and South America. The new joint venture company will make, sell, and service pet caskets (coffins) for the burial of beloved pets, mostly dogs and cats. One month earlier, each company had assigned personnel to the task force:

• From the **Japanese** company, Furuay Masahiko from Yokohama, assistant to the president of the Japanese company; Hamada Isao from Tokyo, director of marketing from its technology group; and Noto Takeshi from Tokyo, assistant director of its financial management department.
• From the **United States** company, Thomas Boone from Chicago, the top purchasing manager from its lumber and forest lands group; Richard Maret from Buffalo, the co-director of the company’s information systems group; and Billy Bob "Tex" Johnson from Arizona, the former CEO, now retired and a consultant for the company.
• From the **South American** company, Mariana Preus from Argentina, the head of product design for that company’s specialty animal products group; Hector Bonilla from their Mexico City division, an expert in automated systems design for wood products; and Mauricio Gomes, in charge of design and construction for the plant, which will be located in southern Chile to take advantage of the vast forest there.¹

These members were chosen for their expertise in various areas and were taking valuable time away from their normal assignments to participate in the joint venture. As chair of the task force, José had scheduled an initial meeting for 10:00 A.M. José started the meeting by reviewing the history of the development of the joint venture and how the three company presidents had decided to create it. Then, José reviewed the market for the new high-end, designer pet coffins, stressing that this task force was to develop the initial design parameters for the new product to meet increasing demand around the world. He then opened the meeting for comments and suggestions. Mariana Preus spoke first: "In my opinion, the current designs that
we have in production in our Argentina plant are just fine. They are topnotch designs, using the latest technology for processing. They use the best woods available and they should sell great. I don’t see why we have to design a whole new product line.” Noto Takeshi agreed and urged the committee to recommend that the current designs were good enough and should be immediately incorporated into the plans for the new manufacturing plant. José interrupted the discussion: "Look, the council of presidents put this joint venture together to completely revolutionize the product and its manufacture based on solid evidence and industry data. We are to redesign the product and its manufacturing systems. That is our job, so let’s get started." José knew that the presidents had considered using existing designs but had rejected the idea because the designs were too old and not easily manufacturable at costs low enough to make a significant impact on the market. He told the group this and reminded them that the purpose of the committee was to design a new product.

The members then began discussing possible new design elements, but the discussion always returned to the benefits of using the existing designs. Finally, Tex spoke up: "I think we ought to do what Mariana suggested earlier. It makes no sense to me to design new caskets when the existing designs are good enough to do the job." The others nodded their heads in agreement. José again reminded them of the task force’s purpose and said such a recommendation would not be well received by the council of presidents. Nevertheless, the group insisted that José write a memo to the council of presidents with the recommendation to use existing designs and to begin immediately to design the plant and the manufacturing system. The meeting adjourned and the members headed to the golf course at 10:45 A.M. José returned to his computer and started to write the memo, but he knew it would anger the presidents. He hoped he would not be held responsible for the actions of the task force, even though he was its chair. He wondered what had gone wrong and what he could have done to prevent it.
Case Questions

1. Which 5 characteristics of group behaviour can you identify in this case? Give also an example for each of the characteristics in the case study (5 marks)

- Group Characteristics:
- Communication patterns
- Decision making
- Division of power
- Role differentiation
- Leadership
- Group Cohesion
- Conforming to group norms
- Dealing with conflict
- Motivation productivity

NB: Student should provide examples from the case-study of the above stated characteristics

2. How did the diverse nature of the group affect the committee's actions? (5 marks)
   a) The group was affected negatively or positively
   b) The following issues should have been included in the response:
      - Role ambiguity
      - Groupthink
      - Progress not reached
      - Members resistant to change
      - Role of Task group not well understood or articulated

3. If you were in Jose’s position, what would you have done differently? (10 marks)
   Following reasons or answers applies:
   
   This question is in 2 parts,

   The 1st part answers the what happened/transpired?

   Stages of Group Formation wasn’t properly conducted, focus was largely centered on Task-performing. As a result members knew very little about each other and did not bond as a Team, which was was critical for sharing and buying into the vision. The team-exercise was done after the task was executed (which was a bit too late). Jose approached the task with
a Top-down approach (didn’t own the idea) which made the group resist the new changes. Jose himself seemed not sold into the idea as he failed to express his own feelings on the new changes. He also lost control of the meeting to Maria allowing her to influence others.

The 2nd part answers the what, how the student could have handled the situation given if they were in Jose’s position?

- Follow or apply rightly stages of group formation
- Use advantage/disadvantage approach to assess whether to keep old designs or not
  - Good for dissolving group think
- Take ownership of the idea
- Encourage group discussion
- Not rely on one persons (Maria) opinion
- Allowed more time (maybe a week) for task to be completed instead of a day
- Try reaching for a compromise

END OF ASSIGNMENT FEEDBACK LETTER