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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert M. Guion, Distinguished University Professor Emeritus in the Department of Psychology, Bowling Green State University, has been at Bowling Green since 1952, when he initiated its program in industrial psychology, now known as industrial and organizational psychology. He received his Ph.D. in industrial psychology from Purdue University in 1952. Honors include being elected President of SIOP (The Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology and Division 14 of the American Psychological Association) and of the APA Division 5 (Evaluation and Measurement). He was twice awarded the SIOP James McKeen Cattell award for excellence in research design, and he also received SIOP’s Distinguished Contributions Award and Distinguished Service Award. The Association for Psychological Science named him James McKeen Cattell Fellow for Distinguished Contributions to Psychological Science. He received a similar life honor, the Stephen E. Bemis Award, from the International Personnel Management Association Assessment Council. He was more recently named Scientific Honoree of the Foundation for the Advancement of Behavioral and Brain Scientists.
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Organizations consist of members. Their members; the tools, equipment, and supplies available to them; their goals and purposes; their research activity; the community services they offer; their influence beyond the organization—such things create environments, social and physical and ideological, for their members and also for customers and vendors. Membership is important; “workers should be viewed as long-term assets, not short-term costs” (Gowing, Kraft, & Quick, 1998, p. 261).

Organizations change. They grow or decay, they merge with others or direct themselves to customers, or perhaps to potential employers that they are competent in what they do. Organizations also face and react to external change. Some buggy-makers, facing the future, started making automobiles. In the automotive industry, skilled craftsmen made cars; product quality depended on their individual skills. Then mechanical equipment made assembly lines possible, and relatively unskilled workers could do what craftsmen had done—and with precision permitting interchangeable parts. New much of automotive assembly is automated, and robots do things people used to do; fewer workers are needed, and many who are left are highly trained in new electronic crafts. Member roles and required qualifications changed as work environments changed from social to mechanical to electronic.

Change occurs spasmodically and in pockets—like “scattered showers” in a weather forecast. At any given moment, some people, and the organizations within which they work, do things in a totally new way; others stick to tradition. Sticking to tradition is partly preservation (perhaps resistance to change), but it also happens because the stimulus for change doesn’t occur everywhere at once. Besides, to recall colleague French, plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose—the more things change, the more they stay the same. Despite Frank Landy’s urging that I follow his trend to find new things in the job at hand and replace it with work, I find daily use still bemoans the loss of jobs in times of recession/depression, meaning work that gets paid. And, like Ilgen and Pulakos (1999), I believe that employee performance remains paramount to the health of both the employing organization and its members.

Not everyone joins an organization. People in some occupations—professionals, people in trades or crafts, farmers, or consultants among them—may form their own small organizations or work independently. Some of them must be certified individually to the public, to customers, or to potential employers that they are competent in what they do. Nevertheless, nearly everyone in a modern society works in some form of organization.

Organizations function through their members. Recruiting and hiring new members is one of the first steps in bringing in new people. Hiring new people is the end state of a selection process and is only one of several kinds of personnel decisions. The selection process involves choosing among applicants those who will be hired—in a prototype for the processes of choosing among applicants those will be hired is a prototype for the processes of a

1 Membership Decisions in Organizations

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