

EGT3
ENGINEERING TRIPOS PART IIA

Thursday 5 May 2022 09.30 to 11.10

Module 3E6

ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

*Answer **two** out of three questions.*

All questions carry the same number of marks.

*The **approximate** percentage of marks allocated to each part of a question is indicated in the right margin.*

*Write your candidate number **not** your name on the cover sheet.*

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

Single-sided script paper

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS TO BE SUPPLIED FOR THIS EXAM

None

10 minutes reading time is allowed for this paper at the start of the exam.

You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent pages of this question paper until instructed to do so.

You may not remove any stationery from the Examination Room.

1 Explain why cultural tightness, compared to cultural looseness, may reduce creativity in groups. In your answer, use theories and/or findings that you learned during the session on Group Dynamics.

Note that whenever you draw on a theory, you should explain the basic tenets of the theory. [100%]

[Answer – 100 %]

1. [20 %] Definition of cultural tightness-looseness: the degree to which a group enforces norms and rules. In tight cultures, norm deviations are immediately, harshly punished; in loose cultures, norm deviations are allowed to some degree.
2. [40 %] Connection between cultural tightness-looseness and groupthink (or norm conformity): In tight cultures, compared to loose cultures, group members are more likely to conform to norms because norms and rules are strongly reinforced by groups, and deviations (or non-conformity) are punished. That is, tight groups are more likely to emphasize the importance of conformity, compared to loose groups. Thus, tight groups are more susceptible to groupthink, than loose groups.
3. [40 %] Connection between norm conformity and group creativity.
 - a. [5 %] Definition of creativity: creativity refers to the generation of novel and useful ideas.
 - b. [5 %] Creativity needs diverse ideas, opinions, and perspectives
 - c. [15 %] Norm conformity (groupthink) reduces the exchanges of diverse, different, and challenging ideas.
 - d. [15 %] Why? Ashe's experiment showed that people, who have different opinions, tend to suppress the expressions of such opinions by conforming to the majority's opinions.

2 Explain why a CEO's openness to experience can facilitate his/her company's innovation. In your answer, use theories and/or findings that you learned during the sessions on Personality and Creativity, Innovation, and Innovation Diffusion.

Note that whenever you draw on a theory, you should explain the basic tenets of the theory. [100%]

[Answer – 100 %]

1. [10 %] Show an understanding of the concept of openness to experience: a person's innate tendency to be open to novel ideas, perspectives, and opinions and his/her fascination with novelty
2. [60 %] Show their understanding of the processes of innovation and innovation diffusion
 - a. [10 %] Innovation is the whole process from idea generation, idea

- evaluation, idea selection, and idea implementation
- b. [20 %] Creativity demonstrated by employees within a company (or generations of novel and useful ideas) is the initial stage of innovation. As for innovation, recognition, selection, and successful implementation of employees' creative ideas are equally as important as creativity. And, it is often the leaders' (e.g., CEO's) job to recognize employees' creative ideas, select such ideas to implement, and manage the company to successfully implement the ideas.
 - c. [10 %] Innovation diffusion is the successful implementation of innovative products or processes that are developed by others (e.g., often competitors). Innovation diffusion consists of (1) recognition / evaluation of innovation achieved by others, (2) adoption of the innovation, and (3) implementation of the innovation.
 - d. [20 %] Innovation diffusion requires the CEO to recognize the value of innovation (e.g., innovative products, manufacturing processes, or organizational practices) initiated by competitors, make a decision on the adoption of innovation, and manage her/his company to successfully implement the innovation. The failure of the CEO's recognition of innovation leads to lag behind in the innovation diffusion.
3. [30 %] Making a connection between a CEO's openness to experience and innovation
 - a. CEOs with high openness to experience are more likely to recognize creative ideas of employees within their companies and recognize a valuable innovation, driven by their competitors, that may improve their companies' performance by adopting it. Thus, a CEO's openness to experience may facilitate innovation driven both by inside and outside the company.

3 According to Attraction-Selection-Attrition theory, employees are attracted to, and selected by, companies whose cultures have a good fit with their personalities. However, when this theory theorises Attrition, it suggests that in any company there are employees who experience a misfit between their personality and the organisational culture. Due to this misfit, these employees will eventually quit their company. The theory then appears to be self-contradictory. If employees have a good fit between their personalities and organisational cultures when they join their companies, why then do some employees subsequently experience a misfit? Based on what you learned during the session on Personality, explain why this theory is not self-contradictory.

Note 1. Assume that employees' personalities never change before and after joining their companies.

Note 2. Whenever you draw on a theory, you should explain the basic tenets of the theory. [100%]

1. [100%] **Selection issue:** According to ASA theory, recruiters select candidates based on the perceived fits between their company's cultures and candidates' personality. Recruiters assess job candidates' personality through in-person (or online) interviews and/or personality tests during the process of selection. Here, job candidates do fake their personality to be seen as more attractive candidates. That is, they intentionally inflate their self-reporting on desirable personality traits such as openness to experience, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability in the Big-Five Personality. Then, such mis-reported information influences recruiters' impressions on job candidates, which in turn affects their final decision on employee selection. Therefore, during the selection process, recruiters may fail to accurately assess the fits between their company's cultures and candidates' personality, which may in turn cause employees who enter the company to experience misfits.
 - a. When presenting their answers, students should rely on research on personality faking
 - i. [20%] Explaining the concept of personality faking
 - ii. [20%] Explaining the empirical evidence for personality faking (i.e., meta-analyses)
 - iii. [60%] Making successful connection between personality faking and misfits that employees may experience after entering the company
 - iv. Note: Students may argue that recruiters can fake cultures when they explain organizational cultures to candidates during the interview. However, this argument was not grounded by theories and empirical evidence. I mentioned it in my lecture. Thus, there will be no point for this argument.

END OF PAPER