**Self-Assessment: It All Makes Sense?**

**The source of this scale is: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited.**

**Instructions:**

Everyone has personal theories that have developed through observation and experience. Many of these beliefs are at least partially true, but some are incorrect or need refinement. This self-assessment gives you the opportunity to test some of your personal theories that apply to the workplace. Read each statement in this self-assessment and indicate whether each statement is true or false, in your opinion.

1. A happy worker is a productive worker.

* Yes
* No

1. Decision makers tend to continue supporting a course of action even though information suggests that the decision is ineffective.

* Yes
* No

1. Organizations are more effective when they prevent conflict among employees.

* Yes
* No

1. It is better to negotiate alone than as a team.

* Yes
* No

1. Companies are most effective when they have a strong corporate culture.

* Yes
* No

1. Employees perform better without stress.

* Yes
* No

1. Effective organizational change always begins by pinpointing the source of its current problems.

* Yes
* No

1. Female leaders involve employees in decisions to a greater degree than do male leaders.

* Yes
* No

1. People in Japan value group harmony and duty to the group (high collectivism) more than do Canadians or Americans (low collectivism).

* Yes
* No

1. Top-level executives tend to exhibit a Type A behaviour pattern (i.e., hard-driving, impatient, competitive, short-tempered, strong sense of time urgency, rapid talkers).

* Yes
* No

1. Employees usually feel overreward inequity when they are paid more than co-workers performing the same work.

* Yes
* No

**Understanding Your Score on the “It All Makes Sense” Self-Assessment**

This self-assessment offers a small test of your "common sense" or personal theories about life in organizations. These statements are not intended to be representative of questions that you might find on a final exam. Rather, they relate to specific aspects of organizational behaviour that are often misunderstood, even among OB scholars!

Scores on this self-assessment range from 0 to 11. The higher the score, the closer your personal theories are to current organizational behaviour knowledge. There are no norms for this scale. Instead, the results provide further details regarding the statements that were answered incorrectly.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Low  0 |  | High 11 |

**Scoring:**

To find where you stand on the “It All Makes Sense” Self-Assessment, please refer to the following feedback:

**Correct Answers:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

1. A happy worker is a productive worker. **TRUE (sort of...).**

People tend to answer "True" to this age-old statement, whereas OB scholars have said for many years that employees with the highest job satisfaction don't perform much better than unhappy employees. But very recent research supports the common sense view to some extent. Happy employees are moderately more likely to perform better on the job. For details, see Chapter 4.

2. Decision makers tend to continue supporting a course of action even though information suggests that the decision is ineffective. **TRUE.**

This statement represents the escalation of commitment phenomenon, which is described in Chapter 8. There are several reasons why people continue to support a bad decision. These include: (a) self-justification — people want to present themselves in a positive light; (b) gambler's fallacy — decision makers under-estimate the risk and overestimate their probability of success; (c) perceptual blinders — decision makers do not see the problems soon enough; and (d) closing costs — decision makers will persist because the costs of ending the project are high or unknown.

3. Organizations are more effective when they prevent conflict among employees. **FALSE.**

Actually, the correct answer is "it depends on the type of conflict." In Chapter 13, we distinguish task-oriented from socioemotional conflict. We also discuss both the benefits of and problems with conflict. Briefly, task-oriented conflict is potentially beneficial because it improves decision making.

4. It is better to negotiate alone than as a team. **FALSE.**

As described in the latter part of Chapter 13, team listening is an important virtue in negotiations. The more people listening, the more your side will hear valuable information and understand the subtle nonverbal cues communicated by the other party. This information makes it easier to identify low-cost concessions or proposals that will satisfy the other side.

5. Companies are most effective when they have a strong corporate culture. **FALSE.**

As with so many organizational behaviour concepts, the more precise answer is "it depends." Chapter 16 states that there is a weak relationship between corporate culture strength and organizational performance. Three reasons are offered. First, a strong culture can be a problem when the values are inconsistent with the organization's environment. Second, a very strong culture can blind employees from seeing other perspectives. Third, a very strong culture suppresses dissenting values that may be important in the future as the environment changes.

6. Employees perform better without stress. **FALSE.**

As we learn in Chapter 7, some level of stress is essential for life. We need a certain level of stress to energize us. The problem is that we sometimes (or often) experience stress beyond this beneficial level.

7. Effective organizational change always begins by pinpointing the source of its current problems. **FALSE.**

This statement refers to the dominant model of problem solving and organizational change, namely, to identify the problem before looking for solutions. In Chapter 17, we introduce an emerging perspective of organizational change called appreciative inquiry. According to this model, dwelling on problems can bog down the change process and degenerate into a political quagmire. Instead, change agents need to focus the group on its potential and positive elements.

8. Female leaders involve employees in decisions to a greater degree than do male leaders. **TRUE.**

There is lot of debate about whether and how men and women lead differently. As we learn at the end of Chapter 14, men and women are mostly similar in their leadership styles. But there is one exception: female leaders involve employees in decisions to a greater degree than do male leaders. Of course, some female leaders are not participative, and some male leaders are very participative. But generally, female leaders are more participative.

9. People in Japan value group harmony and duty to the group (high collectivism) more than do Canadians or Americans (low collectivism). **FALSE.**

Chances are, even your instructor will get this statement wrong. People widely believe that Japanese culture is very group-oriented. According to recent studies, this simply isn't true. The error relates back to how group orientation (called collectivism) was measured in a major study of IBM employees over 20 years ago. Scholars now conclude that Japanese culture has fairly low collectivism and that the famous early study measured collectivism incorrectly.

10. Top-level executives tend to exhibit a Type A behaviour pattern (i.e., hard-driving, impatient, competitive, short-tempered, strong sense of time urgency, rapid talkers). **FALSE.**

Chapter 7 introduces the concepts of Type A and Type B behaviour patterns. While most people think senior executives are hard-driving Type As, research suggests that they tend to exhibit more of the Type B behaviour pattern. In other words, they tend to work steadily, take a more relaxed approach to life, and be even-tempered. In fact, these features may provide superior human relations skills which give Type B people more promotions.

11. Employees usually feel overreward inequity when they are paid more than coworkers performing the same work. **FALSE.**

When it comes to money, people tend to play interesting mind games to avoid feeling overreward inequity. Students will read in Chapter 5 that overrewarded employees often distort their perceived inputs or outcomes to reduce inequitable feelings. For example, they might begin to think that their higher pay is justified because they offer more skills or experience than they previously thought. They might think: "This large bonus means that the company values my talent more than I thought!"