TOPIC

INDIVIDUALS IN THE ORGANIZATION

LEARNING, PERSONALITY

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Introduction

Individuals in the organization, explores five topics from psychology:

• Learning

• Personality

• Communication

• Perception

• Motivation

Introduction

- These topics are of enduring significance to management and organizational behaviour.

- However, in an economic downturn, such as the second decade of the twenty-first century has produced, maintaining a capable, informed, motivated, and engaged workforce becomes more, not less, important.

- We know that, as a general rule, **giving people at all levels of an organization more autonomy**, and more freedom to experiment and to solve their own problems, can increase individual and organizational performance.

- However, the **management tendency in times of crisis is to tighten controls on employee behaviour and to centralize** decision making – actions which can have the opposite effect on motivation and performance.

Learning outcomes

You should be able to define those key terms in your own words, and you should also be able to:

1. Explain the characteristics of the behaviourist and cognitive approaches to learning.

2. Explain and evaluate the technique of behaviour modification.

3. Explain the socialization process, and assess the practical relevance of this concept.

4. Explain and evaluate the technique of behavioural self-management.

5. Describe features of knowledge management and the learning organization.

Why study learning?

- In an economy dominated by knowledge work and rapid, unpredictable change, **the ability to learn, continue learning, for individuals and organizations, is crucial.**

- As a general rule, the **higher the level of your education**, the more employable you are likely to be, and the higher your salary.

- In contributing to organizational effectiveness, employees have to know what to do, how to do it, and how well they are expected to perform.

Learning theories thus affect many management practices including

- induction of **new recruits**;

- the design and delivery of job **training**;

- design of **payment** systems;

- how supervisors evaluate **performance** and provide feedback;

- methods for modifying employee **behaviour**;

- creation of **learning** organizations;

- design and operation of **knowledge management** systems.

Why study learning?

- The learning mechanisms explored is **positive reinforcement**

- **In practice, this means praising employees for good performance**

- The **learning organization** is a combination of structures and policies which encourage learning, with individual and corporate benefits.

- **Competitive advantage** means knowing **how** to make products, **how** to innovate more rapidly, **how** to bring new products and services more quickly to the marketplace, **how** to meet changing customer needs.

- The **capacity to develop new knowledge** affects the organization's ability to **grow and to survive**, as technologies, customer requirements, government policies, and economic conditions change.

Why study learning?

- 1. **Learning is a part of work and work involves learning**; these are not separate functions but intertwined; the separation we have made of them is artificial and often does not serve us well.

- 2. Learning is not only or even primarily **about obtaining correct information** or answers from knowledgeable others; it is **fundamentally about making meaning out of the experience** that we and others have in the world.

- 3. **Organizational learning results from intentional and planned efforts** to learn. Although it can and does occur accidentally, organizations cannot afford to rely on learning through chance.

- 4. **As a collective**, we are capable of learning our way to the answers we need to address our difficult **problems**. It is ourselves we must rely on for these answers rather than experts, who can, at best, only provide us with answers that have worked in the past.

Learning the process of acquiring knowledge through experience which leads to a lasting change in behaviour.

Why study learning?

- It is helpful to distinguish between two types of learning.

- **Procedural learning**, or '**knowing how**', concerns your ability to carry out skilled actions, such as riding a horse or painting a picture.

- **Declarative learning**, or '**knowing that**', concerns your store of factual knowledge, such as an understanding of the history of our use of the horse, or of the contribution of the European Futurist movement to contemporary art.

- The learning can be plotted for one person, for a group of trainees, or even for a whole organization.
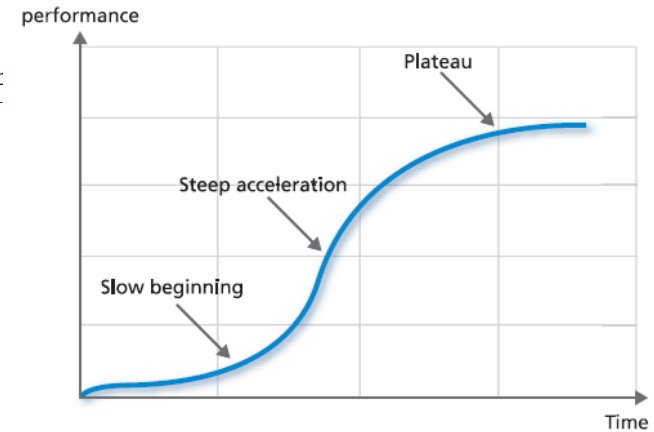
The typical manual skills learning curve

2 types of psychology

- **Behaviourist psychology** a perspective which argues that what we learn are chains of muscle movements, and that mental processes are not observable, and are not valid issues for study.

- **Cognitive psychology** a perspective which argues that what we learn are mental structures, and that mental processes can be studied by inference, although they cannot be observed directly.

Behaviourist/stimulus–response	Cognitive/information-processing
studies observable behaviour	studies mental processes
behaviour is determined by learned sequences of muscle movements	behaviour is determined by memory, mental processes and expectations
we learn habits	we learn cognitive structures
we solve problems by trial and error	we solve problems with insight and understanding
routine, mechanistic, open to direct research	rich, complex, studied using indirect methods

The behaviourist approach to learning

- **Reinforcement regimes**

	behaviour	reinforcement	result	illustration
positive reinforcement	desired behaviour occurs	positive consequences are introduced	desired behaviour is repeated	confess, and stick to your story, and you will get a shorter prison sentence
negative reinforcement	desired behaviour occurs	negative consequences are withdrawn	desired behaviour is repeated	the torture will continue until you confess
punishment	undesired behaviour occurs	a single act of punishment is introduced	undesired behaviour is not repeated	fail to meet your scoring target and we kick you off the team
extinction	undesired behaviour occurs	day's work not counted towards bonus	undesired behaviour is not repeated	ignore an individual's practical jokes used to gain attention

STOP AND THINK!

- Some airlines, concerned about the cost of fuel, want to encourage passengers to carry less luggage (a lighter plane uses less fuel).

- One approach is to allow passengers with hand luggage only to skip the check-in queues.

- Another is to charge passengers extra for each item of luggage that they check in.

- **Which reinforcement regimes are being used to teach passengers to travel light?**

The behaviourist approach to learning

- The **development of associations between stimuli and responses** occurs in two different ways, known as Pavlovian conditioning.

- **Pavlovian conditioning**, also known as classical conditioning and respondent conditioning, was developed by the Russian physiologist **Ivan Petrovich Pavlov** (1849–1936)

- **Pavlovian conditioning a technique for associating an established response or behaviour with a new stimulus.**

_____

- **Can you recognize conditioned responses in your own behaviour?**

- Is there a particular song, or a smell (perfume or after shave, or food cooking), that makes you think of another person, another place, another time, another experience?
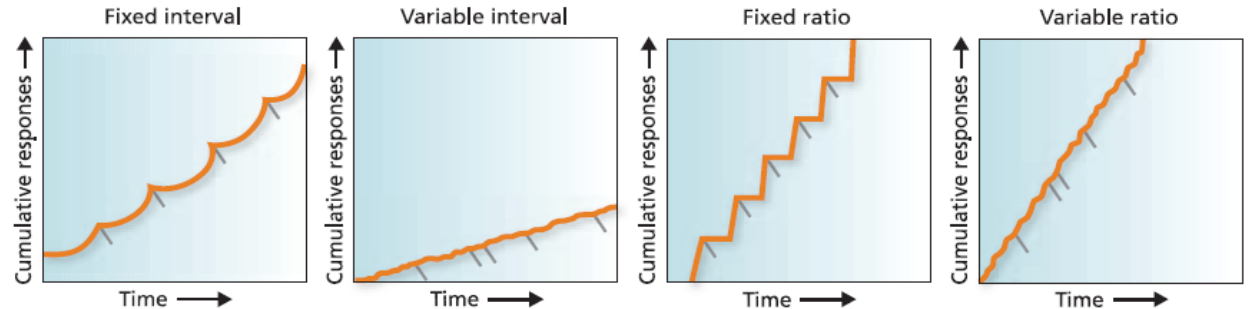
The behaviourist approach to learning

- Skinnerian conditioning is also known as **instrumental conditioning** and as operant conditioning. It is the discovery of the American psychologist **Burrhus Frederic Skinner** (1904–1990).

- **Skinnerian conditioning** a technique for **associating a response** or a behaviour **with its consequence.**

- **Shaping** the selective reinforcement of chosen behaviours in a manner that progressively establishes a desired behaviour pattern.

- Intermittent reinforcement a procedure in which a reward is provided only occasionally following correct responses, and not for every correct response.

The behaviourist approach to learning

Schedules of reinforcement

schedule	description	effects on responses	example
continuous	reinforcement after *every correct response*	establishes high performance, but can lead to satiation; rapid extinction when reinforcement is withheld	praise
fixed ratio	reinforcement after a *predetermined number* of correct responses	tends to generate high rates of desired responses	incentive payments
variable ratio	reinforcement after a *random number* of correct responses	can produce a high response rate that is resistant to extinction	commission on sales
fixed interval	reinforcement of a correct response after a *predetermined period*	can produce uneven response patterns, slow following reinforcement, vigorous immediately preceding reinforcement	weekly payments
variable interval	reinforcement of a correct response after *random periods*	can produce a high response rate that is resistant to extinction	prizes

Source: based on Luthans and Kreitner (1985).

The behaviourist approach to learning

**Reinforcing desired behaviour is generally
more effective than punishing undesirable behaviour.**

However, Walters and Grusek, from a review of research, suggest that punishment can be effective if it meets the following conditions:

- the punishment should be quick and short;
- it should be administered immediately after the undesirable behaviour;
- it should be limited in its intensity;
- it should be specifically related to behaviour, and not to character traits;
- it should be restricted to the context in which the undesirable behaviour occurs;
- it should not send 'mixed messages' about what is acceptable behaviour;
- penalties should take the form of withdrawal of rewards, not physical pain.

To what extent should the criteria for effective punishment be used by managers when disciplining employees in an organizational context?

REMEMBER punishment can be effective if it meets the following conditions:

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The cognitive approach to learning

- **How do we select** from all the stimuli that bombard our senses those to which we are going to respond?

- Why are some **outcomes seen as rewarding and others as punishments**?

- This may appear obvious where the **reward** **is survival or food and the** **punishment** **is pain or death**.

- To answer these questions, we have to consider **states of mind concerning perception and motivation.**

The cognitive approach to learning

- This approach draws concepts from the field of **cybernetics** which was established by the American mathematician Norbert Wiener (1954).

- **Cybernetic analogy** an explanation of the learning process based on the components and operation of a feedback control system.

- Reinforcement is always knowledge, or feedback, about the success of past behaviour. Feedback is information that can be used to modify or maintain previous behaviours.

- We formulate **plans** to achieve our **purposes**. These plans are **sets of mental instructions** for guiding the required **behaviour**. Within the master plan (get an educational qualification) there are likely to be a number of subplans (submit essays on time; pass examinations; make new friends).

The cognitive approach to learning

- The cybernetic analogy says that this control loop is a model of what goes on inside the mind.
  - For standard, read motive, purpose, intent, or goals. The output is behaviour. The senses are our measuring devices.
  - Our perceptual process is the comparator which organizes and imposes meaning on the sensory data which control behaviour in pursuit of our goals.
  - We have some kind of internal representation or 'schema' of ourselves and our environment.
  - This internal representation is used in a purposive way to determine our behaviour, and is also known as the individual's **perceptual world**
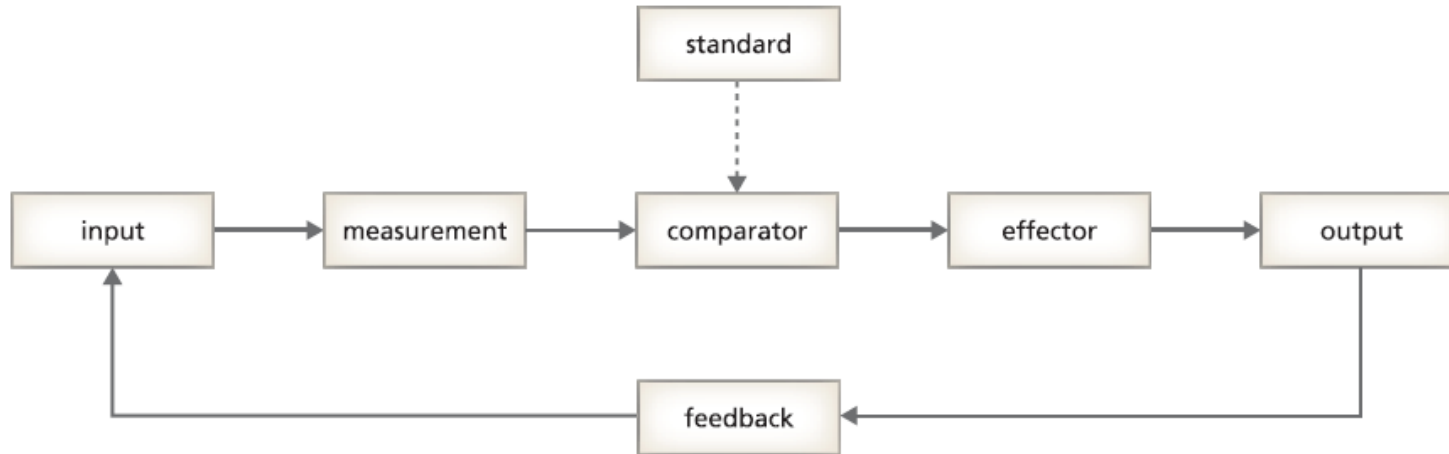
The cognitive approach to learning

- **Behaviour modification** is attractive to managers who can manipulate the reinforcement of employee behaviours.

- **Desirable behaviours** include speaking politely to customers, attending training, helping colleagues, or, in a hospital, washing hands regularly to reduce infections.

- **Undesirable behaviours** include lateness, making poor-quality items, and being rude to customers.

    OB Modification uses reinforcement to eliminate undesired behaviour and to encourage desired behaviour.

- Suppose a manager wants more work assignments completed on time, and fewer submitted beyond the deadline

The cognitive approach to learning

- **Behaviour modification Options**

Procedure	Operationalization	Behavioural effect
Positive reinforcement	manager praises employee each time work is completed on schedule	increases desired work behaviour
Negative reinforcement	unpaid overtime continues to be mandatory until work is completed on schedule, then overtime is rewarded	increases desired work behaviour
Punishment	manager asks employee to stay late when work is not handed in on time	eliminates or decreases undesired behaviour
Extinction	manager ignores the employee when work is handed in late	eliminates or decreases undesired behaviour

The cognitive approach to learning

OB Mod has the following characteristics:

- It applies to **clearly identifiable and observable behaviours**, such as timekeeping, absenteeism, carrying out checks and repairs, and the use of particular work methods.

- **Rewards** are contingent on the performance of the desirable behaviours.

- **Positive reinforcement** can take a number of forms, from the praise of a superior to cash prizes, food, or clothing.

- **Behaviour change and performance** improvements can be dramatic.

- The **desired modification in behaviour** may only be sustained if positive reinforcement is continued (although this may be intermittent).

STOP AND THINK!

How do you feel about being given food, T-shirts, and praise for working harder?

Do you regard this approach as practical, or as demeaning – and why?

The cognitive perspectives in practice

- When people join an organization, they **give up** some personal freedom of action. That is part of the **price of membership**. Employees thus accept that an organization can **make demands on their time and effort**, as long as these demands are perceived to be legitimate.

- The process through which recruits are 'shown the ropes' is called **socialization**.

- **Socialization - the process** through which individual behaviours, values, attitudes, and motives are influenced to conform with those seen as desirable in a given social or organizational setting.

This process, she found, has three stages:
- **observing** we watch other people to see how they behave and respond
- **experimenting** we try out some of those behaviours to see how they work for us
- **evaluating** we use our own assessment and feedback from others to decide which behaviours to keep, and which to discard.

STOP AND THINK!

**Think of two people who you have observed recently –
one a real person, the other a character in a movie or a television
programme.**

How have they influenced you?

Which of their behaviours have you adopted?

What behaviours have you decided not to adopt, and why?

For whom are you a role model in this way?

The cognitive perspectives in practice
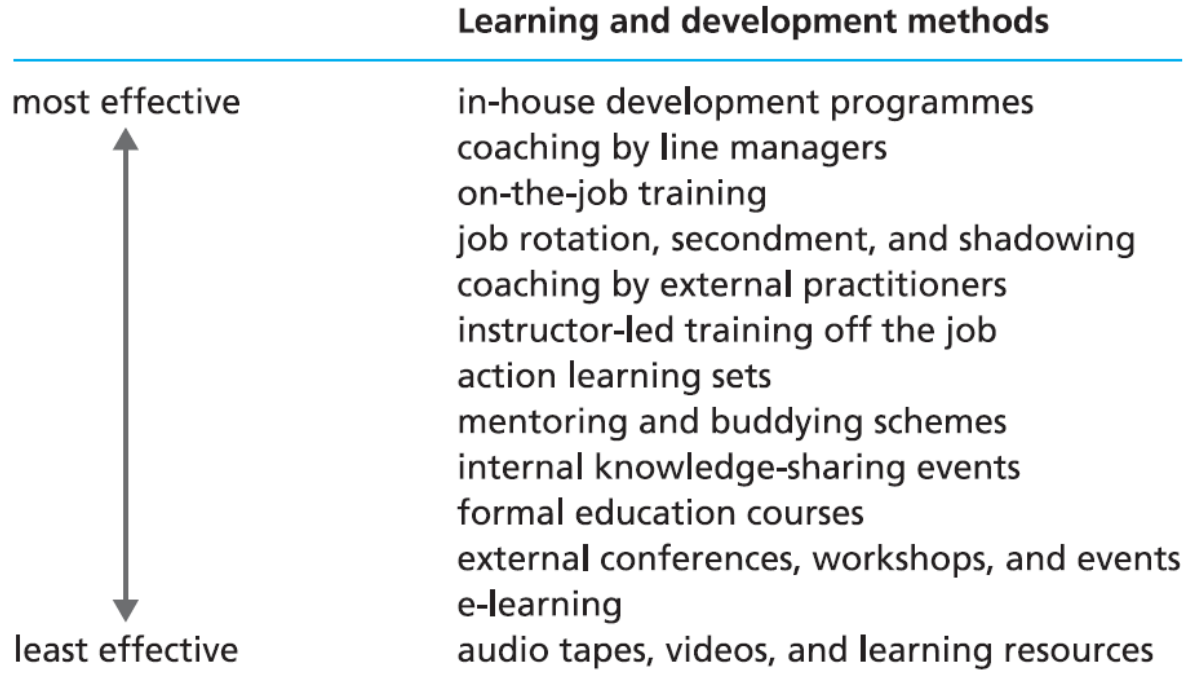
How does social learning theory apply to organizational settings? Organizations encourage different standards concerning:

• what counts as good work performance;

• familiarity in social interactions at work;

• the amount of respect to show to superiors;

• dress and appearance;

• social activities after work;

• attitudes to work, colleagues, managers, unions, customers.

The cognitive perspectives in practice

Effectiveness of learning and development methods

Learning and development methods

most effective	in-house development programmes
↑	coaching by line managers
	on-the-job training
	job rotation, secondment, and shadowing
	coaching by external practitioners
	instructor-led training off the job
	action learning sets
	mentoring and buddying schemes
	internal knowledge-sharing events
	formal education courses
	external conferences, workshops, and events
↓	e-learning
least effective	audio tapes, videos, and learning resources

The cognitive perspectives in practice

Behaviour modification versus socialization

Behaviour modification	Socialization
feedback needed in both approaches for behaviour to change	
planned procedure	naturally occurring, even if also planned
stimulus determines responses	individual needs determine responses
externally generated reinforcements	internally generated reinforcements
focuses on observable behaviour	focuses on unobservable internal states
focus on tangible rewards and punishments (money, other material rewards)	focus on intangible rewards and punishments (social inclusion, self-esteem)
clear links between desired behaviour and consequences	intangible links between desired behaviour and consequences
compliance required by external agent	conformity encouraged by social grouping

The learning organization

- The concept of the learning organization is based on the work of **Chris Argyris and Donald Schön** (Argyris and Schön, 1974 and 1978; Argyris, 1982).
- **This is an organization that helps individuals to learn and to perform more effectively.**

The **learning organization concept has become significant for several reasons:**

- the production of goods and services increasingly involves sophisticated knowledge;
- knowledge is, therefore, as valuable a resource as raw materials;
- many organizations have lost knowledgeable staff through retirements and de-layering;
- information technologies are knowledge-intensive;
- some knowledge can have a short lifespan, and be made obsolete by innovation;
- flexibility, creativity, and responsiveness are now prized capabilities;
- knowledge can thus be a source of competitive advantage for an organization.

Barclays Bank – radically different environment

- When Barclays Bank set up its corporate university, it wanted to develop something different. Paul Rudd, director of Barclays University (known as 'BU'), said 'Corporate universities are pretty ill-defined and many organizations just re-branded their training departments to make them sound sexier.

- The company focus groups showed that employees were not 'engaged' either by attending training courses or by sitting at computer screens. The bank set up leading edge 'metro centres' in existing bank buildings, but with a radically different environment. Each metro centre cost £1 million to establish, and typical features include
  - background music
  - café area
  - high-tech training rooms
  - Zen room in which to relax
  - library
  - 48-hour free ordering service for books, videos and CDs.

- The libraries have books not on banking, but on subjects such as teaching children to read, t'ai chi, and anger management. The centres are open in the evenings, and also at weekends, when families are allowed to visit. Each of the bank's 65,000 staff has a £150 allowance to spend on anything that is related to learning.

The learning organization

- The idea of the learning organization was popularized by **Peter Senge**, whose book *The Fifth Discipline (1990*) was an international best-seller. Senge argues (1990) that work at all levels must become more 'learningful', by applying the five '**learning disciplines'.**

Learning discipline	Explanation
1. Personal mastery	*aspiration*, concerning what you as an individual want to achieve
2. Mental models	*reflection and inquiry*, concerning the constant refinement of thinking and development of awareness
3. Shared vision	*collective commitment* to a common sense of purpose and actions to achieve that purpose
4. Team learning	*group interaction*, concerning collective thinking and action to achieve common goals
5. Systems thinking	*understanding interdependency and complexity* and the role of feedback in system development

Is yours a learning organization?

A survey tool for deciding if you have a learning organization has been developed by David Garvin and colleagues (2008). They felt that while others had provided a compelling vision of the learning organization, they had not developed a practical approach to implementing the idea. The effective learning organization, they argue, has three building blocks. Here are the three blocks and their components, with a sample of the survey questions which employees are asked to rate in order to measure how well the learning organization functions.

Block 1: Supportive learning environment

psychological safety	'In this unit, it is easy to speak up about what is on your mind.'
appreciation of differences	'Differences in opinion are welcome in this unit.'
openness to new ideas	'In this unit, people are interested in better ways of doing things.'
time for reflection	'Despite the workload, people in this unit find time to review how the work is going.'

Block 2: Concrete learning processes and practices

experimentation:	'This unit experiments frequently with new ways of working.'
information collection	'This unit frequently compares its performance with that of competitors and best-in-class organizations.'
analysis	'This unit engages in productive conflict and debate during discussions.'
education and training	'In this unit, time is made available for education and training activities.'
information transfer	'This unit regularly shares information with networks of experts within and outside the organization.'

Block 3: Leadership that reinforces learning

'My managers invite input from others in discussion.'

'Managers acknowledge their limitations with respect to knowledge, information, or expertise.'

'My managers listen attentively.'

The learning organization - positives and negatives

learning organization positives	learning organization negatives
a rich, multi-dimensional concept affecting many aspects of organizational behaviour	a complex and diffuse set of practices, difficult to implement systematically
an innovative approach to learning, to knowledge management, and to investing in intellectual capital	an attempt to use dated concepts from change management and learning theory, repackaged as a management consulting project
a new set of challenging concepts focusing attention on the acquisition and development of individual and corporate knowledge	a new approach for encouraging employee compliance with management directives in the guise of 'self-development'
an innovative approach to organization, management, and employee development	an innovative approach to strengthening management control over employee behaviour
innovative use of technology to manage organizational knowledge through databases and the internet or intranets	a technology-dependent approach which ignores how people actually develop and use knowledge in organizations

Personality

- Who are you? How do you describe yourself? How do you differ from others? How can define and measure those characteristics and differences?

- Psychology answers these questions using the concept of **personality**.

- **Personality the psychological qualities that influence an individual's characteristic behaviour patterns, in a stable and distinctive manner**.

- What are the **foundation of personality assessments**, or **psychometrics**, and what value are they?

- Psychometrics the systematic testing, measurement, and assessment of intelligence, aptitudes, and personality.

Personality

In addition to selecting job applicants, **psychometric assessment** has several other applications:

- assessment of **suitability** for promotion;

- assessment for **redeployment** purposes;

- evaluation of **training** potential;

- team and **leadership** development;

- career **counselling** and development;

- graduate recruitment, for applicants with limited work experience;

- vocational **guidance**;

- redundancy counselling.

Oops!: is there an 'accident-prone' personality?

The luxury cruise liner *Costa Concordia* ran aground off the Tuscany coast in January 2012. Discussing incidents like this, Adrian Furnham (2012) identifies six personality factors that can make some people (such as a ship's captain) more prone to accidents than others:

defiant (rather than compliant)   defiant individuals have problems with authority, they don't like being told what to do, which makes them accident-prone

panicky (rather than strong)   in a crisis, the person who is cool and confident can prevent others from panicking and making mistakes

irritable (rather than cheerful)   people who are easily upset, get depressed and lose their tempers can annoy those around them and become indecisive

distractible (rather than vigilant)   people who get bored quickly are inattentive, and more likely to make mistakes; vigilance is needed to avoid accidents

reckless (rather than cautious)   some people just don't listen to warnings

arrogant (rather than self-confident)   arrogant individuals are less willing to learn and more likely to make bad decisions – but overconfident people don't listen to others either.

Costa Concordia cruise liner aground off the Tuscany coast, January 2012

You may want to avoid working (and sailing) with people who are defiant, panicky, irritable, easily distracted, reckless, and arrogant. Watch the news for stories about people involved in 'high-profile' accidents. The press often describe their characters; do they fit this profile?

Defining personality

- Personality describes **aspects of behaviour** which are stable and enduring, and which distinguish the individual from others.

- Using the term personality in this way assumes that **behaviour does have stable features**, and does not change frequently, and that those distinctive properties can somehow be measured.

- The '**stable' behaviours** which we exhibit depend, in part, on **social context**.

- Some personality features (as with allergies) may only appear in specific social and **physical conditions**.

- Both **genetic** and **situational** factors influence behaviour.

Are you a morning person or a night owl – and does it matter?

Christoph Randler (2010) argues that those who are most energetic and proactive in the morning (and who get up early) are more likely to have successful careers than those who are at their best in the evening. You might be able to adjust your **chronotype** with training, but Randler argues that it is difficult to make major changes. His research on university students showed that morning people, on average, tend to

- get better grades in school and go to better colleges
- have better job opportunities
- anticipate and try to minimize problems
- perform better at work
- have greater career success and higher wages.

The typical personality traits associated with these chronotypes are:

morning people	evening people
agreeable	creative
optimistic	intelligent
stable	humorous
proactive	extraverted
conscientious	pessimistic
satisfied with life	neurotic and depressed

Source: Reprinted by permission of Harvard Business Review. Adapted from 'The early bird really does catch the worm' by Randler, C., 88(7/8) 2010. Copyright © 2010 by the Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation; all rights reserved.

Evening people can be smart, creative, funny, and outgoing, but Randler notes that 'they're out of sync with the typical corporate schedule'. Most organizational timetables are tailored to morning types. The evidence suggests that the population is evenly split between morning and evening types, but after age 50, most become morning types.

Is your chronotype geared for career success? If not, what can you do about that?

Defining personality

- These debates have implications for organizational behaviour. There are many situations **in which we want to be able to explain behaviour**, and personality can give us clues.

- However, there are also settings where it is important to be able not just to explain, but also to predict behaviour. **Prediction** is particularly important with job selection and promotion.

- ***Can personality assessment help us to make better predictions about someone's job performance?***

- Descriptions of the components and structure of personality have focused on the concepts of <mark>type</mark> and <mark>trait</mark>. One of the most straightforward ways of describing and analysing personality concerns the categorization of people into **personality types**.

Defining personality

- One of the first personality theorists was **Hippocrates** ('the father of medicine'), who lived in Greece around 400 BC.

- He claimed that personality type or 'temperament' was determined by bodily 'humours', generating the different behaviour patterns.

body humour	temperament or type	behaviours
blood	sanguine	confident, cheerful, optimistic, hopeful, active
phlegm	phlegmatic	sluggish, apathetic
black bile	melancholic	depressed, sad, brooding, prone to ill-founded fears
yellow bile	choleric	aggressive, excitable, irritable

Defining personality

Type theory owes a debt to the Swiss psychologist **Carl Gustav Jung** (1875–1961), whose approach is based on psychological preferences for **extraversion or introversion**, for **sensation or intuition**, for **thinking or feeling**, and for **judging or perceiving.**

Thinking

ST: Sensation–thinking

practical, down-to earth, impersonal, wants facts, needs order and precision, dislikes ambiguity, values efficiency and clear lines of authority

NT: Intuition–Thinking

conceptual, analytical, sees future possibilities, generates creative new ideas, welcomes change, sparks enthusiasm in others

Sensation

Intuition

SF: Sensation–Feeling

gregarious, sociable, interested in other people, little or no time for personal reflection, dislikes ambiguity, enjoys getting people to care for and support each other

NF: Intuition–Feeling

creative, warm, enthusiastic, hates rules, hierarchies and procedures, persistent and committed, flexible and communicative, can be overambitious and idealistic

Feeling

Defining personality

- Using this theory, the mother-and-daughter team of Katherine Briggs and Isabel Myers (Myers, 1962, 1976; Myers and McCaulley, 1985) developed the <mark>**Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).**</mark>

- The world's most popular personality assessment, still widely used across a range of organizational contexts, including management development programmes focusing on self-awareness and personal development.

- The **MBTI makes Jung's theory easier to understand and practical**, rating personal preferences on the four scales:

Introvert	⟷	Extravert
Sensing	⟷	iNtuiting
Thinking	⟷	Feeling
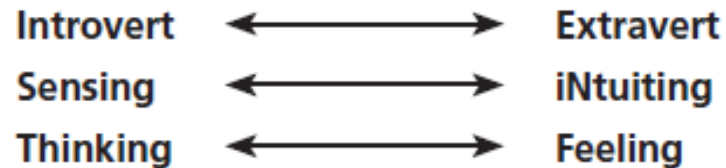
Defining personality

- Type approaches fit people into categories possessing common behaviour patterns.
- A **Personality trait**, on the other hand, is any enduring **behaviour that occurs in a variety of settings**.
- **While individuals belong to types, traits belong to individuals**.
- You fit a type; you have a trait.
- Traits are also defined in terms of predispositions to behave in a particular way.
- Examples of traits include shyness, excitability, reliability, moodiness, and punctuality.

extravert	introvert
activity	inactivity
expressiveness	inhibition
impulsiveness	control
irresponsibility	responsibility
practicality	reflectiveness
risk-taking	carefulness
sociability	unsociability

Defining personality

- Trait clusters for emotionally **unstable** and **stable** types.

- Stable people are 'adjusted', self-confident, and optimistic; they resist irrational fears, are easygoing and realistic, solve their own problems, have few health worries, and have few regrets about their past.

emotionally unstable	emotionally stable
anxiety	calm
guilt	freedom from guilt
hypochondriasis	sense of health
lack of autonomy	autonomy
low self-esteem	self-esteem
obsessiveness	casualness
unhappiness	happiness

- You will take a test during seminar - The Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) is a three dimensional personality assessment tool that was preceded by an overlapping two-dimensional measure called the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI).

Defining personality

- The search for trait clusters has culminated in what is known as the big five.

- **Big five trait clusters** that appear consistently to capture main personality traits:

- Openness,
- Conscientiousness,
- Extraversion,
- Agreeableness, and
- Neuroticism.

High ⟵⟶ **Low**

explorer (O+) creative, curious, open-minded, intellectual	**Openness** rigidity of beliefs and range of interests	*preserver* (O–) conventional, unimaginative, narrow-minded
focused (C+) organized, self-disciplined, achievement-oriented	**Conscientiousness** desire to impose order and precision	*flexible* (C–) disorganized, careless, frivolous, irresponsible
extravert (E+) outgoing, sociable, talkative, assertive	**Extraversion** level of comfort with relationships	*introvert* (E–) reserved, quiet, introverted
adapter (A+) good-natured, trusting, compliant, soft-hearted	**Agreeableness** the ability to get along with others	*challenger* (A–) rude, quarrelsome, uncaring, irritable, uncooperative
reactive (N+) anxious, depressed, self-conscious	**Neuroticism** tendency to maintain a balanced emotional state	*resilient* (N–) calm, contented, self-assured

High ⟵⟶ **Low**

Defining personality

- ***Does success in your chosen career depend on your personality?***

They reached three main conclusions:

- **Conscientiousness** was positively related to management level.
  - This suggests that you are more likely to be promoted if you are capable, sensitive, effective, well organized, thorough, dependable, reliable, ambitious, and hard-working. However, it may also be the case that high-level jobs encourage the development of those characteristics.

- **Neuroticism** was negatively related to management level.
  - This means that you are less likely to be promoted if you appear nervous, tense, anxious, stress-prone, unhappy, depressed, shy, and unable to cope. People with those characteristics may avoid management jobs with high levels of responsibility, but the stress of those jobs may increase neuroticism.

- **Extraversion** was positively related to management level.
  - This implies that you are more likely to be promoted if you are dominant, socially ascendant, confident, assertive, energetic, determined, outgoing, and sociable. The researchers note that 'Management is an extraverted activity. Managers attend meetings, give talks and socially interact all day long, which are activities more easily handled by extraverts than introverts

Personality types

- Meyer Friedman and Ray Rosenman (1974) identified **two extreme 'behaviour syndromes'** which explained differences in **stress levels**.

- They claim to have identified a 'stress-prone' personality. Much subsequent research has focused on what they called **Type A personality** and its opposite, **Type B personality.**

Type A personality characteristics	Type B personality characteristics
competitive	able to take time out to enjoy leisure
high need for achievement	not preoccupied with achievement
aggressive	easygoing
works fast	works at a steady pace
impatient	seldom impatient
restless	not easily frustrated
extremely alert	relaxed
tense facial muscles	moves and speaks slowly
constant feeling of time pressure	seldom lacks enough time
more likely to suffer stress-related illness	**less likely to suffer stress-related illness**

STOP AND THINK!

Are you a Type A or a Type B?

Do you suffer from: alcohol abuse, excessive smoking, dizziness, upset stomach, headaches, fatigue, sweating, bad breath?

If 'yes', these could be stress responses to your Type A behaviour pattern. Expect your first heart attack before you are 45.

If you don't suffer stress-related symptoms, perhaps you are a Type B.

Whichever your response, what are you going to do about it?

Stress management: individual and organization

- **Stress** may become the **most dangerous business risk** in the twenty-first century.

- Three-quarters of executives say that **stress adversely affects** their health, home life, an performance at work.

- **Work-related stress** is a growing problem around the world that **affects** not only the health and well-being of employees, but also the **productivity of organisations**.

- **Work-related stress** arises where work demands of various types and combinations **exceed the person's capacity** and capability to cope.

Stress management: individual and organization

Typical **stressors** that arise in organizational contexts are:

- **poor management style:** inconsistent, competitive, crisis management, autocratic management, excessive time pressures placed on employees;

- **poor relationships**: with superiors, with colleagues, and with particular individuals; lack of feedback, little social contact, racial and sexual harassment;

- **uncertain future**: job insecurity, fear of unemployment or redeployment, few promotion opportunities, low-status job;

- **divided loyalties**: conflicts between personal aspirations and organizational requirements, conflict between job and family and social responsibilities.

Stress management: individual and organization

What are the main work-related stressors?

- Organisation culture
- Bad management practices
- Job content and demands
- Physical work environment
- Relationships at work
- Change management
- Lack of support
- Role conflict
- Trauma.

Stress management: individual and organization

Causes of work-related stress

- Long hours
- Heavy workload
- Changes within the organisation
- Tight deadlines
- Changes to duties
- Job insecurity
- Lack of autonomy
- Boring work
- Insufficient skills for the job
- Inadequate working environment
- Lack of proper resources
- Lack of equipment
- Few promotional opportunities
- Harassment
- Discrimination
- Poor relationships with colleagues or bosses

Stress management: individual and organization

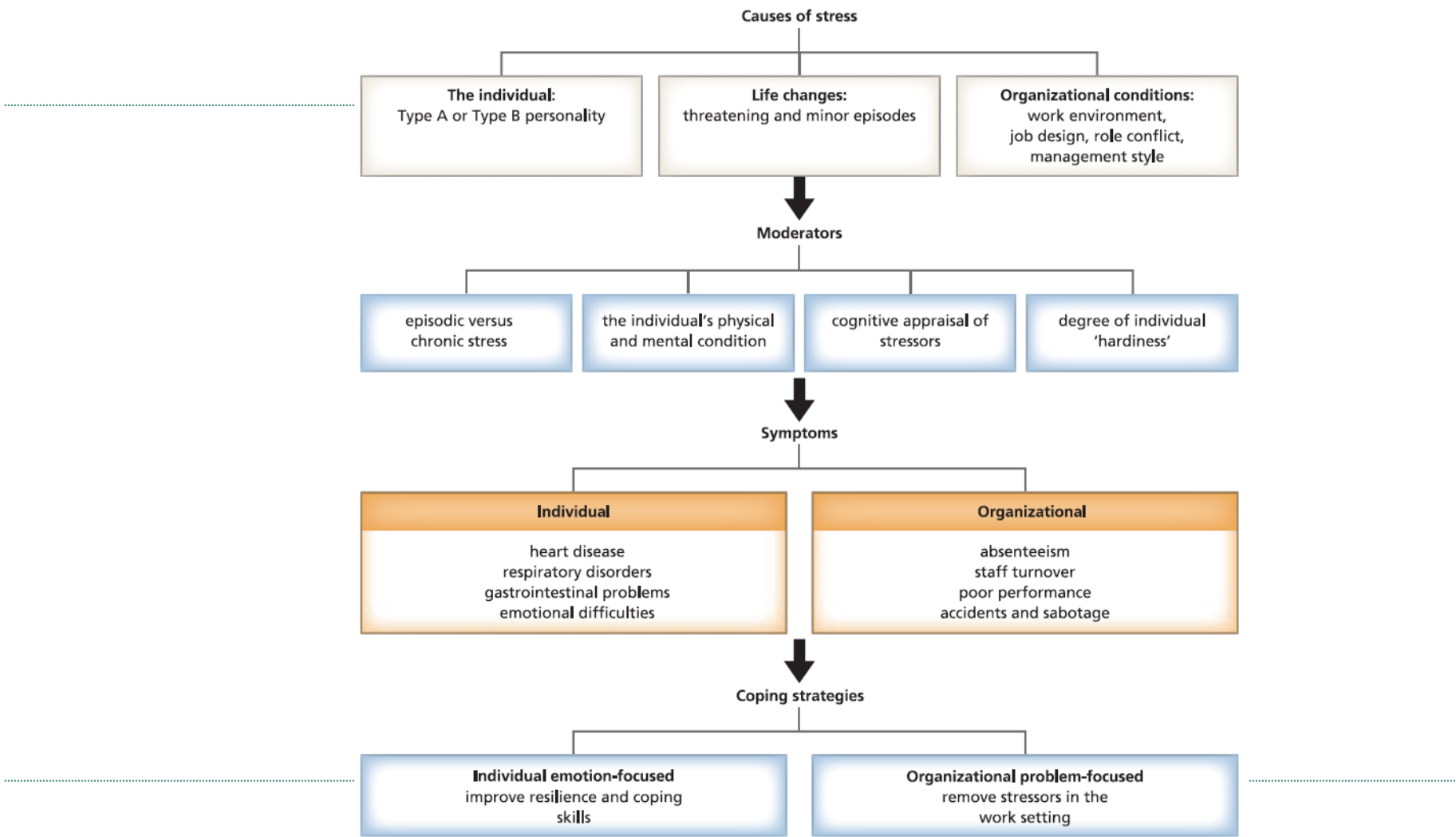**Self-help for the individual**

A person suffering from work-related stress can help themselves in a number of ways, including:

- Think about the changes you need to make at work in order to reduce your stress levels and then take action. Some changes you can manage yourself, while others will need the cooperation of others.

- Talk over your concerns with your employer or human resources manager.

- Make sure you are well organised. List your tasks in order of priority.

- Take care of yourself. Eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly.

- Consider the benefits of regular relaxation. You could try meditation or yoga.

- Make sure you have enough free time to yourself every week.

- Don't take out your stress on loved ones. Instead, tell them about your work problems and ask for their support and suggestions.

- Drugs, such as alcohol and tobacco, won't alleviate stress and can cause additional health problems. Avoid excessive drinking and smoking.

- Seek professional counselling from a psychologist.

Stress management: individual and organization

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Causes of stress

The individual:	Life changes:	Organizational conditions:
Type A or Type B personality	threatening and minor episodes	work environment, job design, role conflict, management style

Moderators

episodic versus chronic stress	the individual's physical and mental condition	cognitive appraisal of stressors	degree of individual 'hardiness'

Symptoms

Individual	**Organizational**
heart disease respiratory disorders gastrointestinal problems emotional difficulties	absenteeism staff turnover poor performance accidents and sabotage

Coping strategies

Individual emotion-focused improve resilience and coping skills	**Organizational problem-focused** remove stressors in the work setting

# Stress management: individual and organization

Individual emotion-focused strategies improve resilience and coping skills and include

• consciousness-raising to improve self-awareness;

• exercise and fitness programmes;

• self-help training in biofeedback, meditation, relaxation, and coping strategies;

• time management training;

• development of other social and job interests.

Organizational problem-focused strategies deal directly with the stressors and include

• improved selection and training mechanisms;

• staff counselling programmes;

• improved organizational communications;

• job redesign and enrichment strategies;

• development of teamworking systems.

Personality and job performance
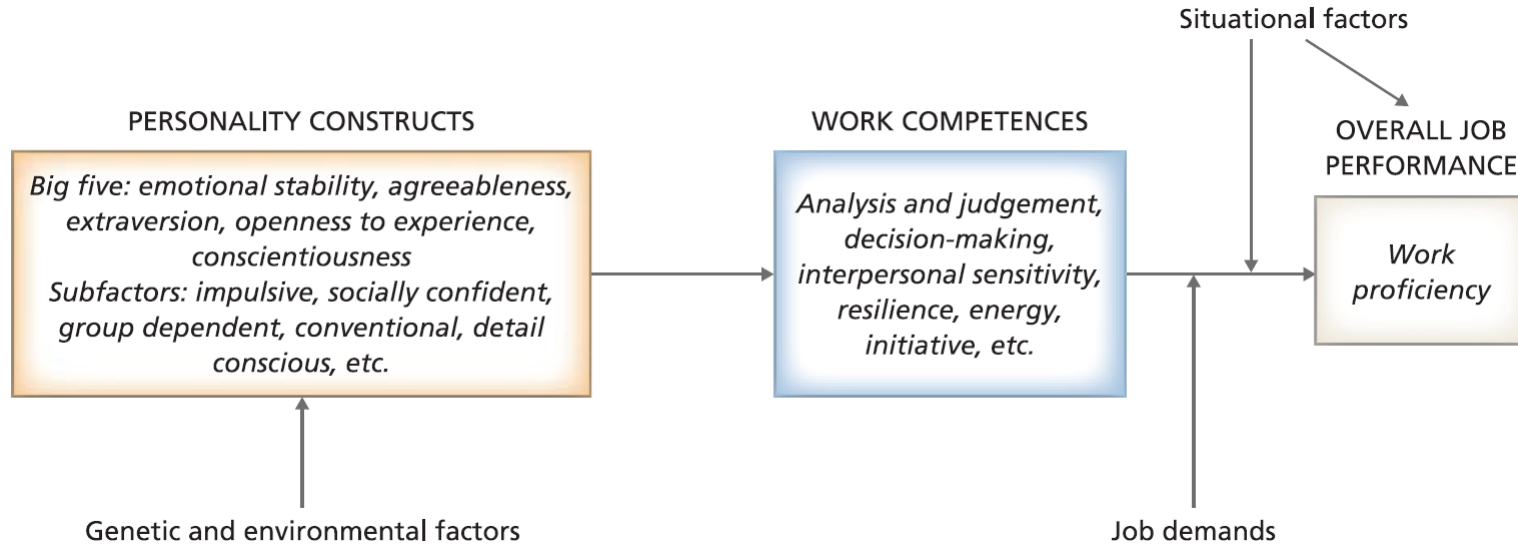
RECAP

- Behaviourism argues that we learn chains of muscle movements. As mental processes are not observable, they are not considered valid issues for study.

- Cognitive psychology argues that we learn mental structures. Mental processes are important, and they are amenable to study although they cannot be observed.

- In behaviourist theory, feedback contributes to learning by providing reinforcement; in cognitive theory, feedback provides information and is motivational.

- Respondent (or Pavlovian, or classical) conditioning is a method by which an established response (good work performance) is associated with a new stimulus (supervisory encouragement).

- Operant (or Skinnerian, or instrumental) conditioning is a method by which a behaviour (good work performance) is associated with a new consequence (bonus payment).

RECAP

- Positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, punishment, and extinction condition the target by manipulating the consequences of desirable and undesirable behaviours.

- Behaviour modification works well when reward are linked clearly to specific behaviours, but does not work well when these links are ambiguous and vague; this manipulative approach may not be acceptable in some cultures.

- Social learning theory argues that we learn values, beliefs, and behaviour patterns through experience, observation, and modelling.

- Socialization can be informal – this happens anyway – or it can be formally organized through induction and training programmes.

RECAP

- Type theories (Hippocrates; Sheldon; Jung) classify individuals using a limited number of personality categories.

- Formal methods offer objective and comprehensive assessments of personality. But they are impersonal, are based on group norms, and don't capture individual uniqueness

- Formal methods provide objective information about job candidates, but the links between personality assessment scores and job performance are often weak.

- Type A personalities (competitive, impatient) are more stress-prone than Type B personalities (easygoing, relaxed).

RECAP

- Individuals can develop physical and psychological resilience and coping skills.

- Management has to reduce or remove work-related stressors (job design, management style, adverse working conditions, excessive workload).

- Psychometrics offer objective, systematic, comprehensive and quantitative information. They are also useful in career guidance, counselling and development.

- Individual scores are meaningless outside the context of group norms.

- It is difficult to predict job performance from a personality profile.

- Personality assessment can identify strengths in specific areas of competence.

We can share our thoughts and ask questions 😊

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