

Engineering the world of work: Organizations in an era of constant change

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Introduction

- The Introduction focuses on the 21st-century organizational environment – increasingly dynamic, multifaceted, complex, and ambiguous.
- Unique challenges face modern organizations due to varied work arrangements, shifting employee characteristics, technological developments, and intensified competition and diversity.
- Based on well-documented research and practice, this book presents a contemporary outlook on salient topics, from present-day learning paradigms, sustainability, and performance management, to theories of work-related attitudes – derived from the need of organizations to adjust to the "Era of Me."

Highlights

This book highlights the centrality of the changing world of work in the 21st century.

- ***Timely & Comprehensive*** – Covers topics highly relevant to contemporary organizational management.
- ***Novel*** – Showcases symbiosis of theory and practice.
- ***Transformative***: Recommends management interventions to promote employee welfare and productivity.
- ***Engaging***: Challenges old management styles with an optimistic view of the future of the workplace.

Insights from the authors

- The contributors included:
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Freelancers in organizations: a novel perspective

- Chapter 2 reviews the growing trend of freelancers entering the work market, attractive because of their expertise, skills, flexibility, and creativity, conferring strategic and economic benefits to management in the current era.
- Discussed are definitions, functions, and characteristics of freelancers with emphasis on the rising number of "talents."
- While freelancers display several assets, they face challenges to their job security.

Organizational learning: personalization, blended learning, and tailor-made learning solutions

- Chapter 3 has a focus on the fundamental change the field of organizational learning is undergoing.
- Assimilation of new emerging learning methodologies are reviewed in this chapter.
- Importantly, a perceptual change has occurred shifting from “training” to “learning” with focus on individuals taking ownership of the learning process. Relevant theories and concepts are discussed.

Diversity and inclusion: challenges and best practices for creating inclusive organizations

- Chapter 4 has a focus on the degree of diversity, the organizational climate for inclusion, and a range of attitudinal and performance outcomes.
- We need to go beyond the surface-level to understand deeper aspects of diversity.
- Greater diversity promotes better organizational performance as well as less prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping.



Examining stress reactions in the world of work in the 21st century

- Chapter 5 focuses on the time dimension that is often omitted from models of workplace stress.
- We need to consider both objective and subjective aspects of time.
- Individuals may vary considerably in their day-to-day levels of wellbeing and this perspective needs to feature in models of factors contributing to workplace stress, recovery from stressful episodes, and future stress reactions.



Managing performance in the “Era of Me”

- Chapter 6 focuses on key factors changing the nature of performance managements systems.
- Specifically, effects of electronic virtual communication, non-traditional work arrangements, and organisational adaptations prompted by government control are discussed within a centralised model.
- In addition, arguments for considering these changes in light of performance management reform are discussed.



Revisiting theories of work-related attitudes in the "Era of Me"

- Chapter 7 focuses on changes in the distal and proximal antecedents to work attitudes in the "Era of Me."
- Distal antecedents are considered within two categories: the local employee environment and well as the external environment.
- A model is presented to help managers consider these distal antecedents in conjunction with proximal perceptions (e.g., justice and fairness) to understand how work-related attitudes develop in the "Era of Me."



Compensation and rewards for work performance in the “Era of Me” work world

- Chapter 8 has a focus on a broad framework of compensation, taking into account the features of personalization and choice in designing a pay and benefits system.
- In the chapter, we look broadly at reward and compensation. Compensation, it is argued, is not only pay. Well-being, learning and development opportunities and more are reviewed as part of the total reward and compensation package.

Racism at work: a conspectus - approaches, perspectives, and potential palliatives

- Chapter 9 focuses on racism at work, starting with various definitions of the phenomenon whether overt or covert, institutionalized or otherwise, on the personal level, the group level, or the broader national level, through reference to its scope, particularly in the US, and concluding with a review of approaches to reduce its manifestations at work.
- We aim to raise awareness, understanding, and advocacy for programs favoring diversity and inclusion, by stressing comprehensive and all-inclusive informal strategies to combat racism.
- We argue that strategies to combat workplace racism must be grounded in values clarification techniques, supported by organizational commitment, passion, support, and oversight.