What Is Industrial and Organizational Psychology?

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The Importance of Work in People’s Lives

Most adults devote the majority of their waking weekday (and often weekends as well!) to work. High school and college students, too, find themselves using a great deal of their discretionary hours in part-time jobs, particularly during the summer months. For many, this is a greater devotion of time and energy than to any other single waking human activity. For this reason alone, we can assume that work is important to people. Then there is the fact that most people need to earn money, and they do so by working. But the experience of work goes well beyond the simple exchange of time for money.

Although many people have mixed feelings about their jobs, research indicates that most people would keep working even if they had the opportunity to stop. The National Research Council, in a book about the changing nature of work (NRC, 1999), adds support to this observation. When asked the question “If you were to get enough money to live as comfortably as you would like for the rest of your life, would you continue to work or would you stop working?” the percentage of people reporting that they would continue working has averaged approximately 70 percent since at least 1973. A follow-up study found that although this percentage had declined slightly in the years from 1980 to 2006, the majority (68%) of people surveyed still reported that they would continue working if they won the lottery (Highhouse, Zickar, & Yankelevich, 2010). This is dramatic evidence of the centrality of work (Arvey, Harpaz, & Liao, 2004) as a noneconomic experience. This is strong testimony to the meaning of work—not a particular job, but the experience of working—in defining who we are.

The importance of work is further confirmed by talking to people who are about to lose or who have lost their jobs. As we will see, work is a defining characteristic of the way people gauge their value to society, their family, and themselves.

The Concept of “Good Work”

Gardner (2002) notes that psychology has often ignored how workers actually “conceptualize their daily experiences—the goals and concerns they bring to the workplace.” He goes on to characterize what he calls “good work” (Gardner,
The Importance of Work in People's Lives

Csikszentmihalyi, & Damon, 2001). Good work is work that “exhibits a high level of expertise, and it entails regular concern with the implications and applications of an individual’s work for the wider world” (Gardner, 2002, p. B7). These concepts have been turned into an extensive endeavor, called the “GoodWork Project,” which is directed toward identifying and, if possible, creating good work. As the project leaders point out, good work is tougher to do than it might seem. “Pressure to keep costs low and profits high, to do more in less time, and to fulfill numerous life roles, including that of a parent, a spouse, a friend, (a student!!), a worker, can all make cutting corners tempting.” This “corner cutting” leads to what the researchers call “compromised” work: work that is not illegal or unethical, but that still undermines the core values of a trade or a profession—the lawyer who creates opportunities for billing extra hours, the plumber who uses inferior, cheaper materials for a repair.

Martin Luther King, Jr., captured the essence of good work eloquently: “If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all heaven and earth will pause to say, ‘Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well’” (King, 1956).

Consider the role of an I-O psychologist who worked in Iraq to hire and train the new Iraqi police force. David Morris is an I-O psychologist who had been helping cities and states in the United States select police officers until September 2004. He decided to trade “his comfortable house in Alexandria, Virginia for a bunk bed in the converted office of Baghdad’s former police training facility” (Dingfelder, 2005, p. 34). Every day, Morris and his staff of 15 administered various tests to up to 300 candidates for possible hire. He and his staff could have earned as much if not more screening applicants for the Philadelphia, or Atlanta, or Dallas police force. But instead, they did such screening in Baghdad to help with the restoration of civil order to Iraq. This is good work as well.

The interesting aspect of “good” and “bad” work is that the individual worker and the employer together have the power to define good work or to transform good work into bad and vice versa. A disreputable accounting firm can cheat and mislead clients and the public, thus engaging in bad work; that same firm and its employees could be doing good work if they are helping people to manage their money and protect their retirement plans. Good work is not simply the province of politicians or soldiers or relief workers.

Gardner describes the depressing consequences of settling for “bad” work:

We resign ourselves to our fate. It is difficult to quit one’s job, let alone one’s whole profession, and few in midlife . . . have the fortitude to do so. As a result, . . . few feel in a position where they can perform good work. (Gardner, 2002, p. B7)
The study of work by I-O psychologists and students (you!) is potentially “good work” because it enables individuals to develop and use skills and to use them for the benefit of someone other than simply themselves. I-O psychologists have also broadened their focus of study to consider the experience of work. Since the mid-1990s there has been a rapid and substantial increase in I-O research related to the feelings that workers bring to and take from the workplace. In addition, there has been a dramatic increase in research directed toward work–life balance issues. Thus, I-O psychology has recognized that the “experience” of work is more complex than simply tasks and productivity and accidents. You will see the results of this research in Chapter 9.

**Authenticity: A Trend of Interest to I-O Psychologists**

I-O psychology often incorporates cultural shifts and changes. In the past few years, “authenticity”—referring to that which is real, genuine, not artificial—has become a popular concept in America. You will see references to “authentic” coffee, music, clothing and furniture lines, foods, and so forth. The attraction of authenticity may also be reflected in some popular TV reality shows such as *American Idol*, *Ice Road Truckers*, and *The Deadliest Catch*, as well as some less dramatic shows dealing with changing families or embarking on a new diet to lose weight. A popular book (Gilmore & Pine, 2007) argues that, in a world where virtual reality is becoming increasingly prevalent, authenticity is “what consumers really want.”

In I-O psychology, we might extend the definition of authenticity to a more philosophical level: “an emotionally appropriate, significant, purposive, and responsible mode of human life” (McKean, 2005, p. 106). Viewing authenticity in that way, we can see authenticity reflected in the search for “good work” and inspirational leadership. In fact, the term “authentic leadership,” which had not appeared in the literature before 2002, is now a widely addressed topic in the popular press and in the research literature (Gardner, Cogliser, Davis, & Dickens, 2011). We will cover this form of leadership in Chapter 12. In various chapters, we will take note of what appears to be the search for authenticity in work and organizations.

**What Is I-O Psychology?**

Throughout this book we will use the term I-O psychology as a synonym for industrial-organizational psychology. The simplest definition of industrial and organizational psychology is “the application of psychological principles, theory, and research to the work setting.” In everyday conversation, I-O psychologists are often referred to as work psychologists. Don’t be fooled, however, by the phrase “work setting.” The domain of I-O psychology stretches well beyond the physical boundaries of the workplace because many of the factors that influence work behavior are not always found in the work setting. These factors include things like family responsibilities, cultural influences, employment-related legislation, and nonwork events (reflect, for example, on how the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, changed the working life of most people).

Even more significant is the influence of personality on work behavior. Although an individual’s personality may actually influence work behavior, his or her personality is often influenced by events that occurred before he or she began full-time employment. In addition, I-O psychologists are concerned about the effect of work
on nonwork behaviors. Spouses and children are well aware of the effect of a “bad day at work” on home life. I-O psychology concentrates on the reciprocal impact of work on life and life on work.

We can also think of I-O psychology as a combination of knowledge and skills that can be applied in a wide diversity of settings rather than just in the arena of traditional work. The example of David Morris helping to select the Iraqi police force is one of those examples. In a similar vein, I-O psychologists are helping to revise the test given to individuals seeking U.S. naturalization (Ulewicz, 2005).

A more formal definition of I-O psychology, approached from the perspective of the I-O psychologist and what he or she does, has been adopted by the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (an association to which many I-O psychologists belong and which we will refer to in this text by the acronym SIOP):

Industrial-Organizational (called I-O) Psychologists recognize the interdependence of individuals, organizations, and society, and they recognize the impact of factors such as increasing government influences, growing consumer awareness, skill shortages, and the changing nature of the workforce. I-O psychologists facilitate responses to issues and problems involving people at work by serving as advisors and catalysts for business, industry, labor, public, academic, community, and health organizations.

They are:

*Scientists* who derive principles of individual, group, and organizational behavior through research; *Consultants and staff psychologists* who develop scientific knowledge and apply it to the solution of problems at work; and *Teachers* who train in the research and application of Industrial-Organizational Psychology. (http://www.siop.org/history/crsppp.aspx. © 2012 Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Reprinted by permission of SIOP, www.siop.org.)

Refer to Tables 1.1 and 1.2 for lists of the common areas of concentration for I-O psychologists and the common job titles they hold. A series on the SIOP website (http://www.siop.org/psychatwork.aspx) called “Psychology at Work: What do I-O psychologists really do?” provides profiles of I-O psychologists that include how they became interested in I-O psychology, what a typical day is like, what aspects of the job are most challenging, why I-O psychology matters, and advice to future I-O psychologists.

Traditionally, I-O psychology has been divided into three major concentrations: personnel psychology, organizational psychology, and human engineering. We will briefly consider each of them. Even though we will talk about them separately, they often overlap considerably, as we will see.

Personnel psychology (often seen as part of human resources management, or HRM) addresses issues such as recruitment, selection, training, performance appraisal, promotion, transfer, and termination.
The approach assumes that people are consistently different in their attributes and work behaviors and that information about these differences can be used to predict, maintain, and increase work performance and satisfaction.

Organizational psychology combines research and ideas from social psychology and organizational behavior. It addresses the emotional and motivational side of work. It includes topics such as attitudes, fairness, motivation, stress, leadership, teams, and the broader aspects of organizational and work design. In some senses, it concentrates on the reactions of people to work and the action plans that develop as a result of those reactions. Both work and people are variables of interest, and the issue is the extent to which characteristics of the people match the characteristics or demands of the work. Of course, organizational psychology has implications for performance, but they may not be as direct as is the case with personnel psychology.

Human engineering (also called human factors psychology) is the study of the capacities and limitations of humans with respect to a particular environment. The human engineering approach is almost the opposite of the personnel approach. Remember, in the personnel approach the goal is to find or fit the best person to

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**TABLE 1.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Areas of Concentration for I-O Psychologists</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Selection and placement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing tests</td>
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<td>Validating tests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyzing job content</td>
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<td>Identifying management potential</td>
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<td>Defending tests against legal challenge</td>
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<td><strong>Training and development</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying training and development needs</td>
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<td>Forming and implementing technical and managerial training programs</td>
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<td>Evaluating training effectiveness</td>
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<td>Career planning</td>
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<td><strong>Organizational development</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyzing organizational structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximizing satisfaction and effectiveness of employees</td>
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<td>Facilitating organizational change</td>
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<td><strong>Performance measurement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing measures of performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measuring the economic benefit of performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introducing performance evaluation systems</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of work life</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying factors associated with job satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reducing stress in the workplace</td>
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<td>Redesigning jobs to make them more meaningful</td>
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<td><strong>Engineering psychology</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Designing work environments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Optimizing person–machine effectiveness</td>
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<td>Making workplaces safer</td>
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What Is I-O Psychology?

In the human engineering approach, the task of the human engineer is to develop an environment that is compatible with the characteristics of the worker. The “environmental” aspects this may include are quite diverse; among them are tools, work spaces, information display, shift work, work pace, machine controls, and even the extent to which safety is valued in the organization or work group. Human engineering, more than personnel or organizational psychology, integrates many different disciplines. These disciplines include cognitive science, ergonomics, exercise physiology, and even anatomy. For that reason, we will touch only lightly on topics that form the core of human engineering—work design and safety in the workplace. Nevertheless, if human engineering interests you, there are many excellent texts in the area (e.g., Salvendy, 2006; Wickens & Hollands, 2000; Wickens, Lee, Gordon, & Liu, 2004).

In the past few pages, you have seen a number of examples of the capabilities of the I-O psychologist. The most striking characteristic of the profession is that research is actually used to address a concrete problem or issue. There is a clear connection between research conducted using the tools of science and the practice of I-O psychology. This emphasis on the application of scientific knowledge is known as the scientist–practitioner model. This does not mean that every practicing I-O psychologist must also be an active researcher or that every I-O psychologist who does research must be an active practitioner. It simply means that science and practice are both important parts of I-O psychology. As an example, real problems related to medical accidents and mistakes in operating rooms lead to research on safety culture in hospitals. Similarly, university-based research on team training is tested in hospital environments. An excellent popular version of the scientist–practitioner model can be found in "The Scientist-Practitioner Model: A Model that uses scientific tools and research in the practice of I-O psychology."
be seen in the TV show *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*. A badly decomposed body is found and a team of forensic practitioners (i.e., the detectives) bring back samples of clothing, skin, teeth, and so forth to the laboratory for analysis (by the scientists). Sometimes they do their own analysis and sometimes they have more skilled colleagues do the analysis. But regardless of who actually does the analysis, it is done for one reason—to find the murderer. I-O psychology is a bit less exciting than detective work, but the underlying motivation is the same—to address a real issue or problem in the workplace.

### I-O Psychology’s Contributions to Society

I-O psychologists have become increasingly interested in building sustainable and environmentally conscious organizations (Huffman, Watrous-Rodriguez, Henning, & Berry, 2009). Several I-O psychologists have described efforts to lead the way in helping organizations to be more sustainable (e.g., DuBois & DuBois, 2010; Jackson & Seo, 2010). Some of these efforts include organizational initiatives that were implemented for traditional business purposes (e.g., cost savings, process efficiency) but can in turn yield environmental benefits, which are also known as eco-benefits (Klein, Sanders, & Huffman, 2011). For example, organizational policies involving online testing and assessment (Chapter 3), telecommuting (Chapter 9), and compressed workweeks (Chapter 9) have all been linked with environmental sustainability. Klein and colleagues (2011) note that I-O psychologists can guide organizations in identifying and measuring their eco-benefits and in promoting these benefits as another important outcome that can be considered along with more traditional outcomes such as individual, team, and organizational performance. The electronics company Panasonic (2011) announced major new eco-sustainability goals (e.g., double the number of drop-off locations in its electronics recycling program from 800 to 1,600 sites, reduce greenhouse gas emissions at its headquarters by half) that are likely to be adopted by other organizations. I-O psychologists can help lead the way in documenting both intended and unintended eco-benefits in organizations. Huffman and Klein (2013) edited a book entitled *Green organizations: Driving change with I-O psychology* that provides a number of excellent examples of interventions that encourage sustainable and socially responsible behaviors.

I-O psychologists Deniz Ones and Stephan Dilchert (2012) have been studying and measuring employee green behaviors, which are individual actions that contribute to or detract from environmental sustainability goals at work. They identified five dimensions of green behavior: conserving (e.g., finding new uses for discarded or surplus items), avoiding harm (e.g., disposing of waste properly), transforming (e.g., using innovations to reduce environmental impact), influencing others (e.g., persuading others to use environmentally responsible products), and taking initiative (e.g., behaving in environmentally responsible way even when it is inconvenient). In a recent study on green behaviors, Norton and colleagues (2017) collected survey data from employees across 10 workdays. They found that the relationship between green behavioral intentions and next-day employee green behavior (conserving water, recycling, avoiding waste, saving energy, and using resources efficiently) was positive only when employees perceived that their workplace was supportive of such green behaviors. The study of employee green behaviors is a promising area that is likely to grow in interest among I-O psychology researchers and practitioners.
In one of the broadest and most ambitious extensions of I-O psychology, Stuart Carr, a New Zealand I-O psychologist, has suggested ways in which I-O psychologists can bring their expertise to bear on humanitarian issues (Carr, 2007). Along with other I-O psychologists such as Lori Foster Thompson and Adrian Furnham, Carr has been working to promote prosocial applications of psychology called humanitarian work psychology: the application of I-O psychology to the humanitarian arena, especially poverty reduction and the promotion of decent work, aligned with local stakeholders’ needs, and in partnership with global aid/development groups (Carr, 2013; Carr, MacLachlan, & Furnham, 2012). Carr suggests that our expertise in areas such as team building and training, stereotypes, organizational justice, and mental models is exactly the type of knowledge and skill necessary for bringing together the essential coalition of governments, aid organizations, and private industry. Carr and colleagues have formed a global network of fellow I-O psychologists interested in addressing the I-O contributions to reducing world poverty (search for “gohwp” on the Web).

An example of another program that demonstrates I-O psychology’s contributions to society is Northeastern University’s Cultural Agility Leadership Lab, which is directed by I-O psychologist Paula Caligiuri. This program has partnered with the Peace Corps to connect corporate-sponsored international volunteers with nongovernmental organizations (Boutelle, 2016). This partnership provides volunteers with valuable international experiences while providing nongovernmental organizations with much needed expertise from these volunteers (Caligiuri, Mencin, & Jiang, 2013). This program and the work by Carr demonstrate how I-O psychologists can contribute to society and make a difference in some of the major global challenges of the 21st century.

A related trend in I-O psychology is a focus on corporate social responsibility (CSR), which is defined as organizational actions and policies that take into account stakeholders’ expectations as well as economic, social, and environmental performance (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). CSR activities can include employee volunteering, donating a portion of sales to a charity, donating a portion of profits to school products for needy children, and having a portion of proceeds from sales go to vitamins and clean water for new mothers and their children. CSR activities can be good for the company (in terms of enhanced reputation) and good for the community. I-O psychology research will continue to investigate these CSR activities and how they relate to a variety of employee and customer attitudes and behaviors (Bauman & Skitka, 2012).

Evidence-Based I-O Psychology

I-O psychologists have become increasingly focused on making evidence-based decisions in their work in organizations. Cascio and Aguinis (2018) have updated their well-known Applied Psychology in Talent Management textbook with “Evidence-Based Implications for Practice” in every chapter. Many of these evidence-based implications are based on empirical research conducted by I-O psychologists. This trend can also be seen in the human resources (HR) field with Rousseau and Barends’ (2011) discussion about how to become an evidence-based HR practitioner. They suggest that HR practitioners use a decision-making process that combines critical thinking with use of the best available scientific evidence. I-O psychologists are well positioned to develop and utilize evidence-based practices as they have adopted the scientist-practitioner model to guide the field as well as to guide the training of I-O
Master’s and PhD students. In a focal article in the journal *I-O Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice*, Briner and Rousseau (2011) point out that the medical field has done a better job of implementing evidence-based practice than has I-O psychology and that making I-O psychology research more accessible to HR practitioners will help with such implementation. In this direction, SIOP and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) are taking steps to put evidence-based I-O psychology into the hands of HR practitioners by publishing collaborative articles. The first two articles in the series are on “Skill-Based Pay: HR’s Role” and “Driving Customer Satisfaction through HR: Creating and Maintaining a Service Climate.” Recent articles in this series are on data visualization, talent analytics, evidence-based decision-making, competency models, leadership development, managing diversity, and performance management. Many more articles are planned for this series. This is a promising step in the process of increasing evidence-based practice and decision-making in I-O psychology and the related field of human resources management. Nevertheless, additional collaborative efforts will be needed to increase the use of evidence-based I-O psychology in organizations.

**SIOP as a Resource**

The Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology is the single best resource for anyone interested in I-O psychology. The society accepts student members. SIOP’s website (www.siop.org) is regularly updated and includes the following types of information:

- The history of I-O psychology and of SIOP
- Membership information
- An electronic version of the quarterly newsletter of SIOP, called TIP (The *Industrial-Organizational Psychologist*), which has now been published for 50 years
- JobNet, a system that matches employers seeking I-O psychologists with applicants for I-O positions
- A listing of educational institutions that offer graduate training programs in I-O psychology
- A list of SIOP publications
- A list of upcoming conferences
- A social media page that includes information about SIOP’s Facebook, Twitter, Exchange Blog, and Wiki sites
- A page that describes Prosocial and Humanitarian I-O Psychology

At its May, 2014 annual conference (a fantastic one in Honolulu!), SIOP launched a re-branding initiative, including a new logo and tagline: Science for a Smarter Workplace (Figure 1.1). The goals of this initiative include (1) promoting the science of I-O psychology, (2) increasing SIOP’s contributions to organizations and society, and (3) educating future I-O psychologists and others who might collaborate with I-O psychologists in research or applied projects. We’ve already discussed examples of the first two goals (e.g., evidence-based I-O psychology, humanitarian work psychology), and we will discuss issues related to the third goal later in this chapter.
How This Course Can Help You

Working is a part of almost everyone’s life. Outside of the classroom, you will likely do what most other people do: spend 50 percent or more of your waking weekday hours at work. This means that a course in I-O psychology should benefit you in several ways. First, it can help you understand what you are experiencing in the workplace. Most students have an exposure to work by the time they finish high school. Most continue to work in some capacity in college (during the summer and/or at part-time jobs during the school year). This textbook does not tell you what emotions to experience at work. Instead, we try to provide a broader context for you to understand various policies and practices that you are likely to experience in your work. For example, material in this text will provide a basis for knowing if the HR policies your organization follows are new or old, tested or untested, likely to be effective or ineffective. Second, chances are that you will eventually be placed in the position of managing the work of others and in that role either developing or at least implementing work-related policies. You may very well become a leader even without asking to be one. The material of this course and the text itself should provide you with a good foundation for developing and/or implementing effective policies. Third, in the course of your daily life, you will almost certainly hear friends and family talk about their joys and frustrations with their organizations and work. Many of them will not have the understanding gained from a course like the one you are taking now. You will be able to act as a resource in helping them understand the policies that are affecting them.

You might wonder why a course in I-O might be preferred over a course in human resources, or labor relations, or general management. The answer can be found in the earlier discussion of the scientist–practitioner model. That is how I-O is different. It applies the results of scientific research to real-world problems. These other courses consider the same real-world problems, but they do not depend on research for drawing conclusions. Instead they depend on experience, or current practices, or suggested “best” practices. And this is a valuable approach as well, but an I-O course is built around the results of scientific research. Although most of the students who read this book for a course they are taking will be neither active researchers nor active practitioners of I-O psychology, there is a high probability that they will be consumers of I-O research in considering their own jobs or the jobs of subordinates. In addition, many will be exposed to concepts of I-O psychology through interactions with psychological consultants or other managers. This course will help those readers become knowledgeable consumers.

You will see another benefit from this course that goes beyond the relationship of you or your friends and relatives to a particular organization or job. There are national debates that relate to work. As a result of having taken this course, you will be better informed about many of the issues that form these debates than your colleagues or relatives. As examples of the debates that are currently on the table, consider the following:

1. Is employment discrimination old news or is it still occurring? If it is occurring, who are its most common victims? To the extent that it is occurring, what can be done to reduce it? What are the various steps in an employment discrimination lawsuit?

2. How serious is the issue of stress in the workplace? How can workplace stress affect the rest of your life? Is stress a legitimate “disease”? Can it be considered as an occupational hazard? How can stress be reduced at work?
3. Are today’s workplaces adequately safe? How can work be made safer? What are the respective responsibilities of workers and employers for creating and maintaining safety at the workplace?

4. How can the jobless be brought back into the workforce? How effective are welfare-to-work programs, which require work in return for government subsidies? What can be done to increase the probability of today’s welfare recipient becoming tomorrow’s full-time employee? If the government proposes to pay welfare recipients less than the minimum wage in return for their work requirement, will this help or hinder the passage from welfare to work?

5. To what extent should work and nonwork lives be kept separate? Should working parents expect their employing organizations to provide family-friendly workplaces? In households with two wage earners, how can both partners lead productive and satisfying work lives yet still maintain a productive and satisfying relationship with each other?

6. Do foreign-based companies actually have better methods of production, or are they more profitable simply because they pay their workers less? Is there any value to U.S. employers in adopting the work practices of other countries, or should we stick with what has made America great? Should everyone working for an American company, either in the United States or in another country, be expected to accept American culture as part of the work environment?

These are just some of the debates that you will see in any newspaper or on any television news program over the course of several months. When you have finished this course, you will have a knowledge base to discuss these and similar issues responsibly. That does not mean that you can solve these problems, but it does mean that you will have something sensible and unique to add to the discussion.

You may also have discussions with others who have taken a course like this, perhaps your parents, coworkers, or managers. If they have not taken this course in the past 5 to 10 years, they may be working from an outdated experience and knowledge base. Just consider how the world has changed since, say, the 1980s:

- Personal computers now dominate the workplace.
- Many workers do their work from home (telecommute), and many work groups and work teams are located in many different offices and work as virtual teams, seldom if ever meeting physically as a group.
- Client meetings, organizational meetings, and training are conducted through videoconferencing.
- Work performance can be monitored electronically.
- Three out of every five jobs are now directly or indirectly providing a service rather than manufacturing “goods.”
- Increasingly more work is done by teams as opposed to individuals.
- There is little stability in many business sectors. Downsizing, rightsizing, mergers, and acquisitions have radically altered the psychological contract between an organization and its employees so that few workers can expect to spend their careers with one organization.
- Workers are expecting greater recognition and support from their organizations with respect to creating and maintaining family-friendly workplaces.
- Workforces are becoming increasingly diverse, and not only in terms of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, and disability. Managing diversity today means embracing an increasingly broad spectrum of interests, values, attitudes, and cultures.
The nature of work has become more fluid, where jobs may not be well defined, tasks may not be routine, and the groups assigned to tasks may vary in their type and number of people.

Work is now international or global.

The information you derive from this course will be substantially different from what your parents’ generation learned in a similar course.

The Importance of Understanding the Younger Worker

A great deal of the published research in I-O psychology deals with managerial, professional, and other white-collar full-time employees who are older than a category that might be labeled "young adults." In the 21st century, we need to question the appropriateness of this research focus. As Loughlin and Barling (2001) report, in Austria, Denmark, and Sweden combined, approximately 70 percent of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 are employed in some capacity. In the United States and Canada, 80 percent of high school students work for pay. By 12th grade, most of these students are employed for more than 20 hours per week.

Loughlin and Barling (2001) argue that it is a mistake to ignore the population of young workers for several reasons: (1) They represent a large portion of a population of part-time workers, and as part-time work becomes more common, we need to know all we can about the experience of part-time work; (2) one’s first job is likely to have a substantial influence on the filters through which subsequent work experiences are viewed. As Loughlin and Barling (2001) suggest, “teenagers seem to be more influenced by their work environments than adults and . . . these attitudes and aspirations are stable once established during teenage years” (p. 548).

Mainstream literature tends to characterize the “first job” as the first full-time job after a decision is made to forgo further education. But your first job might be more correctly seen as your first paying job outside of the home environment, regardless of whether it occurs at age 14, age 19, or age 25. Surveys the authors of this text have done with college students suggest that jobs such as cashier, customer service rep, camp counselor, lifeguard/swim instructor, waitserver, and retail salesperson are the most common paid positions for younger adults. Experiences in these jobs are often memorable if for no other reason than motivating the job holder to aspire to work that will never repeat these experiences! Nevertheless, they help form early impressions of management and supervision, “good” work, and work/life balance. As such, these experiences are understudied.

The little I-O research that has been done on younger workers suggests the following:

1. For younger adults, jobs that provide an opportunity to use current skills or develop new skills are most satisfying (Green & Montgomery, 1998; Mortimer, Pimental, Ryu, Nash, & Lee, 1996).
2. For younger adults who do not have the opportunity to use current skills, or develop new skills, cynicism and lack of interest in the work can result (Stern, Stone, Hopkins, & McMillian, 1990).
3. Young workers represent a very valuable commodity or resource since their education levels tend to be higher than their parents’, they are more sophisticated technologically, they tend to see the world globally rather than domestically, they have no problem being “connected” 24 hours a day, and multicultural school environments have given them an open-mindedness that was rare in earlier generations (Loughlin & Barling, 2001).
Chapter 1  What Is Industrial and Organizational Psychology?

The paradox of younger workers goes beyond issues of research focus, too. Younger adults represent a valuable resource in terms of skills and experiences they have independent of paid work. Yet at the entry level, paid work often consists of menial activities that neither tap current skills nor develop new ones. This, in turn, leads to demotivation, cynicism, and a negative view of work in general. Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak (2000) cite management and supervision as the real culprit in the negative experiences of younger part-time workers.

Virtually everyone reading this text has had some experience as a paid worker, and we encourage you to consider this experience when reading the following chapters. Moreover, it will be useful for you to remember these experiences when you become a supervisor or leader, even in your part-time life. As a shift manager at Burger King, think twice on slow days before directing subordinates to wipe tables that are already clean. Instead, take the opportunity to ask them what they are good at that might contribute to the shift productivity or what they’d like to become good at that might contribute to future productivity.

Butler (2007) has examined the issue of work–school conflict for college-age students. Many students work part-time (and some even full-time) to fund their education. Not surprisingly, Butler found that students struggled to keep a balance between work and school and that work often had a negative effect on schoolwork. This was particularly true when the work consisted of long hours and difficult schedules, provided little real control to the student-worker, and did not permit opportunities to complete schoolwork. The research showed that when the nature of the student work was related to the student’s major, both school satisfaction and school performance increased. In contrast, long hours and work that allowed no control on the part of the student actually decreased academic performance. As we will see in Chapter 10, these results are similar to what has been found when studying work–life balance outside of the school years.

Butler justifiably argues that school should come first and work should simply facilitate the educational experience. He suggests that universities and colleges become more proactive in creating or facilitating work programs that foster, rather than impede, education and in counseling students with respect to what jobs might create conflict versus those that will promote the educational experience. The lesson may be that mindless jobs with long hours can do more harm than good for the student.

Module 1.1  Summary

- Work is important because it occupies much of our time, provides us with a livelihood, and defines how we feel about ourselves. “Good work” enables workers to develop and use skills to benefit others.
- I-O psychology applies psychological principles, theory, and research to the workplace and to all aspects of life that are touched by work. SIOP is the primary professional membership organization for I-O psychologists.
In this course, you will gain knowledge about the workplace, work-related issues, and the ways that work has changed over recent decades.

### Key Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>industrial-organizational (I-O) psychology</td>
<td>Human resources management (HRM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP)</td>
<td>Organizational psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personnel psychology</td>
<td>Human engineering or human factors psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIP (The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist)</td>
<td>Scientist-practitioner model</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welfare-to-work program</td>
<td>Telecommuting virtual team</td>
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MODULE 1.2
The Past, Present, and Future of I-O Psychology

The Past: A Brief History of I-O Psychology

We will present the historical context of various I-O topics when we cover them in subsequent chapters; here we will sketch the evolution of I-O psychology in broad and simple terms. For the interested reader, Koppes (2007) has published a useful book tracing this development of I-O psychology in great detail. In particular, we will present a brief description of the development of American I-O psychology as it is valuable for you to see how the science evolved in the United States. Having said that, we also point out that there were parallel developments in other countries, such as Britain (Chmiel, 2000; Kwiatkowski, Duncan, & Shimmin, 2006), Australia, Germany, the Netherlands (van Drunen & van Strien, 1999), and eastern European countries such as Romania (Pitariu, 1992; Rosca & Voicu, 1982). For many foreign countries, unfortunately, there is no published English-language account of their development of I-O psychology. However, one of the first modern American I-O psychologists, Morris Viteles, did a wonderful job of describing the status of I-O psychology around the world during the period from 1922 to 1932 (Viteles, 1932). Arthur Kornhauser (1929) also provided a description of I-O psychology in England and Germany. One of the most comprehensive surveys of international applied psychology (particularly with respect to vocational counseling) as it was practiced in 1937 appears in a book by Keller and Viteles (1937). In addition, a more recent survey of early non-American I-O psychology, in particular the work of Otto Lipmann (German) and Charles Myers (British), has been provided by Vincur (2005), and there is an entire chapter on the topic of non-American I-O by Warr (2006). As we present the various topics, note that we make use of a wide variety of contemporary research and theory produced by non-American scholars. Salgado (2001) has published a comprehensive review of the landmarks of scientific personnel selection internationally covering the period 1900–2001. For further reading on the development of I-O psychology as a science and a practice in America, we recommend several excellent and detailed reviews (Benjamin, 1997; Katzell & Austin, 1992; Landy, 1997).

You may ask why we need any historical treatment. The answer is that to know where we are now and where we are going as a field, it helps to know how we got here. As an example, much of the current effort being devoted to research on emotional intelligence is wasted because the researchers ignored many years of earlier research on social intelligence—a similar concept—and wandered down the same
dead ends as their earlier counterparts (Landy, 2005b, 2006). As the philosopher Santayana (1905) suggested, those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it (p. 284).

When we look at history from a broad perspective, it is possible to make some good guesses about the future. And knowing the discipline’s history helps us understand the context in which research and application were conducted, which in turn helps us appreciate the value of that research today. Consider Table 1.3, which lists the titles of articles in the first year of publication of one of the major I-O journals, the *Journal of Applied Psychology* (*JAP*). Now look at Table 1.4. This is a list of articles that appeared in 2018 in the same journal. Quite a contrast! There are two reasons for the difference between what was important in 1917 and what is important today. The first reason is the change in the world of work. The second reason is the accumulation of knowledge about work-related behavior in nearly a century since then. Table 1.5

### TABLE 1.3

**Titles of Research Articles in the Journal of Applied Psychology, 1917**

- Estimates of the military value of certain personal qualities
- The legibility of the telephone directory
- The psychology of a prodigious child
- A test for memory of names and faces
- Practical relations between psychology and the war
- The moron as a war problem
- Mental tests of unemployed men
- A trial of mental and pedagogical tests in a civil service examination for policemen and firemen
- The attitude and reaction of the businessman to psychology
- A note on the German recruiting system

### TABLE 1.4

**Titles of Research Articles in the Journal of Applied Psychology, 2018**

- Resource scarcity, effort, and performance in physically demanding jobs: An evolutionary explanation
- Minimizing cross-cultural maladaptation: How minority status facilitates change in international acculturation
- Motivated reasoning during recruitment
- The dimensions and mechanisms of mindfulness in regulating aggressive behaviors
- When daily planning improves employee performance: The importance of planning type, engagement, and interruptions
- Leader humility and team creativity: The role of team information sharing, psychological safety, and power distance
- Linking job-relevant personality traits, transformational leadership, and job performance via perceived meaningfulness at work: A moderated mediation model
- Supervisor-employee power distance incompatibility, gender similarity, and relationship conflict: A test of interpersonal interaction theory
- What goes up must . . . Keep going up? Cultural differences in cognitive styles influence evaluations of dynamic performance
TABLE 1.5
Important Dates in the Evolution of I-O Psychology

- 1890 Cattell develops first Mental Test
- 1892 Munsterberg arrives at Harvard; American Psychological Association (APA) founded
- 1913 Munsterberg publishes first English language textbook in I-O Psychology
- 1917 First issue of the Journal of Applied Psychology is published
- 1917–1918 U.S. psychologists involved in World War I
- 1930 Elton Mayo publicizes the Hawthorne studies
- 1932 Viteles publishes Industrial Psychology, often considered first modern text in the field
- 1939 Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) first published
- 1941–1945 U.S. psychologists involved in World War II
- 1945 Division 14 of APA established, named Industrial and Business Psychology
- 1950 Explosion of commercial tests
- 1950 Division 14 membership exceeds 280
- 1953 Viteles publishes Motivation and Morale in Industry, adding focus on Organizational side
- 1963 Equal Pay Act passed
- 1964 Title VII of Civil Rights Act passed
- 1970 Division 14 membership exceeds 1,100
- 1982 Division 14 renamed Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP)
- 1983 The first edition, 1-volume Handbook of I-O Psychology (edited by Marvin Dunnette) appears
- 1986 SIOP holds first annual conference in Chicago
- 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) passed
- 1990 SIOP membership exceeds 2,500
- 1992 The second edition, 4-volume Handbook of I-O Psychology (edited by Marvin Dunnette and Leaetta Hough) appears
- 1995 Occupational Information Network (O*NET) published as a replacement for the DOT
- 1997 SIOP celebrates its golden anniversary at annual conference in St. Louis
- 2008 New SIOP journal Industrial and Organizational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice first published
- 2010 3-volume APA Handbook of I-O Psychology appears (edited by Sheldon Zedeck)
- 2018 SIOP membership exceeds 9,000

presents a broad time line in the evolution of I-O psychology. Important dates and developments in I-O psychology that have occurred over the past few decades are covered throughout the remainder of this book. In the sections that follow, we will highlight some early and important developments in the field of I-O psychology.

1876–1930

The roots of I-O psychology trace back nearly to the beginning of psychology as a science. Wilhelm Wundt founded one of the first psychological laboratories in 1876 in Leipzig, Germany. Within 10 years, he had established a thriving graduate training and research enterprise. He hoped to put scientific psychology on an even footing with the more established physical sciences of chemistry, physics, and biology. In the mid-1880s, he trained two psychologists who would have a major influence on the eventual emergence of I-O psychology: Hugo Munsterberg and James McKeen Cattell (Landy, 1997; Sokal, 1982). Munsterberg left Germany for America in 1892 and became the director of the psychological laboratories at Harvard University. Initially, he was a devoted experimental psychologist who actually rejected any value for
the application of psychology to the workplace (Benjamin, 2006). Soon, however, he saw the potential of psychology to address many practical problems of the early 20th century.

Munsterberg was also one of the first to measure abilities in workers and tie those abilities to performance—something that in hindsight may seem like an obvious path to follow but was innovative at the time. In another departure from the practice of his day, he applied rudimentary statistics to “analyze” the results of his studies. The world’s first I-O psychology textbook, written in 1912 and translated from German to English in 1913, was another of Munsterberg’s memorable contributions to the field. At the time of his death in 1916, Munsterberg was at the pinnacle of his career at Harvard. In conjunction with pursuing his research on industrial efficiency, he devoted considerable energy to persuading the leaders of American government and industry that I-O psychology was a key contributor to the nation’s economic development. I-O psychology was really only “industrial” psychology in those days, devoted to the goal of increasing productivity. It was known by some as “economic” psychology.

Cattell was an American contemporary of Munsterberg and is recognized for being among the first to realize the importance of differences among individuals as a way of predicting their behavior. Wundt, under whose direction Cattell studied, was interested in general laws of behavior and less interested in the differences among participants in responding to his experimental stimuli. He and other experimental psychologists of the time considered those differences to be “errors” that served to complicate and muddy their results. Cattell observed instead that these differences were reliable properties of the participants and could be used to understand behavior more fully. After a brief stay in England, Cattell joined the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania in 1888, and then of Columbia University in 1893, where he remained until his retirement in 1917.

At around the same time as Munsterberg and Cattell were doing their work, two other leaders in I-O psychology, Walter Dill Scott and Walter Van Dyke Bingham, were working at the Carnegie Institute, developing methods for selecting and training sales personnel (Landy, 1997). When the United States entered World War I in 1917, Scott and Bingham volunteered to help with the testing and placement of more than a million army recruits. Together with other prominent psychologists, they adapted a well-known intelligence test (the Stanford–Binet test, designed for testing one individual at a time) to make it suitable for mass group testing. This new form of test was called the Army Alpha. (The Army Beta test was like the Army Alpha but was nonverbal and administered to recruits who were illiterate.) When the war ended, private industry set out to emulate the successful testing of army personnel, and mental ability testing soon became commonplace in the work setting.

Although Bruce Moore is often credited with receiving the first PhD in industrial psychology, that distinction actually goes to Lillian Gilbreth. She received her PhD in industrial psychology from Brown University in 1915 (Koppes, 1997; Perloff & Naman, 2003). As noted by Benjamin (2009), Gilbreth is the only person with a PhD in psychology to appear on a U.S. stamp! Bruce Moore received the second PhD in industrial psychology in 1921, and he was elected as the first President of SIOP in 1945 (Farr & Tesluk, 1997).

Lillian Gilbreth’s doctoral work at Brown University applied the Scientific Management principles of Frederick W. Taylor to educational institutions. Scientific Management was based on the principles of time and motion study. She and her husband, Frank Gilbreth, became well-known human engineering practitioners and management consultants. As America entered World War II, the field of human engineering emerged. Until then, human engineering was little more than the study of time and
motion. Time and motion specialists (like Frederick W. Taylor and the Gilbreths) broke every action down into its constituent parts, timed those movements with a stopwatch, and developed new and more efficient movements that would reduce fatigue as well as increase productivity.

Leaders of government and industry, not generally known for acceptance of new science, embraced industrial psychology in its infancy. In 1911, Harry Hollingworth, an early applied psychologist, was asked by Coca-Cola to help the company persuade the federal government that caffeine, which was an important part of the recipe for the drink, was not harmful to those who ingested it. The government contended that caffeine impaired motor performance and mental efficiency (Benjamin, 2003). Hollingworth conducted a series of laboratory studies and concluded that in normal amounts, caffeine enhanced performance rather than impairing it (Hollingworth & Poffenberger, 1923). Based in part on Hollingworth’s research, Coca-Cola was successful in defending the use of caffeine in its recipe. The case resulted in substantial exposure for Hollingworth, and within a short period of time, he was besieged with requests for consulting help. Topics on which advice was requested included the following (Benjamin, 2003):

- How to interview farmers
- The effect of perfume on emotions
- The hours of the day when advertising was most effective
- The correct height for work benches
- The best color for a railroad to paint its boxcars
- The legibility of traffic signs
- The differences in buying habits of men and women
- The value of auditory versus visual channels for advertising
- The selection of clerks
- The legibility of typeface

Hollingworth was not unique in this respect. Most applied psychologists of the day (e.g., Walter Dill Scott, Walter Van Dyke Bingham, Hugo Munsterberg, James McKeen Cattell) were in demand for applications of the new science of human behavior.

1930–1964

Industrial psychology underwent a sea change when Elton Mayo, a psychologist from Australia, arrived in the United States in 1924 (Griffin, Landy, & Mayocchi, 2002) and immediately began studying not the efficiency of workers, but their emotions. He was particularly interested in the possibility that work “caused” workers to act in pathological ways. He proposed that there was a mental state known as revery obsession that resulted from the mind-numbing, repetitive, and difficult work that characterized the factories of the day. Mayo proposed that because workers were not required to use their intellect but only their physical effort, their minds would inevitably wander and, in this wandering, various paranoid thoughts would arise. As a result, they would be unhappy, prone to resist management attempts to increase productivity, and sympathetic to labor unions. Notably, such a reaction to boring work today would likely be considered normal rather than pathological.

When Mayo was given a faculty appointment at Harvard in 1926, research was being done at the Hawthorne, Illinois, plant of the Western Electric Corporation. These studies, now classics, are known collectively as the Hawthorne studies. The research had begun as simple attempts to increase productivity by manipulating
lighting, rest breaks, and work hours (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939). But the results of the experiments were puzzling. Sometimes, when conditions were actually made worse (e.g., lighting was reduced), production improved; when conditions were made better (e.g., lighting was enhanced), production sometimes dropped! Mayo suggested the workers be interviewed to see what was going on. This led to the rather dramatic discovery (for the time) that workers’ attitudes actually played a role in productivity. In the context of the Hawthorne experiments, the very fact that someone was finally paying attention to the workers seemed to have affected behavior. This has become known as the “Hawthorne effect”—the change in behavior that results from researchers paying attention to the workers. We will revisit this concept in the chapter on emotion in the workplace. Until the Hawthorne studies, it had been generally accepted that the only significant motivator of effort was money and that the environment, rather than the person, was of primary importance.

The results of these studies ushered in a radically new movement known as the Human Relations Movement. Researchers in this movement were interested in more complicated theories of motivation, as well as in the newly discovered emotional world of the worker. Studies of job satisfaction became more common. After his successful use of interviews to examine the puzzling performance effects of the experiments, Mayo convinced management to embark on a much more extensive series of interviews with workers that lasted for almost a decade. Mayo was a frustrated clinician (as well as an avowed critic of labor unions) and believed that these interviews would result in a decrease in worker stress and unhappiness. There was some speculation that these interviews (called “counseling” at the Hawthorne facility) were really only intended to reduce the number of formal employee grievances (Highhouse, 1999; Mahoney & Baker, 2002). Many social observers over the years have been suspicious of the objectivity of industrial psychology when it comes to the needs and values of workers versus managers (Baritz, 1960; Carr, 2005). A notable exception to this general suspicion was Arthur Kornhauser, who from the 1920s to early 1950s was relentless in his application of applied psychology on behalf of the worker rather than on behalf of management (Zickar, 2003).

World War II brought some interesting new problems, particularly in the Air Force. The aircraft that had been used in the World War II were primitive and differed little from one model to another. They were biplanes (i.e., structured with two wings, one on top of the other) with simple controls for the throttle, the flaps, and the rudder. Some also had crudely mounted machine guns. Bombs were dropped over the side by hand. But in the two decades between the wars, tremendous advances had been made in aircraft and other tools of battle. There were many different types of aircraft: fighters, bombers, and transport planes, to name a few. Even within a type of aircraft, controls (flaps, landing gear, throttle) and displays (gauges and dials that signaled airspeed or altitude) were located in different places. This meant that as pilots moved from one plane to another, they would encounter completely different cockpit configurations. This in turn led to an astounding number of crashes, many fatal, as pilots would mistakenly activate the landing gear instead of the flaps or the flaps instead of the throttle. Applied psychologists suggested that cockpits be standardized with respect to the placement of displays and controls and that controls be given unique shapes so that a pilot would know simply by grasping a control that it was the correct one. The landing gear control was to be shaped like a wheel or tire, the flap control to feel like a flap would feel, and so forth. When these innovations were implemented, the resulting immediate reduction in accidents assured human engineering its place as a sub-area of industrial psychology.
In the more traditional areas of I-O psychology, the war brought renewed interest in ability testing (to accurately place recruits in these new technologically advanced military jobs) as well as the introduction of the assessment center, a technique we will examine in Chapter 3. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was the department of the government charged with gathering and analyzing military intelligence. Part of its responsibility was to run a spy network to anticipate enemy strategies. Candidates for these spy positions were sent to a secluded farm near Washington, DC—hence the term assessment “center” (Guion, 2011)—for extensive testing, which often took a week or longer. The testing consisted not only of interviews and paper-and-pencil tests but also of “exercises” intended to determine which candidates could withstand the stress and rigors (often very physical) of working behind enemy lines. As it has been described, “To this end, they were sent over obstacle courses, attacked in stress interviews, and observed when they were falsely told that they had flunked out—the week was calculated to reveal every strength and weakness they might have” (Bray, Campbell, & Grant, 1974, p. 17). A well-known personality theorist, Henry Murray, was in charge of the assessment center for the OSS; thus, it is not surprising that personality attributes were central to the assessment exercises (Guion, 2011).

In both the United States and allied countries (e.g., the United Kingdom), the morale of war industry workers was a central concern, as were the effects of fatigue on performance. In the United Kingdom, psychologists were particularly interested in munitions workers and conducted various studies to reduce fatigue and increase morale.

In contrast to the Depression of the early 1930s, when employers were laying off workers rather than hiring them and consequently had little interest in selection testing, the post–World War II years were a boom time for industry, with many jobs to be filled and applicants to be tested. Interestingly, however, when the war ended and the soldiers came back to work, there was an increasing trend toward labor unrest. Increasing numbers of authorized and unauthorized (sometimes called “wildcat” strikes) work stoppages were staged by unions and workers, and management was very concerned about the effect of these strikes on productivity. This was also a period of unprecedented interest in worker attitude surveys. The results of these surveys were regularly published in business publications. There is no clear reason for this rapid increase in labor unrest. One might speculate that having faced death on the battlefields of Germany, France, Italy, and the islands of the Pacific, workers were less willing to passively accept the decisions of organizations or their leaders.

By 1950, as employers realized that interests and attitudes and personality might be contributors to desirable outcomes such as productivity and workforce stability, a glut of tests had entered the market. The influx of new tests for selection continued unabated until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Civil Rights Act was written in sections, called “titles,” with each title addressing a specific area of possible discrimination, such as voting, education, or housing. The section dealing with employment discrimination was Title VII, and it required employers to justify the use of tests for selection. If the test could not be shown to be related to job performance, and if a protected group (demographic groups specifically identified in the legislation, e.g., African Americans, Hispanics, women) tended to score lower on that test, on average, than the nonprotected group, resulting in fewer offers of employment, the test might be considered illegal. This legislation revolutionized selection testing and led to the development of a broad base of technical knowledge about the characteristics of employment tests.

Defining a “historical” period is, to some extent, difficult and arbitrary. Nevertheless, the mid-1960s seems to mark a line of demarcation between “classic” and...
“modern” thinking. As an example, during this period, the field changed its name from industrial psychology to industrial and organizational psychology. The earlier periods addressed work behavior from the individual perspective, examining performance and attitudes of individual workers. Although this was a valuable approach, it became clear that there were other, broader influences not only on individual but also on group behavior in the workplace. Thus, in 1973, “organizational” was added to our name to emphasize the fact that when an individual joins “an organization” (e.g., the organization that hired him or her), he or she will be exposed to a common goal and a common set of operating procedures. In other words, the worker will be “organized” not only by his or her individual characteristics but also by a larger social system. This recognition provided the foundation for an approach to theory and data analysis called multilevel analysis that we will refer to throughout the text. We will address these larger organizing forces in the second part of the text.

Because we will pick up on the continuing evolution of theory and practice in the chapters that follow, we will conclude our formal “history” section in this period of the mid-1960s. Nevertheless, we leave you with some generalizations that can be drawn from the early history of I-O psychology that point out important themes.

1. Mental ability tests have always played an important part in the practice of industrial psychology.
2. Most industrial psychologists were focused on improving productivity and reducing counterproductive behavior such as absenteeism and turnover.
3. There was a tendency to see the three different branches of I-O psychology as unrelated to, and possibly in competition with, one another to explain industrial behavior.
4. It was taken for granted that the unit of analysis was the individual worker rather than the work group, organization, or even culture.

We make these generalizations to highlight the difference between the I-O psychology of 1964 and the I-O psychology of today. Consider how those generalizations above would change to be applicable today.

1. Mental ability is only one of a number of important attributes that play a role in the practice of I-O psychology. Personality characteristics are assuming an increasingly important role in understanding and predicting work behavior.
2. Although many I-O psychologists continue to address issues of productivity and efficiency, others explore issues of worker well-being, work–family balance, and the experience of work by workers. Some I-O psychologists are embracing large 21st-century issues such as an aging workforce and world poverty.
3. I-O psychologists see the three major branches of the discipline as complementary rather than independent or antagonistic. I-O psychologists take a systems view of work behavior and acknowledge that there are many individual, social, work environment, and organizational variables that interact to produce behavior at the workplace.
4. The worker is one level of analysis, but the work group, the organization, and even the culture represent additional and valuable levels of analysis.

In the chapters that follow, we will trace the evolution of I-O psychology from what it was in 1964 to what it is today. It is our hope that this will provide a foundation for understanding how the science of I-O psychology will continue to evolve over your lifetime.
The major professional organization for psychologists of all kinds in the United States is the American Psychological Association (APA), founded in 1892. Nearly a century later, the Association for Psychological Science (APS) was formed to serve the needs of the more experimental and theoretical areas of psychology. Clinical, counseling, and school psychologists make up over 50 percent of the more than 96,000 APA members, while the remaining members are active in a wide range of specialties ranging from I-O psychology to forensic psychology, sport psychology, and adult development and aging. The APA has more than 50 divisions that represent different types of psychologists; Division 14 of APA represents SIOP. In 2012, I-O psychologists represented approximately 4 percent of all members of the APA, and approximately 8,600 I-O psychologists (including approximately 4,000 students) were members of Division 14. As an indication of the vitality of I-O psychology, consider the following statistics:

- In 1986, there were 23 I-O master’s degree programs in the United States; in 2008, there were at least 75; in 2012, there were over 100.
- In 1986, there were 44 I-O PhD degree programs in the United States; in 2008, there were at least 65; in 2012, there were over 70.

It is interesting to trace the changes in the demographic characteristics of I-O psychologists who were members of the APA between 1985 and 2003. The major shift was in gender. In 1985, 15 percent of I-O psychologists were women. By 2003, that percentage had doubled to 30 percent. The most recent salary survey conducted by SIOP estimated that 49 percent of the responding members were women (DuVernet, Poteet, Parker, Conley, & Herman, 2017). In 2012, the median salary for a PhD in I-O psychology was $118,818; for a master’s level I-O psychologist, it was $84,500. The highest-paid PhD I-O psychologists in private industry were self-employed consultants and averaged approximately $175,000 per year; the median salary for those who worked in the computer and information technology sector was $130,000; the lowest earners were found in nonprofit organizations and government job. I-O psychologists whose primary responsibility is teaching at private and public colleges and universities often earn additional income from consulting with government and industry (DuVernet et al., 2017).

I-O psychologists work in a wide variety of employment settings. Figure 1.2 presents percentages for areas of primary employment (SIOP, 2011). A book by Hedge and Borman (2008) provides a detailed description of the life of an I-O consultant and how to prepare for such a role. In 2014, the Bureau of Labor Statistics ranked the 20 fastest growing occupations, and I-O psychology was #1! The expected job growth rate, 53 percent, was higher than every other occupation in the United States.

**FIGURE 1.2 Where I-O Psychologists Are Employed**
Pathways to a Career in I-O Psychology:
A Curious Mixture

You may believe that the instructor of this course knew from an early age that he or she was destined to become an I-O psychologist—but you would most likely be wrong. The reasons for gravitating to a profession are as varied as the people in that profession, and I-O psychology is no exception. In a column called “What I Learned along the Way,” which appeared regularly in TIP (the newsletter of SIOP) for several years, I-O psychologists described various events that led them to their career or led to radical shifts in their interests. These accounts are very personal, often amusing and sometimes touching. They give very different views of I-O psychology. Some of the events that have led to a choice of I-O psychology as a career include the following:

- A casual discussion with a dishwasher (Vol. 42, no. 1, p. 42)
- The discovery that some men prefer their underwear ironed (Vol. 42, no. 2, p. 119)
- Working on a Ford assembly plant line (Vol. 41, no. 3, p. 64)
- Doing community service for underage drinking (Vol. 41, no. 3, p. 69)
- Chopping off the heads of hamsters (Vol. 42, no. 4, p. 73)
- Counseling students on academic probation (Vol. 42, no. 3, p. 39)
- Looking for “cruiser” courses at registration and seeing that the Psych line was shorter than the Poli Sci line (Vol. 41, no. 4, p. 101)
- Observing a spouse’s dental problems (Vol. 43, no. 1, p. 94)
- Deciding the job of college professor seemed pretty cool (Vol. 44, no. 1, p. 119)
- Choosing psychology as a major because a friend was a psychology major and seemed to like psychology (Vol. 44, no. 1, p. 122)
- Making a $999,999 mistake in the first day on the job as a bank teller (Vol. 44, no. 4, p. 67)

We are not making these up—go read them! They make it abundantly clear that a profession just as often finds you as you find a profession.

What We Call Ourselves

I-O psychologists in other countries use different labels from those used in the United States. For example, our colleagues in the United Kingdom call themselves occupational psychologists, while our German and Dutch colleagues prefer the label work and organizational psychologists. Even among U.S. I-O psychologists, there is some variation in labeling. Some call themselves organizational psychologists, while others refer to themselves as work psychologists or applied psychologists. Throughout the text, we will use several terms interchangeably to describe what we do. These terms will include I-O, industrial and organizational, work and organizational, or simply work psychologists. Nevertheless, each of these terms describes a psychologist who studies work behavior.
The Future: The Challenges to I-O Psychology in the 21st Century

As we have seen, there are many opportunities for I-O psychology to contribute to employers, workers, and the broader society in which we live. To make these contributions, I-O psychology needs to meet four challenges.

- **I-O psychology needs to be relevant.** This means that we need to study the problems of today, not those of yesterday. In the early 21st century, relevance means addressing problems of globalization of the economy; increasing technological evolution of the workplace; team and group contributions rather than exclusively individual contributions; nontraditional employment conditions, including part-time, temporary, contract, and telework; and the balance of work with nonwork. That is not to say that earlier research was misguided or “wrong,” but rather that older research gives us a foundation for newer research and application.

- **I-O psychology needs to be useful.** I-O psychology, like counseling, school/educational, and clinical psychology, is an applied subdiscipline. The value the discipline adds is in putting our theories and research findings into action. I-O psychologists must always be thinking of ways to put our research into practice.

- **I-O psychology needs to think bigger.** In the past, I-O psychology concentrated on the behavior of single individuals and tended to shy away from larger issues such as poverty, unemployment, globalization, and workforce diversity. Certainly, I-O psychologists do not have all the tools necessary to address these large global issues. But, as Stuart Carr (whose research on poverty we described earlier) explains, I-O psychology should be represented at the “table” where such issues are being debated. We know a great deal about work behavior, and work behavior is implicated in one way or another in virtually every pressing global challenge.

- **I-O psychology needs to be grounded in the scientific method.** The confidence that society has in I-O psychology depends on this. Careful and systematic observation, the development of hypotheses that can be tested, the public collection and analysis of data, and a logical connection between the data and the interpretations of these data are the bases for our “reputation” in research and practice. Beginning in the early 1990s, the courts have become more exacting about what testimony will be accepted as “scientific.” This is further evidence of the importance of science and the scientific method in the larger world.

A notable step in terms of I-O psychology being relevant and useful is that SIOP was granted special consultative status as a nongovernmental organization (NGO) with the United Nations in 2011. This NGO consultative status provides opportunities for SIOP members to address a variety of humanitarian and societal issues. In applying for NGO consultative status, SIOP outlined some areas in which I-O psychologists’ expertise can be useful in the UN’s initiatives, including (1) talent selection and development, (2) corporate social responsibility research and initiatives, (3) entrepreneurship (enterprise development), and (4) occupational health and safety. In using this expertise, I-O psychologists can do “good work” with the UN in tackling important issues such as poverty and hunger, maternal and child mortality, disease, inadequate shelter, gender inequality, and environmental sustainability (Aguinis, 2011; Scott, 2011).
Anderson, Herriot, and Hodgkinson (2001) describe the research of I-O psychologists as falling into one of four categories. We have renamed these categories but kept the sense of each:

1. Junk science: fascinating topic with shoddy research
2. Pragmatic science: important topic with well-designed research
3. Irrelevant science: unimportant topic with meticulous research
4. Hopeless science: unimportant topic with shoddy research

Using this scheme for categorization, the goal for the I-O psychologist should be to conduct or apply pragmatic science. Throughout the book, we will consider it our job to help you navigate among these categories, because examples of all of them appear in either the popular or scientific arena. Realize, of course, that 100 percent pragmatic science is an ideal and that, as a field, we will never realize that ideal. But we can continue to look for important and relevant topics and study them in as rigorous a manner as conditions permit.

A Personal View of the Future: Preparing for a Career in I-O Psychology

We assume that most of the students who take this course are doing so to fulfill a requirement for their major or as an elective. We also assume that some will decide to go to graduate school for further training in HR or I-O psychology. The following section is written for those who are considering the merits of graduate school.

Education and Training

To call yourself an I-O psychologist, you will need either a master’s degree or a PhD. If you expect to practice (as opposed to teach) I-O psychology, the issue of licensing quickly comes up, as virtually all states also require that you possess a license to practice under the heading of a professional psychologist. Fewer I-O psychologists are licensed than clinical or counseling psychologists, in part because what is being licensed is the use of the term “psychologist” rather than what is actually done. Thus, an individual doing HR consulting may not need a professional license. The licensing requirements vary by state, and all require some form of advanced degree. In addition, many require a period of supervised practice. The SIOP website (www.siop.org) provides a good general description of these licensing requirements, as well as contact information for each state’s licensing body. It is clear that licensing is necessary to protect the public from untrained or poorly prepared therapists in clinical and counseling psychology. It is not so clear in the area of I-O because I-O psychologists are not health-care providers. I-O psychologists are almost always retained by organizations rather than by single individuals, and most organizations have professionals within their ranks who can (or should be able to) distinguish between the trained and untrained I-O psychologist. Individual members of the public considering using the services of a therapist are less able to make such distinctions. Licensure continues to be a controversial topic among I-O psychologists, and you can follow this debate on the SIOP website.

Advanced training in I-O psychology is widely available, both in the United States and elsewhere. The SIOP website provides a list of those programs as well as links to many of them. Some programs offer only a PhD, some offer either a PhD or a
master’s degree, and some offer only a master’s degree (often called a “terminal” master’s degree). The SIOP website also provides an elaborate description of the type of curriculum you will encounter, as well as a list of the skills and competencies that would be expected of a master’s or PhD candidate to qualify for graduation.

**Getting into a Graduate Program**

There is no “standard” process by which departments choose graduate students, but it’s generally the case that students are admitted only once a year, in the fall. Graduate programs will examine both your overall grade point average (GPA) and the GPA you achieved in your major. Many programs will also examine your GPA from the last two years independently of your overall GPA. Faculty members want to know how you did once you chose and became committed to a major. Most programs will place some emphasis on your Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores. They will also examine how many courses you took in I-O, statistics, testing and measurement, and possibly relevant courses in business, sociology, and labor studies. There is usually an emphasis on a background in statistics because you will need to be comfortable with a wide range of statistics to understand much of the published I-O research. At the very least, you will be expected to have done well in the basic statistics course offered at your school. Additional statistics and research methods courses will make you a more attractive candidate.

In many graduate programs, there is no requirement that you be a psychology major. The emphasis is on what courses you have taken (and, of course, your grades in those courses) rather than the major you chose. All programs will expect recommendation letters from knowledgeable faculty. You may also solicit letters from non-faculty sources, but they should address skills that you will need in an I-O graduate program (e.g., communication skills, research skills, statistical experience, relevant work experience). Obtaining experience as an undergraduate research assistant is likely to improve your chances of admission to graduate school. If that experience is in an I-O research lab, it will be viewed even more favorably. However, because many departments have a small number of I-O psychologists, it is not necessary to limit yourself to I-O psychology labs. Research labs in many areas can provide excellent experience and training in conducting literature reviews, study design, data collection, statistical analyses, and interpretation of findings.

**Module 1.2 Summary**

- I-O psychology began with studies of industrial efficiency and individual differences. The latter led to mental ability tests. The Hawthorne studies prompted the study of workers’ emotions. Human engineering came to prominence during World War II. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 required employers to justify testing and other policies in terms of equal opportunity.
- I-O psychology in the 21st century needs to be relevant, useful, broadly focused, and grounded in the scientific method.
- To call yourself an I-O psychologist, you need to earn a graduate degree and, in many jurisdictions, obtain a license. SIOP provides information about licensing requirements.
- To be admitted to a graduate program, it is advantageous to do well in statistics and methods courses, obtain strong letters of recommendation, and gain experience as a research assistant.
### Key Terms

<table>
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<th>Stanford–Binet test</th>
<th>revery obsession</th>
<th>Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964</th>
<th>American Psychological Association (APA)</th>
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<td>Scientific Management</td>
<td>Hawthorne studies</td>
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The Multicultural Nature of Life in the 21st Century

There are some pretty dramatic differences between the world you know and the world your parents experienced when they were your age. You might immediately think of technological differences, but equally dramatic are the “people” differences. In the course of a day, you probably encounter a wide range of nationalities—possibly East African, Israeli, Russian, Mexican, Pakistani, Japanese, Chinese, or Dutch, just to mention a few. A few decades ago, you would have expected to encounter this diversity in New York City or London. Now you are just as likely to see such diversity in almost any medium-sized to large city and even more so in educational settings.

Nationalities can be thought of as boxcars. In and of itself, a nationality is simply a geographic reality. You claim a nation as your country of birth—you were born in the United States, or Russia, or Thailand, or India. Your nationality, like a boxcar, has importance only because it carries important psychological material. Geographers, economists, and political scientists may be interested in nationality per se, but psychologists are concerned with the behavioral implications of nationality. Perhaps the most important material for a psychologist is culture. A culture can be defined as a “system in which individuals share meanings and common ways of viewing events and objects” (Ronen, 1997). It is culture that distinguishes people more than nationality. For example, you might sit next to someone on a plane going from Denver to Chicago and strike up a conversation. If you were to ask your seatmate where she was from and she said, “the United States,” you wouldn’t know much more than before you asked. But if she said New Orleans, Detroit, or Las Vegas, you might very well follow up with a question or comment about the food, music, or politics of her home city or state. When you do that, you have begun to address cultural similarities and differences between yourself and your seatmate.

In I-O psychology, some of the most obvious cultural differences we need to address are related to nationalities. As you saw above, the definition of culture emphasizes the sharing of meanings and interpretations. This highlights the opportunity for people to bring different meanings and interpretations to an event or an object. This is why
recognition of culture’s influence is so important for I-O psychology. As the world of work brings together people of many different nationalities (and, more important, cultures), the opportunities for misunderstandings and ineffective or counterproductive human resource applications grow as the number of different cultures grows. Consider the findings of some I-O research studies:

1. In considering who gets a bonus and how much, Chinese managers make decisions based more on the personal needs of the individual, whereas in the United States, these decisions are based more on the performance of that individual (Zhou & Martocchio, 2001).

2. Compared to American managers, Japanese managers are much more likely to solve a strategic problem by being cooperative and making sure that individuals share equally in rewards (Wade-Benzoni et al., 2002).

3. Japanese managers are much more likely to seek compromise solutions than their American counterparts, who tend to follow win–lose strategies (Gelfand et al., 2001).

4. Shame as a result of a poor salesperson–customer interaction motivates salespersons from the Philippines but demotivates their Dutch counterparts (Bagozzi, Verbeke, & Gavino, 2003).

5. American software engineers provide assistance to a colleague only when they expect to need that colleague’s help at some future time; Indian software engineers provide help to whoever needs it without any expectation of future reciprocation (Perlow & Weeks, 2002).

6. Teams of American financial advisors will be more cohesive and likely to work as a unit when a task is complex; teams of Hong Kong financial advisors are cohesive even when the task is not complex; American financial advisors value autonomy and independence of action more than their Hong Kong counterparts (Man & Lam, 2003).

7. Most countries have employment protections for “disadvantaged” groups, but these groups vary widely from country to country. In Canada, there are protections for French-speaking citizens; in Greece, there are protections for Albanians, Bulgarians, Georgians, and Romanians; in Israel, there are protections for Palestinian Arabs, Sephardic Jews, and Druze; New Zealand has protections for Maoris and Australia for indigenous Australians (Myors et al., 2008).

8. U.S. workers are less concerned about job insecurity than are Chinese workers (Probst & Lawler, 2006).

Notice that with the exception of points 4 and 7 above, all of these studies showed differences between Americans and their non-American counterparts. This is just the tip of the iceberg with respect to culture and organizational behavior. American workers and managers interact with dozens of different nationalities (and different sets of beliefs and values) over the course of a year. The same is true of Egyptian, Thai, South African, and Australian managers. As an example, at the Holden automobile assembly plant on the outskirts of Melbourne, Australia, no fewer than 57 first languages could be spoken on the production floor. The point is not about language, since all communication occurs in English. The point is that each of these languages is likely a surrogate for a different culture or sets of beliefs and expectations. To make the situation even more complex, individuals often simultaneously embrace several cultures and subcultures. As an example, a middle-level manager in South Africa may very well embrace the competitive and individualistic culture of his colleagues yet take a place in the collective and process-oriented circle of elders
when he returns to his native village in Zimbabwe. Chao and Moon (2005) refer to this phenomenon as the “cultural mosaic” and suggest that each individual is really a composite of several interacting cultural influences (in keeping with the metaphor of a mosaic, Chao and Moon refer to each of these influences as a “tile”). Thus, person A might be an Italian American Generation X male from an urban environment who is employed as a manager, while person B might be a Japanese American female who is a baby boomer and also from an urban environment and also a manager. Although these two individuals share the fact that they are managers and work in an urban environment, they differ in gender and national origin; thus, they may hold different values regarding certain behaviors and might be expected to behave differently in certain situations.

Consider one rather dramatic example: Located in Foshan, China, Lee Der Industrial Co. Ltd. produced toys for Fisher-Price and Mattel. The toys they produced were found to contain high levels of lead (Barboza, 2007; Telegraph.co.uk, 2007). Soon after being alerted to the problem, the factory manager, Zhang Shuhong, hanged himself from the factory rafters—even though the culprit was actually a subcontractor who had supplied the paint. How many American managers would be likely to take such a drastic action?

A less dramatic example of culture in the classroom, your “production floor,” might help to make the issue of culture more concrete (Aguinis & Roth, 2002). Imagine that, instead of your current instructor, your instructor in this course was a well-known Taiwanese professor of I-O psychology. This psychologist had never taught in the United States before but spoke excellent English. Imagine that this instructor engaged in the following behaviors:

1. Changed the syllabus for the course frequently throughout the term without warning or explanation
2. Read lectures directly from notes
3. Would not accept any questions from students during the class period
4. Expected unquestioning deference and respect both in and out of the classroom

In most American classrooms, the Taiwanese scholar might not fare very well. He might be viewed as arbitrary, imperious, and poorly prepared. Yet in most traditional Taiwanese college classrooms, his behavior would be considered appropriate. Similarly, if you were an American student in a traditional Taiwanese college classroom, other students and the instructor might be horrified if you challenged the instructor on a point he or she had made or expressed any personal feelings or emotions on a topic. These would be examples of the clash between the American and Taiwanese cultures. Without an understanding of the differences in culture, you might interpret the same actions very differently.

Cross-National Issues in the Workplace

Consider the following facts:

- More than 100,000 U.S. companies are involved in worldwide ventures that are worth over $1 trillion; U.S. corporations have invested more than $400 billion abroad and employ more than 60 million overseas workers (Cascio, 2010).
- One in five American jobs is tied directly or indirectly to international trade; foreigners hold top management positions in one-third of large U.S. firms,
and Americans hold similar positions in one-fourth of European-based firms (Cascio, 2010).

• The demise of the former Soviet Union and the development of the European Union have led to mass movements of people across borders.

• Economic blocs have formed, enabling easy movement of the goods and people of one nation to another. These blocs include the North American and Central American Free Trade Agreements (NAFTA and CAFTA), the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), the European Union (EU), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (Aguinis & Henle, 2002).

The facts above define what has come to be called the global economy. It is no longer possible for any country, regardless of size, to exist without economic connections with other countries. To be sure, there have always been “connections” between countries, but they usually shared a border or a culture. Now, connections are much wider, more complex, and more intense. Connectedness may be either a positive force or a negative force. Economic blocs such as those above are formed to enhance the future of all members. But corporations can make decisions about where to hire workers or locate facilities that can devastate local, and sometimes even national, economies. As an example, although in the late 1990s India became the IT and call-center outsourcing darling of Western nations, as the amount of work increased and the number of available Indian workers decreased, Western customers began a search for cheaper sources of labor (Scheiber, 2004). It now appears that this work can be done more cheaply in Kenya (Lacey, 2005). Cheap Chinese labor, an article of faith for much of the 20th century, may be a thing of the past as the salaries of Chinese skilled workers rise geometrically (Reuters, 2012). Western nations will soon need to begin looking elsewhere for cheaper manufacturing and assembly labor. There are two points to be made here. The first is that an American or Australian or British manager may be connected to two or three or five different cultures in the course of a year as labor sources and partnerships gravitate from one culture to another. (As an example, the Swedish retail company IKEA warns management recruits that in the first 10 years that they are with the company, they should expect to work in at least three different countries.) The second is that this sense of global connectedness makes jobs even less secure than they might have been last year—or even last month.

For the I-O psychologist, the importance of this connectedness is that it brings many different cultures into contact with one another at the workplace, particularly when that workplace is a virtual one. The challenge then becomes one of developing systems (e.g., training, motivation, or reward) that will be compatible with so many different ways of viewing objects or events, that is, compatible with so many different cultures. For example, American workers might expect individual rewards for outstanding performance, while Japanese or Swedish workers might consider them insulting. Conversely, group or team rewards would be compatible with Swedish culture.

As more corporations employ workers in foreign countries, work in the 21st century is increasingly a global concept.
or Japanese cultures yet considered inappropriate for American workers (Fulkerson & Tucker, 1999). Consider that almost half of McDonald’s restaurants are located outside the United States (Cascio, 2010). Developing a uniform human resource system for such a diverse workforce is a challenge for the U.S.-based central management. The key to meeting this challenge is understanding culture.

Erez and Gati (2004) make the point that individual behavior is the result of many different forces, and culture is one of those forces. They further distinguish between layers or levels of culture. As is illustrated in Figure 1.3, the broadest level is the global culture. By that, they mean that because Western societies dominate the global economy, the global culture is largely a Western one characterized by freedom of choice, individual rights, and competition. This means that most global or multinational corporations will be distinctively Western in “personality.” But this does not mean that national cultures do not also have an influence in the manner by which work gets done in individual domestic locations. This is the second level or layer of culture in their model. The third layer is that of the organization, then the work group, and finally the core—the extent to which the individual identifies with these various cultures. Am I a citizen of the world (i.e., identified with the global culture) or a Swede, or an employee of IBM, or a software engineer? The center core or layer is the resolution of these questions. It represents how I see myself, and for most people that means a weighted combination of all of those influences. Nevertheless, each has an influence in some way. This is what makes organizational behavior so much harder to understand now, in the 21st century, than it was 50 years ago. Throughout the text, we will touch on all of these levels of cultural identification.

Why Should Multiculturalism Be Important to You?

It seems clear that living and working in a multicultural environment is part of the definition of the 21st century. Not only are we exposed to multiple national cultures, but there are multiple domestic cultures to experience as well. As suggested by the mosaic theory of Chao and Moon described earlier, these domestic cultures (or subcultures) are defined by age, gender, race, disability, geographic region, education, or even leisure pursuits (Thomas, 1998). And many of these cultures and subcultures overlap and interact with each other, resulting in even greater complexity (Brett, Tinsely, Janssens, Barsness, & Lytle, 1997). Consider the overlapping cultures represented by a 52-year-old Pakistani chemical engineer who is also vegetarian, female, Christian, a New York City resident, and a marathon runner; or a 27-year-old African American male police officer who plays the cello in his spare time, is a Jehovah’s Witness, and lives in Boise, Idaho.

In your working life, it is a virtual certainty that you will come into contact with coworkers, superiors, subordinates, clients, and vendors who have cultural values
and beliefs different from your own. For that reason, you need to understand not only the fact that cultures do differ systematically but also how they may differ.

As a student in I-O courses, you will also find it useful to recognize how cultural differences influence what is examined in field and laboratory research. In many of the leading I-O psychology and human resource management (HRM) publications, the participants are most commonly American, the context of the research is American, and the outcomes or results of the research are interpreted for application to the American context. There is nothing necessarily wrong with limiting research investigations to uniquely American situations and problems. But it is important to remember that these results may not always generalize to non-American cultures, particularly since many of those cultures are considerably more homogeneous than is true of the United States. And many, if not most, of those cultures have existed considerably longer than their younger American counterpart.

**Why Is Multiculturalism Important for I-O Psychology?**

American scholars and researchers have dominated many areas of psychology since the discipline began almost 135 years ago. Although these psychologists have contributed many genuine advances, a certain insularity has characterized American psychology as well. This has been particularly true in applied areas such as I-O psychology. In applied psychology, research and theory tends to flow from “problem” areas rather than anticipating them. As a result, researchers have tended to develop theories that are relevant to U.S. situations, with less concern about their applicability in other countries. Hermans and Kempen (1998) have dubbed this the “West versus the Rest” mentality. Not surprisingly, attempts to apply American theories to non-American situations are not always successful. It appears that culture may actually determine (or “moderate”) the effectiveness of an HRM initiative (Earley & Erez, 1997). This is important information because it provides a roadmap for modifying a theory developed in one culture for application to a different culture.

Consider the following reasons for valuing a multicultural psychology in general (Fowers & Richardson, 1996), and notice how they fit with the goals of I-O psychology in particular.

1. Definitions of psychology usually include the phrase “the scientific study of human behavior,” which implies that human behavior in all parts of the world must be investigated, not just those aspects of behavior conveniently available to investigators in highly industrialized nations (Triandis & Brislin, 1984). Work psychologists should be just as interested in theories of work motivation or personnel selection as they apply to cultures other than the United States as they are in U.S. applications.

2. Psychology has tried hard to be color blind and, according to some critics, in the process it has “perpetuated racism in blinding us to the discrimination that is an everyday experience for members of minority groups... This color blind approach . . . does not recognize authentic differences that are defining features of identity” (Fowers & Richardson, 1996). While striving for fairness, American employers (and other American institutions, such as universities) have tended to down-play or ignore cultural differences among men and women, Caucasians, Hispanics, African-Americans, and other groups. Similarly, U.S.-based multinational corporations have often
attempted to apply a “one-size-fits-all,” American-oriented mentality to human resource practices in all of their locations throughout the world. A major challenge for work psychology today is to determine how policymakers can acknowledge and value multiple cultures while upholding standards of fairness and equality.

As we will see throughout this textbook, non-American scholars have proposed many excellent theories of work behavior based on research with non-American workers. These theories are valuable for application not only in the United States but also by U.S. multinational corporations in foreign countries.

Although both the I-O psychology and HRM fields are beginning to recognize the importance of a multicultural foundation for understanding work behavior, the recognition has come mostly in the form of applications devoid of theory. A case in point has been the problem of expatriates: American managers and professionals assigned to work in locations outside the United States. A great deal of expense and effort is involved in getting an expatriate settled in a new location. If the expatriate is not successful in that new location, the parent organization has wasted a considerable financial investment, in addition to losing productivity and goodwill in the new location. Some expatriates fail because they cannot or will not adapt to the culture of the new location (including colleagues and subordinates). As a result, expatriate selection and training has become a booming area for practice and has inspired many effective programs.

It is only recently that the I-O literature has begun to include research of a theoretical nature concerning expatriate success. Some examples include applications of personality theory (Caligiuri, Tarique, & Jacobs, 2009; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1999), models of expatriate adjustment (Takeuchi, 2010), and studies of feelings of fairness held by the expatriate (Garonzik, Brockner, & Siegel, 2000). Several of these studies have demonstrated the value of using personality factors, such as emotional stability and tolerance for novel experiences, for the selection of expatriates. Interestingly, many of these theoretical developments may also serve the purpose of understanding the broader issues of relocation, even relocation within the United States.

Theories of Cultural Influence

It does not necessarily take a behavioral scientist to realize that principles or strategies that apply in one culture might not apply in another. But it does take a behavioral scientist to understand why they may not apply. By understanding the “why,” we are actually understanding the meaning and importance of that cultural variable. To return to our example, a manager may realize that individual rewards seem ineffective in Japan but effective in the United States. But that manager may not understand the underlying principle: The Japanese culture is a collectivist culture that values the group more than the individual. The U.S. culture is an individualist culture that values the individual more than the group. By understanding the underlying cultural principle, and gaining the ability to place other cultures on the collectivist–individualist continuum, the manager might be able to design effective reward schemes for operations elsewhere, for example, in Germany, Thailand, or Egypt. Consider the experiment with students from individualist and collectivist cultures that is presented in Box 1.1. This is a great example of the actual workings of culture in everyday life.
Box 1.1 | The Faces of Culture

In a clever experiment designed by a multicultural research team (Masuda et al., 2008), faces expressing happiness or unhappiness were presented to both Western (e.g., U.S., U.K., Canadian) and Japanese students. The central figure in the two panels was drawn to be either Asian or Caucasian. Western students (from individualist cultures) assigned emotional meaning (happiness or unhappiness) based on the expression of the central figure and did not use the faces of the background group to interpret the emotion of the central figure. They identified the central figure in the top panel as happy and the one in the bottom panel as unhappy.

In contrast, the Japanese students’ interpretation of the emotion experienced by the central figure was influenced by the expressions of the group members in the background. Further confirmation of the importance of the “group” was provided by eye-tracking measurements—the Japanese students spent more time looking at the surrounding people than did the Westerners.

The researchers concluded that the Japanese interpret emotions in a much broader collectivist social network, while more individualistic Westerners see emotions as individual feelings.

Consider a workplace application. An expatriate American manager in Japan might concentrate on only the emotional signals of one Japanese subordinate (e.g., a team leader or subordinate) to estimate satisfaction or happiness; but her Japanese counterpart would be more likely to include social information from the entire group rather than just the group leader.


Hofstede’s Theory

As you might expect, culture is more complex than a single continuum like individualist–collectivist. As a result of some pioneering research by the Dutch researcher Geert Hofstede (1980, 2001), we know a good deal about the defining characteristics of culture, particularly culture in the workplace. Hofstede distributed questionnaires to IBM employees worldwide between 1968 and 1972, and more than 116,000 employees from 72 countries returned them. In his continuing...
analysis of those data, he has developed a theory that proposes five basic elements on which cultures can be distinguished. *Individualism/collectivism* is the degree to which individuals are expected to look after themselves versus remaining integrated into groups (usually the family). *Power distance* is the degree to which less powerful members of an organization accept and expect an unequal distribution of power. *Uncertainty avoidance* is the extent to which members of a culture feel comfortable in unstructured situations. *Masculinity/femininity* is the distribution of emotional roles between the genders, with the masculine role being seen as “tough” and the feminine role seen as “tender.” Masculine cultures tend to emphasize accomplishment and technical performance, while feminine cultures tend to emphasize interpersonal relationships and communication. Finally, *long-term versus short-term orientation* is the extent to which members of a culture expect immediate versus delayed gratification of their material, social, and emotional needs. Think of each of these elements as a continuum stretching from one pole to another. These five elements can almost be thought of as the “personality” of a nationality. This is the essence of what a culture is: a “collective psyche.” The importance of Hofstede’s theory for I-O psychology is substantial. In the past few decades, Hofstede has refined his theory to address specific aspects of the workplace.

Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright (2010) also provided applications of Hofstede’s findings in contrasting countries. They make the following observations:

*Individualism/collectivism.* In countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands, individuals tend to show greater concern for themselves and their families than for the community; in Colombia, Pakistan, and Taiwan, greater concern is expressed for the community than for the individual.

*Power distance.* Denmark and Israel seek to reduce inequalities in power, while India and the Philippines accept and maintain such power distances.

*Uncertainty avoidance.* The cultures of Singapore and Jamaica accept uncertainty and take one day at a time, but Greek and Portuguese cultures seek certainty.

*Masculinity/femininity.* In masculine cultures such as the United States, Japan, and Germany, performance, success, and accumulated wealth are important, but in feminine cultures such as Sweden, Norway, and the Netherlands, people, relationships, and the environment are more important than wealth and accomplishment.

*Long-term versus short-term orientation.* Cultures with a short-term orientation, such as the United States and Russia, focus on the past and present and honor tradition. Conversely, countries like Japan and China tend to have a long-term orientation and are not nearly as concerned with immediate benefit as they are with thrift and persistence.

Noe and colleagues (2010) also identified several reasons why managers ought to be sensitive to culture:

* Cultures differ strongly on how subordinates expect leaders to lead and what motivates individuals; therefore, the selection and training of managers should vary across cultures.
* Cultures influence human resource practices. For example, in the United States hiring decisions depend heavily on an applicant’s technical skills, whereas in collectivist cultures such as Japan much more emphasis is placed on how well the individual will fit into a group.
Compensation policies vary greatly across cultures. In the United States, the highest-paid individual in a company may earn 200 times more than the lowest-paid individual. In collectivist cultures, the highest-paid individual rarely earns more than 20 times the compensation of the lowest-paid individual.

In collectivist cultures, group decision-making is more highly valued, but in individualist cultures, individual decision-making is more the norm. This type of cultural discrepancy will inevitably lead to problems in communication and decision-making when an individual from one culture is placed into work groups or work settings with individuals from another culture.

If diversity is to produce the anticipated economic and intellectual rewards, managers must be aware of the various cultures operating in the workplace and be prepared to provide the training and support necessary to work with those cultures productively. We will consider the topic of workplace diversity in greater detail in Chapter 11. The point here is that diversity comes with a cost. It may very well bring about cultural clashes and conflict. Nevertheless, the benefits are likely to outweigh the costs.

Other Theories of Cultural Influence

Hofstede’s theory is not the only theory of cultural influence. Triandis (Triandis, 1995a,b; Triandis & Bhawuk, 1997) suggested a variation on Hofstede’s dimension of individualism/collectivism—that is, a horizontal/vertical dimension interacts with individualism/collectivism, as shown in Figure 1.4. Horizontal cultures are those that minimize distances between individuals (much like Hofstede’s power distance dimension), whereas vertical cultures accept and depend on those distances.

*horizontal culture* A culture that minimizes distances between individuals.

*vertical culture* A culture that accepts and depends upon distances between individuals.

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**FIGURE 1.4** Triandis’s View of Cultural Determinants in the Workplace

Most theories of cultural influence have incorporated the individualism/collectivism dimension of Hofstede in one way or another (e.g., Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998), and it appears that this dimension will be the backbone of any future theories. But Hofstede’s analysis was conducted by averaging the responses of all respondents from a given country and assigning that average as the country value on the dimension. Thus, we really have a theory of countries, not individuals. However, it is vitally important to realize that, within a country, not all individuals share the same culture. As we will see in Chapter 14, the extent to which values are shared varies across work groups and has an effect on the behavior of each group. As an example, the Honda of America Corporation has four production plants in Ohio. Those plants have adopted a collectivist, high power distance, masculine, long-term orientation culture, much as one might expect to see in Japan. Here is a Japanese culture embedded in the heartland of America. The entire Honda organization, regardless of where a plant may be, applies this culture and trains all of its employees in it, with successful results.

Keep in mind that cultural variables represent only one of the many influences on work behavior. Other influences include individual skills and motivation, managerial skills, leadership behaviors, HRM practices, and other individual and group variables. Nevertheless, culture is a key factor in appreciating the complexity of the modern workplace. It is important to acknowledge that psychology is neither sociology nor anthropology. I-O psychology focuses on the perception of the culture by the individual worker, not necessarily any “objective” measure of culture. Although mainstream I-O psychology has only recently acknowledged the importance of culture in work behavior (Earley & Erez, 1997; Kraut & Korman, 1999), we can predict that its role in the new global definition of work will become more obvious in the next decade. We will remind you of the issue of culture as it applies in the chapters that follow.

Module 1.3 Summary

- Culture is a system of shared meanings and ways of viewing events and things.
- The global economy has made it important for all countries to foster economic connections with others.
- It is important for I-O psychologists to recognize and study the multiplicity of cultural factors that influence workplace behavior.
- Individualism/collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, and long-term versus short-term orientation are some of the key considerations in describing and characterizing various cultures.

Key Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>culture</th>
<th>expatriates</th>
<th>horizontal culture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“West versus the Rest” mentality</td>
<td>collectivist culture</td>
<td>vertical culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individualist culture</td>
<td></td>
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MODULE 1.4

The Organization of This Book

Themes

Several themes run through the chapters of this book. They will be more apparent in some chapters than others. The first theme is one of a unified science of industrial and organizational psychology. Unified means several things in this context. First, to truly understand work behavior, we must be willing to consider and acknowledge the interplay of many different approaches. For example, when we consider the issue of safety in the workplace, we could consider the individual strategies for creating a safe workplace embodied in the personnel, organizational, or human engineering approaches. The personnel approach would suggest selecting people who are likely to act in safe ways and then training them in those ways. The organizational approach might suggest rewarding people for safe behavior and reducing stress in the workplace. The engineering approach might endorse modifying the environment, equipment, and work procedures to eliminate the hazards associated with common accidents, as well as creating and maintaining a climate of safety in individual work groups. The unified approach means not preferring one or another of these approaches, but realizing that all approaches are useful and can be skillfully applied, either individually or in combination, depending on the situation at hand. We will apply the same theme of unity to the many other topics you will encounter in the book.

“Unified” has another meaning in our treatment of I-O psychology. It means that research and theories from non-American researchers are just as valuable to understanding work behavior as the work by American researchers. We are all in this together: Our fellow Croatian, Japanese, Swedish, and New Zealand I-O psychologists are just as intent on understanding the experience of work as we are, and they are just as skilled at forming theories and conducting research. For those reasons, we will freely discuss the work of our colleagues in other countries and combine it with what has been learned in the United States to develop a broader and deeper understanding of work behavior. As you read in Module 1.3, all workers and work have been globalized, whether or not they embraced the concept of globalization. As a result, in many instances the research of a single country will not be sufficient to understand the behavior of workers in that country or any other. So we will present you with the best thoughts of those who study work behavior, regardless of the country in which it is studied.
The second theme that will be apparent in our treatment is a holistic one. By this we mean that we cannot and should not try to understand any work behavior by considering variables in isolation. There is a natural temptation to look for quick and simple answers. In some senses, the scientific method yields to that temptation by having the goal of parsimony, that is, choosing simple explanations and theories over complex ones. But in the real world, unlike the laboratory, we cannot control multiple forces that act on an individual. Your behavior is not simply a result of your mental ability or of your personality. The behavior of your instructors is not just the result of their knowledge or attitudes or of the culture in which they were raised. These behaviors are influenced by all of those things, and to consider only one variable as the explanatory variable is an endeavor doomed to failure. We will remind you frequently that you must look at the person as a whole entity, not as a single variable. Human behavior in real-world situations is like a stew. We may know every ingredient that went into that stew, yet the actual experience of tasting the stew is much more than the single elements that made it up and is certainly not described by any one of those elements.

A third theme that will run through the chapters is the vast cultural diversity of virtually any workforce in any country. A key facet of cultural diversity is differing values. It is these differing values that present the greatest challenge for employee selection, motivation, leadership, teamwork, and organizational identification. The organization that can “solve” the diversity puzzle (i.e., how to effectively integrate diverse ways of thinking and acting) is likely the organization that will enjoy high productivity, low turnover, and high satisfaction. I-O psychology can play a major role in helping to accomplish this integration, and we will address these issues throughout the text.

Parts

The book is divided into three parts.

* The first part presents descriptive information about I-O psychology, some historical background and principles, and the basic methods of data collection and analysis.
* The second part deals with material that has often been labeled “industrial psychology” (as opposed to “organizational”). This includes material on individual differences, assessment, job analysis, job performance and its evaluation, staffing decisions, and training.
* The third part covers material that is usually referred to as “organizational psychology” and includes topics such as motivation, attitudes, emotions, stress, fairness and justice, leadership, teams, and organizational theory.

Resources

As a student of I-O psychology, you will want to consult resources beyond those offered by your instructor, this text, and its supplements. The most important of these resources are knowledge bases. This knowledge can come in two forms: paper and electronic. The electronic resources are websites and search engines that will
identify useful information for you. Because website addresses change frequently, we will use this book’s companion website to list the most useful websites for the material covered in each chapter. The paper resources are the various journals and books that provide information about the topics covered in the text. Table 1.6 presents a list of the most common scientific journals that carry articles relevant to the text material.

In the references at the end of the book, you will see these journals cited frequently. If you want to do additional reading on a topic or are preparing a course paper or project, you should go to these journals first. In addition to journals, SIOP publishes the most current thinking on various topics in two series: the Frontier Series for research and the Practice Series for practice. These volumes present the most recent work available from some of the world’s best I-O psychologists. Table 1.7 provides the titles and publication year of recent books in these two series. These books represent another excellent information base for your further reading.

| TABLE 1.6 |
| Scientific Journals in I-O Psychology |

| Journal of Applied Psychology |
| Personnel Psychology |
| Human Performance |
| Journal of Business and Psychology |
| Industrial and Organizational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice |
| Academy of Management Journal |
| Academy of Management Review |
| Annual Review of Psychology |
| Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior |
| The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist (TIP) |
| Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes |
| Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology |
| Leadership Quarterly |
| Applied Psychology: An International Review |
| International Journal of Selection and Assessment |
| Journal of Occupational Health Psychology |
| Journal of Organizational Behavior |
| Australian Journal of Management |
| European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology |
| Work and Stress |
| Human Factors |
Chapter 1 What Is Industrial and Organizational Psychology?

Module 1.4 Summary

- This book treats I-O psychology in a unified and holistic manner.
- The three parts of this book discuss the basics of I-O psychology, industrial psychology topics, and organizational psychology topics.
- You can use this book’s supplements, I-O journals, websites, and the SIOP Frontiers Series and Practice Series to find additional information for your coursework, papers, and projects.
CASE STUDY EXERCISE

Below is a realistic case for you to read that includes topics from every chapter in the book. After each paragraph, you will find the number of the chapter that contains information relevant to the case. We don’t expect you to be able to “solve” the case or address the issues presented. Instead, we present the case as a vivid example of the complexity of work behavior and environments. After you complete each chapter in class, you will find it useful to come back to this case, identify the paragraphs relevant to the chapter you have read, and determine how the chapter material applies to the case. What we want you to do now is simply read and appreciate the experience of work in the 21st century.

Welcome to Milford. We’re a “rust belt” survivor: Unlike a lot of towns around here, we’ve actually grown in the past few decades. Our town, with a current population of 600,000, has a fairly good economic base, since we have an auto assembly plant and a glass factory, as well as a state university campus and a regional airport. About 50,000 of our residents are Hispanic, mostly descended from Mexicans and Central Americans who came to the area decades ago as migrant farmworkers and moved into town when agriculture declined. We have the kinds of problems with crime and drugs that you’d expect in any city of this size, but on the whole it’s a pretty good place to live. (Chapter 1)

I’m 48 now and a captain of patrol with the Milford Police Department. I started working for the department when I was 26 years old, a little later than most of the other officers. Before that I spent five years in the Navy maintaining sonar units, then used my military education benefit to get a college degree in law enforcement. At age 33, I was promoted from patrol officer to patrol sergeant. Five years after that I became a lieutenant, and in four more years I made my present grade. Except for two years behind a desk during my stint as a lieutenant, I’ve spent my entire career on the street. (Chapter 3)

I’ve seen lots of different “systems” in my 22 years on the force—systems for hiring, systems for promotion, systems for discipline, systems for training. If you didn’t like a particular system, all you had to do was wait a few years, and it would change because someone in power wanted a change. But now I’m a “person in power” and I have a say in these “systems.” I remember reading once that the best performance evaluation system people ever saw was the one they had in their last job. Boy, is that on the money! You hear people’s criticisms and you try to think of a way to make the system better, but no matter what you propose, they come back and complain that the old way was better. Sometimes it seems my work life was easier when I just had to put up with systems, not help make them up. (Chapters 5, 6, and 11)

I have four direct reports: patrol lieutenants, shift commanders. We work the evening watch, which is roughly from 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. I say “roughly” because some of the subordinates come in at 2:30 and others leave at 11:30 to cover shift changes. We tried a rotating shift schedule many years ago, but that was a disaster. Now we follow a fixed shift system in which officers work consistent hours weekdays and every third weekend. Shift assignment follows strict seniority rules: New hires and newly promoted officers work what we call “graveyard”—the night shift, from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. They have to wait until someone else quits, is fired, or retires before they can move up to evening and day shifts. This is good and bad. It’s good for the cops because building your seniority to move off the graveyard shift, and eventually making it to the day shift, is something to look forward to. But it’s bad from a law enforcement standpoint because there’s a natural tendency to have a lot more problems during graveyard hours than at other times. I mean, when John Q. Public decides to act stupid, it’s usually between 11:00 p.m and 7:00 a.m. And here we are with mostly green recruits right out of the police academy on that shift, being supervised by newly promoted officers. We don’t even have any top-echelon officers working: Lieutenants cover the captain’s duty on the night shift. If you ask me, the department would have far fewer problems with patrol officer performance if only you could put the most experienced officers and supervisors where they were needed the most, on night watch. (Chapters 10 and 12)

There’s a new breed of officer that I’ve been seeing in the past 5 to 10 years and I can’t say I like it. These young guys don’t really seem as committed to being a cop as I was when I started. They treat it like a “job,” not like a profession. They use all their sick time; they’re always looking to join “better” departments where the pay scale is higher. They seem to “expect” that they’ll be respected by civilians and fellow officers. They don’t seem to understand that respect is earned, not be stowed. Something funny happens to them after the academy. When they arrive for their first shift after graduation, they’re like kids starting first grade. Big eyes, lots of questions, asking for “feedback,” asking for responsibility. They think they can do it all. But in less than...
a year, it’s a different story. You have to stay on their case to get anything done. They take longer meal breaks, find more excuses for not being able to respond to a call, and saunter in two minutes before roll call. Just another job to them. (Chapters 7, 8, and 9)

Maybe this is because of the way recruits are tested. When I started, only the best were hired. The person who got the highest score on the civil service test, and was the fastest and the strongest on the physical ability test, was the person who got hired. You filled out a questionnaire to see if you had emotional problems; this was reviewed by the department shrink. You took a medical and they ran a background check on you. But now it’s different. Now, in addition to the civil service test, recruits are interviewed about things like “interests” and “values” and “ethics.” They also take a personality test, whatever that is. And they fill out a form about what they like and don’t like in a job. I don’t understand why they changed the system. Bad guys are still bad guys and they still do bad things. What’s so complicated about that? You want a cop who is stand-up, not afraid to do what it takes. You want a cop who is honest. You want a cop who is in for the long haul and who understands the chain of command. Why, all of a sudden, does the cop have to have a “personality”? (Chapter 3)

Another thing is the job is getting much more technical. The city council just approved funds for giving every cop a personal digital assistant/handheld computer with Wi-Fi capabilities. They thought the police officers would love coming into the 21st century. According to them, we can use the computers, GPSs, listen to departmental podcasts, and use handheld PDAs to analyze various crime patterns in our sectors, run more sophisticated checks for warrants and warrants, look at traffic patterns for selective enforcement of moving violations where they are most dangerous. They don’t realize that we are being suffocated with equipment. It takes 10 minutes now just to load the stuff in the patrol car and get it up and running—and use simultaneously!! (Chapter 3)

Since I’ve been on the force I’ve seen various trends and fads come and go. The latest buzzwords seem to be statistical control, or “stat con,” where crime is analyzed by an “operations researcher.” Not surprisingly, the new cops seem to take to stat con better than the veterans, and this is causing a certain amount of friction. The veterans call the new cops who understand stat con “stat cops.” The new cops joke that the veterans are “knuckle draggers” and “Neantherals.” It doesn’t help that some of the new cops score better on the promotional exams and get promoted faster. That means that the younger “bosses” don’t always have the respect of the older subordinates. And the beat cops who aren’t promoted just get older and more cynical. (Chapters 3, 6, and 14)

The force has changed in other ways as well. When I started, I could count the number of female police officers in the department on one hand and have a finger or two left over. Now the department is almost 40 percent female. That makes it tougher for the supervisors, because even though the law says they have to treat females the same as males, in reality the women get treated with kid gloves because the bosses are afraid of being accused of bias. Given the Hispanic community in town, we’ve always had a small but steady percentage of Hispanic officers. In recent years more black officers have gotten on the force, and now black officers outnumber the Hispanics. This has led to rivalry and competition, particularly when it comes to promotion exams. Everybody counts to see how many white, black, and Hispanic officers are promoted. Since the Hispanics have more seniority, they expect to have more promotions, but the black officers figure since there are more of them there should be proportionately more black supervisors. To make matters worse, the female officers always seem to do better on the exams than the men. As a result, I actually report to a female assistant chief. And she’s been in the department for only 13 years! But she’s a great test taker. And everybody knows that we had to have a woman somewhere up there in the chain of command, whether she could do the job or not. The problem is that you don’t get respect for being a good test taker—you get it for being a good cop. Most of the officers don’t pay much attention to her. Her decisions are always second-guessed and checked out with the other two male assistant chiefs. (Chapter 11)

The chief of police is a good guy. He has been in the department for just 16 years, but he’s a college grad and went nights to get a master’s in public administration. He’s sharp and is always trying out new stuff. Last year he hired an outside consulting firm to run the promotion exams. Some of the consultants are psychologists, which was a little strange, since the department already has a shrink on retainer. For the last sergeant’s exam, they had a bunch of the current sergeants complete some “job analysis” forms. That seemed like a pretty big waste of time. Why not just get the most experienced officers together for an hour’s discussion and have the consultants take notes? This “job analysis” thing led to an unusual promotion examination. They did use a knowledge test that made sure the candidates knew the criminal code and department policies, but they also had the candidates play the role of a sergeant in front of a panel of judges. The judges were from other police departments, which didn’t make sense. How could they know what would be the right way to behave in our department? But the good part was that everyone got a score for performance and this score was added to the written test score. It was objective. The time before that, the lieutenants and captains got together for a few hours and talked about all
the candidates and just made up a list according to their experiences with the candidates, which everybody agreed was unfair. (Chapters 1, 2, and 4)

Over the past several years, there has been a new kind of tension in the department. It became really obvious after 9/11, but it was building up before that and has not gone away. In a nutshell, officers are more interested in having a life outside the department instead of making the department their whole life. I’m talking about the veterans, not just the young new guys. Their mind is not on their work the way it ought to be. It got a lot worse after 9/11 because we’ve been expected to do so much more but with the same number of officers. We’ve tripled our airport detachment and had to post officers at city court, the bus station, and the power plant. And we’ve been getting a lot more calls about suspicious people and activities, especially people from other countries. A lot of private citizens have gotten so distrustful of foreigners that they act as if they’d like nothing better than to have the police force arrest every illegal alien it could find. But when you talk to those same people at work, all of a sudden they’d just as soon we look the other way because they know their corporate profits depend on having a cheap labor pool of undocumented workers.

You’d expect the immigration authorities to give us some guidelines about this, but when I think about them, I get just as annoyed as I do thinking about the other federal law enforcement agencies we’re supposed to “interface” with now. We get overlapping or conflicting information from the different agencies, or else the information is so general or outdated that it doesn’t really help us do our jobs. All of this extra responsibility has meant lots of overtime. Overtime used to be a big reward; now it’s a punishment. And it looks like sick leave is off the charts. Some of the officers are snapping at each other and civilians. And a week does not go by when we don’t have at least one police cruiser in a wreck. The officers seem really distracted. (Chapter 10)

Citizens are not doing so well either. The economy headed south and unemployment went way up. Ever notice that people act funny when they lose their jobs? Men are the worst. They feel worthless and angry. They do things that they would never do otherwise. A traffic stop turns into World War III. All of a sudden, we cops are the enemy—a complete about-face from the first few months after 9/11, when we were the heroes. We still remember that. People couldn’t thank us enough for keeping them safe. It made us feel really good. It sure helped recruiting, too. All of a sudden we had a big surge in applicants to take the test. It was nice while it lasted. But when the conventions canceled, and the orders for cars dropped, and the state had to start cutting back on services, we were not the good guys anymore. I know life is tough. I know people take hits when the economy sours, but how can we help them? It’s not our fault. We just end up dealing with the consequences. (Chapters 9 and 10)

One of the other captains just came back from a seminar on new techniques in law enforcement where they talked about “teams.” I don’t know what is so new about that. We’ve always had squads of officers assigned to a beat or sector. But he says that is not what they were talking about. They were talking about “competencies,” whatever that means. I didn’t think the officers would go for this. But he showed us a half-dozen studies that were done by people from top law enforcement schools. When I looked at the results, I had to agree that this team approach might actually work. What they found, when they gave it a chance, was that the officers were more involved in their jobs, felt more in control, and took pride in showing that they were more effective on patrol. Response times went down, more problems were handled with summonses and bench warrants rather than arrests, and resisting arrest charges and claims of brutality went down. The studies showed that sick leave went down as well. Hard to understand, but the numbers don’t lie. Maybe these experts are right—“team” policing would help us get out of this slump. (Chapter 13)

But the academics can have some pretty dumb ideas, too. One of the sergeants is taking a course at the community college on employee attitudes, so he asked some of us to fill out a form to determine our job satisfaction. It was pretty simple, just asking us to agree or disagree with some sentences. He took the forms away, analyzed them, and came back to tell us what we already knew. We like our work, we don’t like our bosses, there are too many “rules” we have to follow in the department, our pay is OK, and we can get promoted if we are lucky and study hard. Why did we need to fill out a questionnaire to come to those conclusions? (Chapter 9)

The job satisfaction questionnaire did reveal one sore point that all of us can sense. We have a problem in the department with leadership. There are plenty of “bosses,” but not many of them are leaders. Some of them play tough and threaten their officers with three-day suspensions for making mistakes. If the officer dares to speak back, it might go up to five days off without pay. Some of the other bosses try to be your friend, but that won’t work either. What you want is someone to help you do your job, not somebody to have coffee with. I was lucky when I was a lieutenant. My captain was somebody I could look up to, and he showed me what it takes to be a good cop and a good leader at the same time. Not everybody gets that kind of training. It seems like there should be a training program for bosses, just like there’s one for new officers—sort of an academy for supervisors. I mentioned that to one of the other captains, who said it would be...
money down the drain. You would take officers off the street and have nothing to show for it. I know there’s an answer to his objection, but I can’t think what it would be. (Chapter 12)

There is another problem that I see, but the questionnaire didn’t ask any questions about it. We don’t really trust anybody except other cops. The courts seem to bend over backward to give the perps a break. The lawyers are always picking away at details of the arrest. Are you sure you saw him on the corner before you heard the alarm? Did you ask for permission to search her purse? How could you see a license plate from 25 feet away when the sun was almost down? Even the DA, who is supposed to be on your side, is always telling you that you should have done something differently. The problem is that this makes the average cop just want to make up whatever details are necessary to get the perp off the street. On the one hand, I can’t disagree with my officers that the system seems to be working against us and what we are trying to do. On the other hand, I don’t think that this is the way a police department should think or behave. We should all be working together in the criminal justice system, not trying to “win.” (Chapter 14)

But this is why the police force feels defensive against the rest of the city government. And it’s why we were not pleased last week when the mayor announced that all city employees would have their performance evaluated once a year, and that includes the police department. It has something to do with “accountability in government.” He has asked each city department to develop its own system, but it has to be numerical. He also said that there have to be consequences for poor performance. The chief is thinking about preventing anyone from taking a promotion exam if his or her performance is “unacceptable,” but he hasn’t told us how he plans to determine what is acceptable. I think this is a disaster waiting to happen. (Chapter 5)

I’m proud of being a cop and I feel a lot of satisfaction with what I’ve achieved in my career. But to tell you the truth, the way things are going around here, retirement is starting to look more and more attractive to me. (Chapter 9)