Journal of **B**usiness **S**tudies **Q**uarterly

jbsq.org

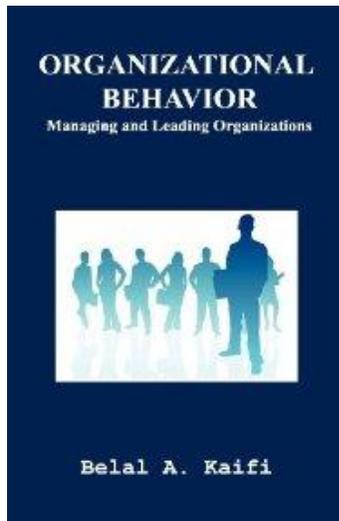**Book Review**

Organizational Behavior: Managing and Leading Organizations
Belal A. Kaifi
Llumina Press, 2013
294 Pages, Hardcover, $99.99

Reviewed by: Wajma Aslami, Managing Your Future Consulting Group

As organizations continuously evolve and change, it becomes imperative to understand the concepts and constructs related to organizational behavior. As a current practical example, the new CEO of Yahoo (i.e., Marissa Mayer) recently changed the telecommuting policy of the organization. According to Picchi (2013), "But with Mayer's recent ultimatum that telecommuters need to either come into the office or quit, some of her one-time fans are turning on her." The implications of this new policy will have severe implications on the behavior of the employees of the organization. It becomes essential for managers and leaders to be able to understand and deal with such implications. Interestingly enough, Best Buy has also recently changed its policy regarding telecommuting. According to Rogers (2013), "Best Buy announced it is making changes to its flexible work program for the 4,000 employees who do not work in stores. The company says its employees will have to now coordinate with managers before creating their own flex-work schedules." The recent changes that have to do with telecommuting may influence changes in job performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and interpersonal and organizational citizenship behaviors.

With new college graduates entering the workforce, it is important for all graduating college students to read a book on organizational behavior so they have a better understanding of how people in organizations behave and specific topics that will influence their success in the workforce such as: job performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, leadership, organizational culture, motivation, and human resource management. In the preface, the author mentions the importance of college students reading and even perhaps taking an organizational behavior course. Traditionally, courses in Organizational Behavior (OB) are taken by business students, but it is important to mention that all students would benefit from taking an OB course. At most colleges and universities, students do not complete a practicum or internship as a part of their degree program unlike most vocational colleges where students learn and experience organizational behavior concepts at their temporary job sites. Thus, it becomes crucial for all university students to take a course in organizational behavior.

Throughout his book, the author is able to provide industry examples that assist the reader with understanding specific concepts related to organizational behavior. As an example, when he addresses voluntary turnover in organizations, he provides the following information to help the reader not only understand the issue but also the severity of the issue; "Cisco Systems enjoys one of the lowest voluntary turnover rates in its industry—around 3 percent" (Kaifi, 2013, p. 22). When discussing motivation, the author provides the following examples:

> Southwest Airlines uses a different strategy for motivating employees to report to work on time and to not call in sick. Southwest employees with no absences or late arrivals over a three-month period receive two free airline tickets from the company. At Starbucks, part-time baristas who work at least 20 hours a week receive full benefits (pp. 107-108).

Furthermore, each chapter is equipped with great resources such as: chapter review questions, discussion questions, current and meaningful case studies, case study questions, and a special case study assignment. Throughout the book, the reader will also have access to several surveys that can be used to evaluate one's ability to function effectively in an organization.

Kaifi (2013) does an outstanding job of introducing novel concepts and frameworks. For example, he introduces his version of the Lifecycle of Leadership Development and explains the four stages: embryonic leader, evolving leader, effective leader, and enlightening leader. Kaifi explains,

> There are four "E" stages to the "Lifecycle of Leadership Development" process that potential leaders experience. The most basic stage is the embryonic leader. This is when leaders observe the leadership skills of others. The next stage is the evolving leader. This is when leaders develop or "fine-tune" their natural propensity to influence, motivate, and empower followers. The third stage is the effective leader. This is when leaders feel comfortable leading teams, making big decisions, and creating new opportunities. And

the final stage is the enlightening leader. This is when seasoned leaders are able to influence or teach new leaders who are at the embryonic stage. This ongoing cycle produces leaders who are able to reach the enlightening stage and give back to others (p. 32).

In regards to decision-making for managers and leaders (p. 2), the author introduces the RED Analysis which focuses on: Recognizing the main issue, Evaluating the issue, and Developing an action plan. Kaifi also provides a new model regarding management and leadership competencies for the 21st century. He explains that managers and leaders need three main competencies to be successful: positive intelligence, cultural intelligence, and emotional intelligence (p. 224). A detailed discussion on the three competencies provides indispensable information to the reader. The author also portrays the different levels of ethos, logos, and pathos that leaders utilize when influencing followers in the Lifecycle of Leadership Development (p. 39).

One unique feature about this book is the ten interviews that can be found in Chapter Nine. The author was able to interview ten managers to learn more about their management philosophies. The interviews are very helpful because each interviewee was able to reflect upon his or her experiences and then provide an answer that others can learn from. "Topics relating to leadership style, glass ceiling phenomenon, motivation, performance management system, organizational politics, rewarding employees, and teamwork are discussed in the interviews" (Kaifi, 2013, p. 140). The same questions were asked of each participant so it is easier to compare and contrast responses based upon: gender, generational affiliation, management experience, span of control, and other important variables.

Throughout the book, Southwest Airlines is highlighted as a progressive organization that continues to strive for excellence. In Chapter Five, Maslow's hierarchy of needs is applied to Southwest Airlines. The real-world "industry" stories are very helpful for the reader because they are easy to understand and remember. For example, Southwest Airlines has used a unique style for hiring employees. The organization became the airline industry's most successful firm by hiring people with positive attitudes and well-honed interpersonal skills, including a sense of humor. When a group of pilots applying for jobs at Southwest were asked to change into Bermuda shorts for the interviews, two declined. As a result, they weren't hired.

The final chapter of the book focuses on the future of organizations and the author provides several interesting recommendations for practitioners and researchers to consider. For example, Kaifi (2013) discusses the challenges of a multi-generational workforce consisting of Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y (Millennials) employees. Kaifi declares, "As such, the goal should be to learn more about Millennials because they will be leading organizations of the future" (p. 220). With organizations relying more on teams and even global teams it becomes essential for the reader to understand the team development process also known as the Tuckman Model which is discussed in the final chapter. Unfortunately, many

teams are dysfunctional and lack proper guidance by their leaders due to a number of complex reasons. Kaifi states, "As such, the goal should be to learn how teams can work collectively on projects without being influenced by groupthink and organizational politics" (p. 222). The author is also quick to point out the pay disparity for men and women. On average, the salaries of men are about 15% higher than their female counterparts for the same jobs. In the 21st century, this gap does not make sense and more should be done to correct this unstableness. Kaifi explains, "As such, the goal should be to create a workforce that promotes and values gender equality" (p. 224). The final chapter provides the reader with many insights regarding future challenges for managers and leaders.

This book provides valuable information for not only practitioners but also researchers. Furthermore, this book can and should be used in the classroom for students who are studying organizational behavior. The author of the book has extensive experience teaching Organizational Behavior courses to both undergraduate and graduate students. The constructs and theories outlined in this book are useful for current and future managers and leaders.

References

Kaifi, B.A. (2013). Organizational Behavior: Managing and Leading Organizations. Tamarac, FL: Llumina Press.

Picci, A. (2013). Yahoo's Mayer: Bashed for her telecommuting policy. Retrieved from http://money.msn.com/now/post.aspx?post=d7ce02a4-7093-4b76-849a-f363587a5b39 on March 10, 2013.

Rogers, K. (2013). Best Buy Takes Yahoo's Lead, Ends Telecommuting Program. Retrieved from http://www.foxbusiness.com/personal-finance/2013/03/06/best-buy-takes-yahoos-lead-ends-telecommuting-program/#ixzz2NBfYF7Ei on March 10, 2013.