# BU 288 Midterm Qs that I made up

1. You're a manager at the local chemical factory and you have just caught one of your floor workers, Gerald, stealing some precious $C_{18}H_{24}O_2$. With an exasperated sigh you drag them into your office for a good sitting down.

    a. This really isn't the first time Gerald has been caught doing this. You're really annoyed too since all of Gerald's previous employers have nothing but good things to say about Gerald, and obviously none of the other people on the floor ever do this. Identify the 3 different types of attributional cues you would use, and what they mean to help you analyze Gerald's behaviour.

    To analyze Gerald's behaviour, you would use distinctiveness, consensus and consistency cues.

    - Distinctiveness cues relate to whether this behaviour also exists in other similar situations, such as in previous workplaces or other public spaces. In this case the high ratings from Gerald's employers suggest that this behaviour of stealing is unique to this job position, or that it the behaviour is due to situational factors.
    - Consensus cues relate to whether the behaviour is exhibited across other people, such as Gerald's coworkers. Since not many of them also steal, it is more likely for the behaviour to be due to dispositional factors.
    - Consistent cues relate to whether the behaviour is repeated by said person over time. As Gerald has been caught stealing time and time again in the workplace, we can likely conclude that the behaviour is dispositional.

    Overall, the behaviour is likely to be dispositional, however there could also be hidden situational factors at work that caused this behaviour to appear.

    b. After thinking for a bit, you think that Gerald just has a bad personality. Which dimension of personality would specifically induce Gerald to act like this?

    The specific dimension would be the conscientiousness dimension of the 5-factor model. Notably having low conscientiousness means one is likely more irresponsible and unreliable, which aligns well with disruptive behaviour such as theft.

    c. After accusing Gerald of being an "ill-minded klepto that [you] should've fired ages ago", they seem a bit upset and says that they feels the management has been very unfair to them. What fairness is Gerald likely referencing? Why is it unfair?

    Gerald is referencing the lack of Interactional Fairness that you have shown them – having respectful and informational communications when being informed about an outcome. Calling Gerald names and belittling them on your part has shown very little respect for poor Gerald, who all this time could have external pressures on him…

    d. Let's backpedal a bit – it COULD be likely that you have some biases, or otherwise gave Gerald an unfair beating. Maybe it was something out of his control… but first, identify 2 potential biases in attribution that you as the observer could have, and their impact.

    - Fundamental Attribution Error – the tendency for you, the observer, to attribute behaviours as the result of dispositional factors rather than situational ones or emphasize dispositional factors. This means you could overlook other situational factors at play in favour for the dispositional explanation that stealing reflects Gerald's general personality and lack of morals.

- **Actor-Observer Bias** – as the observer, you additionally tend to attribute behaviours as the result of dispositional factors, while the actor tends to attribute them to dispositional factors. This means that Gerald might see their theft as justifiable in the situation, while you would disagree and say that it reflects on Gerald's personality and disposition.

e. On further inspection you realize that everyone has been stealing chemicals! After doing some OB reading, you are almost certain that job satisfaction is to blame. What could some mediating variables be to this relationship?
Guess it was situational after all. One mediating variable that could explain this is the lack of adequate pay – since employees are not paid enough, they are not satisfied and thus feel the urge to steal from the company to "make back" some of the lost pay. Another mediators could be coworkers – if everyone feels dissatisfied in the workplace, coworkers could incite each other to start doing disruptive behaviour such as stealing to get back at the employer (you).

f. Given that you run a chemical factory, it's not the most interesting of work just stitching molecules together all day. What is most important to achieving job satisfaction? What could you do to improve job satisfaction?
The most important aspect to job satisfaction is having meaningful, challenging and interesting work. Studies seem to show that employees like this sort of work and thus feel more fulfilled and thus satisfied. Another important aspect to job satisfaction include having adequate compensation, and having good coworkers and people at the workplace. For your chemical factory, since it is almost impossible to make it interesting, you could look to either increasing compensation through pay or benefits, or to team-building activities or organize a company retreat to build solidarity and community.

g. For the future, you don't want Gerald or any other employee to act up like this again. You want them to LEARN to not be steal. Identify 5 ways you would teach them and give an example of how that would look like. Additionally give examples of prerequisites needed for it to be effective, should there be any.
- **Positive Reinforcement** – you would apply a positive reinforcer after they perform the behaviour (not stealing) which serves to increase or maintain the probability of said behaviour. In this case you could acknowledge their hard work after the end of each shift with a "Good Job!", given in that shift they were focused and did not steal lol. Have to make sure that the positive stimulus isn't applied anywhere else though, to ensure the connection between behaviour and consequence is clear.
- **Negative Reinforcement** – terminate a negative reinforcer when they perform the desired behaviour of not stealing which also increases or maintains the probability of said behaviour. Hard to do since its NOT stealing, but you could berate and nag endlessly whenever you find something stolen until Gerald returns it, which might have a similar effect. A prerequisite would be that this sort of reinforcement is effective on Gerald, and that they don't like the nagging enough to take the desired action to change their behaviour.
- **Extinction** – terminate any positive reinforcer so that the behaviour stops as there is a lack of incentive to do so. This would correlate to fixing the issues in the workplace with regards to job satisfaction.
- **Punishment** – apply a negative reinforcer to ensure stealing never happens again – this is the more straightforward approach of just a slap on the wrist, or a pay

dock, or something worse. You have to ensure that the punishment is truly adversarial though (day off is eh), and ensure you have the correct expectations for behaviour shown, and to keep your emotions in control. Also ensure you don't accidentally reward stealing – you have to catch Gerald in the future!

- Observational Learning – set up a "model employee" that doesn't steal that Gerald looks up to and is thus compelled to mimic their behaviour. Could do this through nomination by other employees or something of the like.

h. 1 Month later, you realize that there is a reason why everyone has been stealing chemicals specifically – turns out that they were collectively donating it to children in need of said chemical! Identify the type of commitment they probably felt and why.
They probably felt normative commitment, or commitment based on a moral or a felt obligation for some organization. In this case, they probably felt some sort of moral obligation to help those children out, and were thus committed to stealing from work.

i. I'm going to make this question last the full page. What type of management style would work better for your chemical factory – between the classical approaches and human relational ones? Define the contigency approach as well but ignore it in this scenario – just say which of the 2 here would probably make more sense for efficiency's sake.
A classical approach, with intense coordination centralized power and high specialization of labour with strict rules would make more sense for the factory, as having high labour specialization allows for better efficiency, and strict rules and centralized power allows for better controls, which might be necessary for quality reasons. The human relations approach which focuses more on participative management and is more oriented to employee needs is likely unnecessary and might lead to decreased efficiency. The contingency approach would involve tailoring the exact management style to fit the situation.

j. You decide to also implement an employee reward program to reward your employees for being nice and productive. Identify a few features that you need to ensure this program runs successfully. What are some potential negative consequences to behaviour if this program gets implemented?
The program should ideally involve public recognition of the employee, give them a token or other memorabilia for the award – basically praise and recognition. Financial compensation is often not enough to achieve the desired behaviour and so more social aspects of recognition must also exist.
A potential negative consequence is unethical competition – employees might start resorting to sabotaging each other in order to get ahead in the program. To avoid this metrics should be made in a way that doesn't incite this form of competition.

k. After you cancelled the employee reward program that you started in (j), you need another way to reinforce good efficiency amongst your employees. What sort of interval and ratio scheduling you should use to ensure that you get optimal efficiency from your employees quickly that lasts?
Ha! This a tricky one, since no one set of interval and ratio scheduling would work for both! Get pranked!!! No you should try first employing fast and immediate feedback to help ensure that employees learn the optimal behaviour fast, then switch to delayed and partial feedback later on one the behaviour is learnt to ensure it persists.

l. Ok you are considering firing Gerald. It's about time, you think. They're a slacker and you've never liked them from the start. But when you bring it up to the board, expecting

a full consensus, the board surprisingly heavily disagrees with you. Explain some of the perceptual biases that could've led to this awkward situation for you.

- Projection – the tendency to attribute one's own perceptions and feelings onto others. In this case, you are projecting your own feelings of hatred towards Gerald onto the other board members, who may not feel the same way.
- Primacy – the tendency to rely on first impressions for perceptions. In this case, you never liking Gerald from the start biases you against the rest of Gerald's working history.
- Reliance on central tendency – through this problem YOU seem to focus on efficiency too much! It biases the rest of your thoughts against Gerald since they doesn't meet your standards there.

2. (define personality-traits (append five-factor-model locus self-monitoring self-esteem affectivities proactivity gse cse))
(for-each personality-traits (lambda (trait) (display (trait-definition trait)) (display (or (trait-good-and-bad-at trait) (trait-effects trait)))))
(Translation: For each personality trait, define it, and explain in what situation it will be good to have a high/low in said trait, or explain some of the outcomes that comes along with it.)

1. Extraversion – how talkative and sociable you are. More likely to enjoy social interaction and seek it out actively. Important for more social jobs like in sales, marketing, and just networking, and less important for say code monke or factory workers and similar.
2. Emotional Stability/Neuroticism – how anxious/calm and overall control over your own emotions. Not stressed easily. High stability needed for high-stress roles like paramedics and emergency services, while jobs that might need a bit more instability could be like TV show hosts or actors? If they need to act a suitably unstable character.
3. Agreeableness – how agreeable or disagreeable they are – I mean it's a bit self explanatory. Important for diplomacy or negotiations, but you could also argue you want low agreeableness for negotiations too so you get the better deal through VIOLENCE.
4. Conscientiousness – how responsible and dependable a person is. Need a high in this one for basically everyone, such as group projects, day-to-day work. A low conscientiousness role I can think of is the r/wallstreetbets trader, or just say anywhere where minimum effort is ok.
5. Openness to Experience – how eager they are to new opportunities to learn/experience things. Important for research and innovation roles, maybe less so in the government or bureaucracy.
6. Locus of Control – who they believe impacts their surroundings more – themselves or external variables. People who believe the former are typically more satisfied in life and are better at career planning and typically do end up achieving more.
7. Self-Monitoring – level to which people monitor their behaviours and alter it to fit the situation. Important for if they need to fit a specific role, such as being a cashier or being in big board meetings etc. Less important if role-playing or self-presentation not needed.
8. Self-esteem – level to which people believe in their own abilities to do well. Leads to improved job performance and job satisfaction, less stress. They also react better to negative feedback.
9. Proactivity – level to which people actively seek out action and take initiative. More job performance of course, but also better leadership and of course less stress.
10. General Self Efficacy – level people perceive they are good at SPECIFIC activities. Better performance, better satisfaction, and lets you adapt to new situations better.
11. Negative Affectivity – tendency to view things negatively. Less job satisfaction, higher stress, and counterproductive or withdrawal behaviours common.

12. Positive Affectivity – tendency to view things positively. Higher job satisfaction, less stress and better job performance.
13. Core Self Evaluations – a combo of self-esteem, GSE, locus of control, and emotional stability, it reflects how one views themselves. A good CSE means job satisfaction and performance, less stress as well.

3. Let's create an OB experiment together! Yay :) You are a researcher trying to figure out the relationship between the model and observational learning in social cognitive theory – notably, what traits a model should have to improve the speed of observational learning.
    a. First, define Social Cognitive theory, and its differences to operant learning theory. Additionally, what are the 3 main components to social cognitive theory? How does observational learning fit into this?
    Social Cognitive Theory says that personal factors and the environment both impact behaviour, and vice versa. There is also a focus on how individuals observe other models to learn; while OLT is about how operators learn to operate on their environment to get desired consequences. SCT consists of observational learning, self-efficacy and self-regulation – learning by observing others to help build desired goals, self efficacy to get resolve to hit those targets set internally, and self regulation to reward oneself for hitting goals and regulating behaviour to get to those targets too.
    b. Write a potential hypothesis for your study that involves the model as the independent variable. Identify potential candidates for the other variables, as well as some moderating variables.
    Independent Variable: The model. Dependent: Speed of Observational Learning.
    Potential Mediators: Competence, Level of Power/Status, Attractiveness etc. anything that could compel the observer to learn from them to get similar effects.
    Potential Moderators: Workplace management style (is learning encouraged?), promotion rates, etc.
    Hypothesis: The perceived competence of a model affects how fast an outside observer learns from them, subject to variations in the learning climate in the organization.
    c. Design your study as an observational experiment – what would you choose to observe, do you choose to join in, does this even make sense in this case?
    We could choose to do participant observation at a factory plant with a system of picking models by competence in place – we can both review ourselves and also interview/ask around other employees to look for cues of motivation/striving to be like the model. This doesn't really make great sense though since the results are quite vague and you won't be able to conclude much from the study – it is too broad and hard to focus in on your specific hypothesis.
    d. Design your study as a correlational study – how would you scrape your data, over what period of time would you gather said data, is this a suitable method for this?
    You could go to a factory right as it is about to start one of these model programs. You can take precious employee productivity metrics from the company database, then during over a period of say 6 months ask how employees feel about whoever the model is and rate if they look up to them strongly or not and why. Then after the trial period ends measure workplace productivity and correlate the data. It's a better solution than an observational experiment since it is more specific and lets you have more precision and control, however causation cannot be concluded and thus isn't suitable for the hypothesis.
    e. Design your study as an experiment – think about how to improve internal validity while doing this. How would you effectively control variables and design the experiment?

You could grab a random sample of people and randomly assign them to a few groups – a control, one with a highly competent model, one with an attractive but less competent one etc. Then ask each group to observe the model performing a specific arbitrary task (maybe like Papers, Please sort of thing lmao) and then get them to mimic that behaviour. Repeat a few times and track how quickly the behaviour is learnt. Previous experience is controlled since the task is arbitrary and communication between learners can be prohibited and learners kept separate to prevent learning from each other as well.

f. For each of the previous 3 design… patterns? Explain their strengths and weaknesses. Assuming unlimited funding, what could you do to further improve your results?
While observational studies allow for very rich information with large breadth and depth, with spontaneous events, they are harder to generalize and often harder to control. Very limited number of cases too.
Correlational studies are middle in both richness, control and rigour – they are more precise and controlled, but still not rigorous enough to prove causation.
Experimental studies are the most rigorous of them all, allowing you to prove causation and also generalize. However, results are very specific and breadth and depth sacrificed.
With unlimited funding, you can choose more than one technique for the same overall study to maximum effect.

4. Perceptions affect a lot in OB – notably, perceptions of organizational climate, trust, and organizational support seem to be prominent for all sorts of metrics. Explain what each one means, what its outcomes are, and how to build strong perceptions for each one.
Organizational Climate – general perception of what is prioritized in the workplace. Could be things like diversity, safety, or more than one! It is crucial to be able to achieve said goals. Boosted by interdependence, communication and interaction amongst employees.
Trust is a willingness to be vulnerable and take risks with regards to another party. Leads to better performance through job satisfaction and perceived fairness. To build trust management has to be benevolent, competent and have integrity, also camaraderie between employees and pride about the job.
Finally Perceived Organizational Support – how strongly they feel the organization supports them and values their contributions and such. With strong POS there is a sense of norm of reciprocity, where employees feel obligations to help achieve the organization's goals in return for support. Requires perceived supervisor support, fairness, rewards and fair compensation, job enrichment etc. Causes improved trust, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, mood, job performance and reduced withdrawal behaviours etc.

5. You (a double degree) are a hiring manager and you just finished with a slew of interviews, when for your last interview you meet this well-dressed DD friend??? He's nice, but you had a really bad day already. He also seems bashful, which you especially despise. List as many potential biases that would affect your evaluation as possible. How could you go about minimizing some of these biases (if it is even possible to)?
Recency bias, Similar-to-me effect, Primacy bias (suit), reliance on central traits, halo effects, contrast effects, and perhaps harshness (if you been having a bad day).
You could minimize these by ensuring you don't ask personal questions, ask the same questions to everyone, ask job specific questions, and use consistent evaluation metrics and scoring such as with something similar to BARS or with Frame of Reference training.

6. Let's do some cultural values stuff!

a. Think of your home culture. (If your home culture is Canada, pick someone else's culture). On the 5 dimensions of cultures, in addition to work centrality and cultural tightness, compare and contrast the above culture against Canada.
Let's do China/HK

- Work Centrality – how important work is in day to day life. Last I checked I would say work in HK is especially central, with their strong financial sector and stuff.
- Cultural tightness/looseness – how strong behaviour standards are. China definitely has stronger standards with respect to traditions and stuff I feel.
- Power Distance – how acceptable unequal power distributions are. Canada def. has a lower power distance with more emphasis on democracy and group vote?
- Uncertainty Avoidance – if risk taking is acceptable or is uncertain ambiguous situations avoided. Uh… hard to say, but I think Chinese culture is more conservative with risk? Or maybe that is just me.
- Masculinity/Femininity – fluidity of gender roles and emphasis on quality of life. I think Chinese culture is more masculine with more strict gender roles, especially when compared to say Canada…
- Indivdualism/collectivism – individual initiative or collective loyalty to the group? Canda definitely the more individualistic one.
- Long/Short Term Orientation – emphasis on long term virtues or short term ones – apparently Chinese culture is more long term with emphasis on perseverance and persistence – seen in anthems and valuing hard work and all the long term infrastructure things they are doing…

b. Let's say you are fresh out of BU111, and you are pumped to open up a foreign subsidiary in the above culture you just picked. What are some of the implications of the differences in culture that you must consider? What traits and skills should you look for in the employee you inadvertently send over there to help get you started?
Might be that the higher power distance means that employees are less ok with making decisions or having a part in them. Uncertainty Avoidance might also say that risks generally taken less. Tightness also mandates comparatively more strict workplace etiquettes. The employee needs cultural intelligence – the ability to function and manage well across different cultures and environments!

c. You've recently began hiring spunky new Gen Z Coop students. Compared to the rest of your workforce, what new values could they have? What could you do to accommodate?
They are generally more progressive, global and less focused on the work but more entrepreneurial. They seem to prioritize different learning opportunities and work life balance, so providing flexible work environments and apparently let them work on separate projects at the same time.

7. How could you attempt to manage workforce diversity in the workplace? List a few potential programs you could use to help. Also, define stereotype threat and diversity culture.
First, stereotype threat is when individuals in a minority feel that they are being stereotyped and that their actions and behaviours will further worsen that stereotype, which often leads to actual reduced performance. Diversity culture is the degree the organization supports diversity through fair HR policy, equal opportunities and inclusion, and supporting typically underrepresented ppl. A few example policies to support diversity is outreach programs for minorities, having more diverse recruiting teams, ensuring a safe workplace and providing better benefits/WLB.

8. Apply OB to things out of the workplace – why are we committed to school? Why am I voluntarily making questions? What would be the organization in this case? What beliefs, values and attitudes shape my behaviour? How does your commitments change as your workplace (school/school term) changes?

- Personally I think I'm committed to school for all 3 types of commitment – I like school and enjoy learning (affective), I need to graduate for employment lol (continuance), and I feel I owe it to my parents to like, you know, finish colleg (normative)
- Me voluntarily sharing my questions is an organizational citizenship behaviour! Probably a norm of reciprocity thing since #DDgangbestgang<3. I'm satisfied in the organization of DD.
- Let's analyze why I do my homework:
    - Belief: Doing homework will help improve my learning and grades
    - Values: Grades are important
    - Attitude: Homework is important to me
    - Behaviour: I do homework
- Commitments can change:
    - Nature of commitment – perhaps over time I enjoy learning less and less because of a bad prof or something. Then I'm just here because I need to
    - Commitment to whom – maybe I feel less commitment to DD overall and just to my friend group, or a completely different group of people entirely, or just feel like I'm some student.