

# Organizational Behavior (OB) B.Sc. IB CBS

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## Course Overview

The goal of the course is to provide students with an understanding of how organizations work based on fundamental principles from organization and management scholarship.

The objectives are that students will:

- 1) develop an ability to identify, analyze, and discuss important aspects and determinants of work behavior through an organizational perspective; and
- 2) apply theories from the course to competently solve problems, effect successful organizational change, and be more effective leaders and managers at an international scale.

In the first section of the course (lectures 1, 2, and 3), we will examine the building blocks of organizations (i.e., organizational structure and culture) and some usual problems that organizations run into given the way they are set up and function. This is meant to provide an overview of the “anatomy and physiology” of organizations.

In the second section (lecture 4, 5, and 6), we will use these foundational ideas to examine some key goals organizations aim to accomplish (e.g., change, learn, and innovate) and the challenges they may face in the process.

## Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate an understanding of concepts, models, and theories from organizational scholarship, including their premises, interconnections, and relevance for comprehending work behavior and management
- Identify challenges related to work and management through an organizational perspective
- Conduct an organizational analysis based on the course content
- Formulate effective organizational solutions to work and management challenges
- Present written discussion, analysis, and solutions based on organizational scholarship in a well-structured style reflective of academic conventions

## Course Format

The course will be delivered through a mix of lectures, workshops, and online Q&A meetings. Each week will start with a lecture that will introduce students to the main ideas related to organization analysis. Subsequently, we will have workshops that will provide students with an opportunity to exercise concepts, models, and theories vis-à-vis particular cases. Finally, there will be online Q&A sessions in which we will address emerging questions and provide feedback on the workshop discussions. Throughout the course, there will be a few guest speakers, including alumni from the IB program, who will elaborate on the topics analyzed in class and their link to practice.

## Examination

There are two examinations. Both are 48h open book written exams in which you will be asked to conduct an organizational analysis of a case. The first is a mid-term assignment with a 10% weight in the overall mark and a maximum of 2 pages. This is meant as an opportunity for you to practice and receive feedback. The second is a final exam with a 90% weight and a maximum of 10 pages. Both exams have an essay format.

## Readings

The short volume from Mary Jo Hatch (*Organizations: A very short introduction*) is the main textbook for the course, and it will be complemented with selected readings.

This syllabus lists all relevant readings. Specifically, it outlines the required readings, which must be read as they are integral for the course. It is essential that you read them before each session. In particular, the workshops will only work if you come prepared.

We also list additional readings which are not required—they are meant to provide general information on the course content. You may want to read them to get a deeper understanding of the topics we will discuss in the lectures and workshops.

Finally, we also listed selected episodes from the [Talking About Organizations Podcast](#), which is a podcast about key ideas in organizational scholarship.

We will post all readings on Canvas except the textbook (which students are asked to buy) and two cases from Harvard (workshops 2 and 4). For copyright regulations, these need to be bought by students. We will post the link for acquiring them.

## Course Program

Week 35	Lecture 1: How Organizations Work
	Workshop 1: Unpacking the Black Box of Organizations (CBS & Boeing)
Week 36	Online Q&A and Feedback
	Lecture 2: Understanding Organization Culture
Week 37	Workshop 2: Organization Culture in Practice (Wall Street)
	Lecture 3: Understanding Organization Structure
	Workshop 3: Organization Structure in Practice (ABB)
	Online Q&A and Feedback
Week 38	Mid-term exam (48h) // 15-17 September 2021
	Online Chat with BCG Consultants (20 September)
	Lecture 4: Managing Knowledge and Learning
Week 39	Workshop 4: Knowledge Management in Practice (NASA)
	Online Q&A and Feedback
Week 40	Lecture 5: Managing Change and Innovation
	Workshop 5: Organizational Change in Practice (Police and BLM)
Week 41	Practice Workshop: Organizational Challenges at Roskilde Festival 1
	Practice Workshop: Organizational Challenges at Roskilde Festival 2
Week 42	Online Q&A and Feedback
	Lecture 6: Wrap Up
Week 43	Online Q&A and Feedback
	Final Exam (48h) // 19-21 October 2021

## **Lecture 1: How Organizations Work**

This first lecture will introduce students to the overall objectives and structure of the work and provide a general introduction to the key concepts and perspectives in the study of organizational behavior.

### Required Readings

- Hatch. (2011). *Organizations: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 1 (What is Organization).
- Huising (2020). Can You Know Too Much About Your Organization? *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2019/12/can-you-know-too-much-about-your-organization>

### For further information (not required)

- Perrow, C. (1973). The short and glorious history of organizational theory. *Organizational Dynamics*, 2(1), 3-15.
- Huising, R. (2019). Moving off the map: how knowledge of organizational operations empowers and alienates. *Organization Science*, 30(5), 1054-1075.
- Massa, F. G., & O'Mahony, S. (2021). Order from Chaos: How Networked Activists Self-Organize by Creating a Participation Architecture. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 00018392211008880.

Podcast Episodes (not required, just for further information)

- Scientific Management: <https://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e01/>
- Human Relations: <https://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e09/>
- History of Organization Theory: <https://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e41/>

## **Workshop 1: Unpacking the Black Box of Organizations**

Cases: Copenhagen Business School & Boeing 737 Max Crisis

In this workshop, we will collectively conduct an organizational analysis of two organizations: CBS and Boeing. First, students will be asked to map the organizational elements of CBS (e.g., study boards and departments matrix structure; authority relations between top leaders, managers, and employees/students; division across departments and centers; etc.). Based on that, we will discuss some potential challenges which may emerge given the way the school is organized. Second, we will employ this understanding about challenges emerging from the way work is organized to investigate how some organizational characteristics of Boeing may have played a role in the Max 737 disaster.

### Required Readings: CBS Case

There is no single reading for this case. Students are asked to familiarize themselves with information about the school from the media and the school page

<http://100.cbs.dk>

<https://www.cbs.dk>

In addition, two sources of information about CBS should be considered in detail. First, the most recent Facts and Figures (2019) are available on: <https://www.cbs.dk/en/about-cbs/profile/facts-and-figures>. Second, a selection of extracts from the book "CBS: 100 years" will be made available on Canvas.

#### Required Readings: Boeing Case

For the case of Boeing, read the following articles:

- Boeing Built Deadly Assumptions Into 737 Max, Blind to a Late Design Change (<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/01/business/boeing-737-max-crash.html>)
- The Long-Forgotten Flight That Sent Boeing Off Course (<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/11/how-boeing-lost-its-bearings/602188/>)
- Boeing and the Importance of Encouraging Employees to Speak Up (<https://hbr.org/2019/05/boeing-and-the-importance-of-encouraging-employees-to-speak-up>)

### **Lecture 2: Understanding Organizational Culture**

This lecture will introduce the topic of organizational culture. We will focus on the origins of the concept and the many ways it has been understood and examined in organizations. We will also examine how culture works across different levels of an organization and how it has different layers. Finally, we will outline the relevance of understanding culture for managing employees, especially knowledge workers, building resilient organizations and safe workplaces.

#### Required Readings

- Hatch. (2011). *Organizations: A very short introduction* Oxford University Press. Chapter 3 (What does it mean to be an organization).
- Giorgi, S., Lockwood, C., & Glynn, M. A. (2015). The many faces of culture: Making sense of 30 years of research on culture in organization studies. *Academy of Management Annals*, 9(1), 1-54.

#### For further information (not required)

- Bierly III, P. E., & Spender, J. C. (1995). Culture and high-reliability organizations: The case of the nuclear submarine. *Journal of Management*, 21(4), 639-656.
- Rodrigues, S. B. (2006). The political dynamics of organizational culture in an institutionalized environment. *Organization Studies*, 27(4), 537-557.

#### Podcast Episodes

- Professions and Culture: <https://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e38/>
- Culture and Control: <https://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/49-engineered-culture-and-normative-control-gideon-kunda/>
- Culture and Reliability: <https://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e20/>

### **Workshop 2: Organization Culture in Practice**

Case: Wall Street

In this workshop, we will discuss how to understand the culture of Wall Street and how its culture is preserved with different artefacts, such as certain events, forms of interaction and the set-up of the organization. Finally, we will discuss the (im)possibility of managing culture from a top-down perspective. This workshop complements the previous one, analyzing a similar case from a different angle, and aims to show students how to analyze different organizational elements in the same case.

#### Required Readings

Ho, K. (2009). *Liquidated*. Duke University Press. Introduction + Chapter 1.

### **Lecture 3: Understanding Organization Structure**

This lecture will introduce the topic of organization structure. We will focus on the main dimensions and types of structure and how it works at different levels of an organization. We will also examine the connection of structure with some management goals such as coordination, control, and decision-making.

#### Required Readings

- Hatch. (2011). *Organizations: A very short introduction* Oxford University Press. Chapter 2 (What is the best way to organize).
- Mintzberg, H (1980): Structure in 5's: A Synthesis of the Research on Organization Design, *Management Science*, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 322-341

#### For further information (not required)

- Galbraith, J. R. (1974). Organization design: An information processing view. *Interfaces*, 4(3), 28-36.
- Baron, J. N., & Hannan, M. T. (2002). Organizational blueprints for success in high-tech start-ups: Lessons from the Stanford project on emerging companies. *California Management Review*, 44(3), 8-36.
- Annosi, M. C., Foss, N., & Martini, A. (2020). When agile harms learning and innovation: (And what can be done about it). *California Management Review*, 63(1), 61-80.

Podcast Episodes (not required, just for further information)

- Centralization and Decentralization: [www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e43/](http://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e43/)
- Bureaucracy: [www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e06/](http://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e06/)
- Group structure & worker engagement: [www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e34/](http://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e34/)
- Job Design & satisfaction: <https://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/77>

### **Workshop 3: Organization Structure in Practice**

Cases: Asea Brown Boveri (ABB) & Wall Street

In this workshop, we will analyze different formats of organization structure and the ways they may relate to particular tasks, goals, and managerial preferences.

First, we will examine the case of Asea Brown Boveri. More specifically, of the merge between Asea AB of Sweden and BBC Brown Boveri Ltd. of Switzerland. We will examine the potential ways in which the new organization can be designed and the challenge involved in aligning their structures in light of issues on centralization/decentralization, accountability, and the role of managers.

Second, we will examine the case from the financial sector with a focus on the struggles of a manager trying to re-organize the structure of a trading room. Together with workshop 3, which also focuses on a case from Wall Street but from a cultural perspective, this will serve to illustrate the relevance of focusing on different elements to develop a robust organizational analysis.

#### Required Readings

- Simons, Robert L., and Christopher A. Bartlett. (1992/2000). "Asea Brown Boveri." Harvard Business School Case 192-139.
- Beunza, D. (2019). Chapter 7. Performative Spirals. In *Taking the Floor* (pp. 120-145). Princeton University Press.

### **Lecture 4: Managing Knowledge and Learning**

This lecture marks the shift from the first to the second section, during which we will consider in more detail the typical issues organizations run into and the ways they attempt to deal with them.

In this lecture, we will focus on the challenges around managing knowledge and learning and the way organization structure and culture in this process. This has become most prevalent with the rise of knowledge work in the economy and the demands on organizations to increase their capacity to adjust and learn.

#### Required Readings

- Cook, S. D., & Brown, J. S. (1999). Bridging epistemologies: The generative dance between organizational knowledge and organizational knowing. *Organization Science*, 10(4), 381-400.
- Argote, L., Lee, S., & Park, J. (2020). Organizational learning processes and outcomes: major findings and future research directions. *Management Science*.

#### For further information (not required)

- Cook, S. D., & Yanow, D. (1993). Culture and organizational learning. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 2(4), 373-390.
- Swan, J., Scarbrough, H., & Newell, S. (2010). Why don't (or do) organizations learn from projects?. *Management Learning*, 41(3), 325-344.
- Newell, S. (2015). Managing knowledge and managing knowledge work: what we know and what the future holds. *Journal of Information Technology*, 30(1), 1-17.

Podcast Episodes (not required, just for further information)

- Knowledge Exploration & Exploitation: [www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e19/](http://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e19/)
- Organizational Learning: <https://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e42/>

## **Workshop 4: Managing Knowledge and Learning**

Case: NASA

In this workshop, we will discuss the challenges involved in managing knowledge. Specifically, retaining and transferring knowledge across space, time, and groups. We will start with a warmup exercise in which we will reflect on your "knowledge infrastructure" (see first reading below). That is, how IB students access different sources and types of knowledge. Then, we will examine the case of NASA and its challenge to transfer knowledge between projects and employees (second reading).

### **Require reading:**

- Nicolini, D., Korica, M., & Ruddle, K. (2015). Staying in the know. *MIT Sloan Management Review*. <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/staying-in-the-know/>
- Leonard, D., & Myers, C. (2016). Transferring knowledge between projects at NASA JPL (A). *Harvard Business School Case*, 917. <https://www.thecasecentre.org/products/view?id=139032>

## **Lecture 5: Managing Change and Innovation**

This lecture will focus on a crucial challenge for organizations: change and innovation. As the environment of organizations shifts with new stakeholders and demands, organizations are called upon to transform how they function and develop new ideas, products, and services. There is also pressure for considering social goals, which require, in turn, altering how most organizations usually operate. In this lecture, we will discuss how organizations change and innovate, paying particular attention to the structural and cultural dimensions in achieving such goals.

### **Required Readings**

- Hatch. (2011). *Organizations: A very short introduction* Oxford University Press. Chapter 5 (How does organizing happen).
- Van de Ven, A. H., & Poole, M. S. (1995). Explaining development and change in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 20(3), 510-540.
- Hargadon, A., & Sutton, R. I. (2000). Building an innovation factory. *Harvard business review*, 78(3), 157-157.

### **For further information (not required)**

- Dougherty, D. (1992). Interpretive barriers to successful product innovation in large firms. *Organization Science*, 3(2), 179-202.
- Lifshitz-Assaf, H. (2018). Dismantling knowledge boundaries at NASA: The critical role of professional identity in open innovation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 63(4), 746-782.
- Sandhu, S., & Kulik, C. T. (2019). Shaping and being shaped: How organizational structure and managerial discretion co-evolve in new managerial roles. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 64(3), 619-658.

Podcast Episodes (not required, just for further information)

Organizational Innovation: <https://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/73>

### **Workshop 5: Managing Change and Innovation**

Case: Changing the US Police in the Aftermath of Black Lives Matter

In this workshop, we will examine the challenges involved in changing the police departments in the US in light of issues of systematic racism and the use of force in some communities. Specifically, we will examine the structural and cultural barriers for transforming the ethos and routines of police work to improve relations with citizens, especially minorities, and monitor and censor misbehavior.

#### Required Readings

- Van Maanen, J. (1975). Police socialization: A longitudinal examination of job attitudes in an urban police department. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 207-228.
- How Cities Lost Control of Police Discipline (New York Times)  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/22/us/police-misconduct-discipline.html>
- What the data say about police brutality and racial bias — and which reforms might work (Nature)  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01846-z>

#### Further information (not required)

- Degnegaard, R., & Waldorff, S. B. (2013). The Police. In *Strategies in Action: A Case Collection* (pp. 101-122). Samfundslitteratur.

### **Special Workshop: Organizing the Roskilde Festival**

This special workshop is an opportunity to practice all ideas from the course in a real-world case. Together with one of the organizers of the Roskilde Festival, we will discuss some of the challenges faced by the festival related to managing knowledge transfer; maintaining collaboration among organizers; and recruiting, retaining, and coordinating volunteers.

We will provide information about the festival, and one of its organizers will give a presentation to provide a general description of the case. We also recommend everyone to familiarize themselves with the history and characteristics of the festival by searching for information about it online. The below text is meant to provide a general example of thinking about festivals from an organizational perspective.

#### Required Readings

- Chen, K. K. (2009). *Enabling creative chaos: The organization behind the Burning Man event*. University of Chicago Press. (Chapter 1)

## **Lecture 6: Wrap Up**

This final lecture will provide a recap for the course and pull some of its key threads and illustrations of the relevance of organizational analysis in different contexts. We will devote some space for any emerging themes and questions students may want to revisit or further explore—to be discussed in class during the course.

### Required Readings

- Hatch. (2011). *Organizations: A very short introduction* Oxford University Press. Chapter 6 (Where do we go from here).

Podcast Episodes (not required, just for further information)

- OB & Modern Time (Movie) ([www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e53/](http://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e53/))
- OB & 12 Angry Men (Movie) (<https://www.talkingaboutorganizations.com/e10/>)