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Robin FINCHAM, Peter S. RHODES : *The Individual, Work and Organization. Behavioural Studies in Business and Management Students*. London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988, 336 pp., ISBN 0-297-79139-7

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precludes such measures. A third option is to make it clear to employers that they will be held accountable for failures of self-regulation by regulatory authorities. Somewhat paradoxically, it may be that effective self-regulation by requires stronger external regulation.

In sum, this study makes it clear that self-regulation is not a panacea and that its effectiveness is influenced by a broad range of general and specific factors. If they cannot be manipulated in ways that produce the necessary levels of motivation and capacity, then the viability of self-regulation as a strategy to reduce death and injury in the workplace is in doubt. The analytic framework developed by the authors and the insights they generate will be of interest to all who are concerned with self-regulation generally and occupational health and safety regulation in particular.

**Eric TUCKER**

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**The Individual, Work and Organization. Behavioural Studies in Business and Management Students**, by Robin Fincham, and Peter S. Rhodes, London, U.K. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988, pp. xiv + 336, ISBN 0-297-79139-7

This is an interdisciplinary perspective ranging across individual, group, occupational, and organizational levels of analysis. Individual chapters cover the acquisition of skill, stress, individual differences among employees, needs at work and their satisfaction, social skills, group processes, inter-group behaviour, leadership styles and training, alternative work design, the control of work, emerging forms of work organization, the impact of technology, workplace resistance and conflict, the labour market, professionalism, patterns of female employment and adaptation of women to work, the effect of microelectronics, bureaucracy and work control, performance, power and conflict, decision-making.

The theoretical basis of learning is focused either on external conditions (stimulus-response) or internal conditions (cognitive processes). Generalization and discrimination both are much valid in the conditioning process. Organizations are quite often so shaped that an adequate work motivation becomes impossible: people are misinformed what actually counts in rewards, hard work is punished, group incentives weaken the link between individual performance and reward, the role of financial rewards is exaggerated, the desirable performance is rather punished than rewarded, contingencies are unclear, rewards are insufficient.

In the process of skill acquisition people develop a mental model of the systems they interact with. They react to the systems according to the perception of constancies, invariants in events, and the growing selectivity of attention. Constructing models of the environment allows to categorize and store inputs as well as it reduces the demand on memory (short term or long term). The development of human skills is a very important factor of improving organization. The much limited scope of skills empoverishes much the perspective of people and their ability to adapt to innovations. It is difficult to reinforce human eagerness to do things without much focus on skill learning.

The lack of fit between a person and the environment appears as stress. The boundary-spanning roles are particularly vulnerable in this respect. People quite often feel to be locked into roles and do not know how to overcome this oppression. The decisional stress leads only in some cases to a careful search for relevant information followed by a thorough appraisal of the alternative (vigilance); it is not unusual to dwell on the worst possible alternatives.

People who feel competent (self-efficacy) are able to handle stress much better. People differ much in their proneness to stress-related health risks. It is worth to mention here that there are various types of personalities distinguished according to the empirically verified dimensions. For example, introversion-extraversion, neuroticism-stability, psychotism (Eysenck). Cattell has distinguished the following traits: reserved/outgoing, more or less intelligent, humble/assertive, emotional/stable, sober/happy go lucky, expedient/conscientious, shy/venturesome, tough minded/tender minded, trusting/suspicious, practical/imaginative, forthright/shrewd, self assured/apprehensive, conservative/experimenting, group-dependent/self-sufficient, undisciplined/controlled, relaxed/tense.

One of the factors much helpful in the prediction of behaviour is the internal or external focus of control. Another factor is the need for achievement (as opposite to the fear of success). Intelligent functioning of the individual depends on the speed of reactions, quick choice, ability to retrieve information, and the speed of reasoning. «Intelligence seems merely to set a minimum level below which entry into an occupation is difficult. Above this level, however, performance in a job is unrelated to intelligence» (p. 69). The organizational quality of work relationships seems to be much more important than intelligence of the employees or even of the manager.

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**La QVT une voie vers l'excellence**, par Pierre R. Turcotte, Montréal, Les Éditions Agence d'Arc inc., 1988, 276 pp., ISBN 289022-134-2 et ISBN 2-7624-0066-x

Dans un monde fortement dominé par les préoccupations économiques, comme c'est le cas depuis la dernière récession, le concept d'excellence fait partie du discours quotidien au point que les gestionnaires sont incités à développer des axes d'excellence pour leur organisation. Les experts en management parlent de la nécessité d'une culture et d'une passion de l'excellence comme condition de réussite entrepreneuriale dans le contexte inexorable de la mondialisation des marchés et de l'internationalisation de la concurrence. L'ouvrage de Peters et Waterman (**Le prix de l'excellence**) reste le point d'encrage de cette tendance.

La réflexion que nous propose Pierre Turcotte sur l'amélioration des conditions de travail (amélioration du travail en soi et amélioration de l'environnement psychosocial) comme condition de réalisation de l'excellence organisationnelle, s'inscrit dans cette optique. Pour ce faire, il passe en revue les différents aspects du travail tels que l'organisation du travail, les conditions de travail, le climat organisationnel, la participation, la santé au travail et la productivité. En détail, l'ouvrage est réparti en sept chapitres dont voici un bref aperçu.

Dans le premier chapitre, l'auteur présente l'évolution des formes d'organisation du travail en expliquant les liens de causalité qui ont prévalu à leur apparition. Il s'agit, en quelque sorte, d'une introduction pour mieux comprendre le mouvement de QVT. Le second chapitre porte plus spécifiquement sur le courant de qualité de vie au travail, son origine, sa définition et les dimensions d'un programme de QVT. Le chapitre trois concerne la relation entre les facteurs organisationnels et la QVT. L'auteur précise que ces éléments peuvent aider l'organisation à réaliser ses objectifs de croissance, de profitabilité, de productivité, de qualité totale, etc. dans la mesure où ils sont imprégnés d'une qualité de vie au travail. Les deux chapitres subséquents étayent davantage le concept de QVT en mettant en relief l'importance de la participation et de la communication comme l'ossature et le coeur de la QVT. L'auteur analyse également la notion de la santé dans une perspective de développement organisationnel. Le sixième