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Business Psychology and Organisational Behaviour: A Student's Handbook, 4th edition
E McKenna

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How does one review a book like this? A fourth edition, a student's handbook and seven hundred pages long (eight if you count the glossary, references and index). On a practical level the book is split into five main parts covering different perspectives, the individual, group and organisation as well a section on some of the issues within business psychology. Each section is then split into chapters covering specific areas and topics. Each chapter also follows a similar pattern; at the start the learning objectives are clearly laid out, with an abstract and contents sections at the start and a summary, series of review/elaboration questions and further reading at the end. Within the chapters various "side bars" either give additional information or provide case studies to give context) Being an updated edition, the book also moves us into the 21st century with regards to models and theories and looks at the progress made over the last few years, whilst still covering the "standard" theories.

Not having come across the earlier editions of this book (my MSc. having used a couple of different books to cover the same subject areas) I can only judge it on its own merits rather than comparing (and contrasting – sorry the student in me came out again!) with earlier editions. As a student's handbook it does appear to cover everything you would want and need to help you through an organisational psychology course. Certainly within my role of management training there are some useful examples, models and information that will find its way into some of my development sessions (from communications, influencing, through interview and recruitment to team building, change management and organisational strategic development, etc.).

In many ways with a book like this, its strength is also its weakness. As a student handbook it has to provide a thorough overview of its topic area, yet to be of any lasting use it has to also provide enough depth of information. This edition has a very good, comprehensive breadth of information and subject matter and at a depth that will enable most, if not all, students to fully understand the main facets of organisational/business psychology. For everyone else it has enough pointers and broad coverage to act as a memory jogger/reminder to be useful (albeit from a perspective of one of many assets to dip into and out of when designing an intervention).

It also compares well with the books I used in terms of content and style and will, I'm sure, become a required text for some students.

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