

## Exam in PSY2405 – Introduction to Work Psychology, Bachelor, Spring 2023

### Course code: PSY2405

On the following pages, you find this year's exam for the Introduction to Work Psychology Course. You will see a case and six tasks under it. Please read the instructions carefully. The first task is compulsory, and it is required to choose two other tasks from the remaining (tasks 2-6). You will be responding to three tasks in total. The compulsory task is scored up to 40 points and each selective one is up to 30 points. The exam will be graded on 100 (40+30+30) points in total. Please note some formal issues:

- If you have **formal** questions during the exam period, post these questions in the corresponding discussion in Canvas. They will be answered once a day during the exam period.
- The maximum length of your exam assignment is 3000 words. Please report the word count on the front page of the assignment.
- Calibri font (11 font size) with 1,5 line spacing and normal margins should be used in the exam.
- Exams can be written in English, Norwegian, or any other Nordic language.
- Note your candidate number that you find in StudentWeb (do not use your name) and the course code on the front page of your assignment.
- Please submit the exam assignment through Inspera within the indicated deadline.
- It is not required for this exam to refer to scientific work other than the textbook. The use of other sources is welcomed. You must use your own words only and not copy-paste from the textbook or any other resources.
- If references (other than the textbook are used), please use APA-style for referencing: <http://www.apastyle.org>
- The case and the names on the case are fictional and the information given in this assignment is sufficient. Tasks do not require a further search of the company or its environment.
- A brief outline of the criteria that evaluators will use for grading the exams is shared in this document. A more detailed grading scheme will be posted on Canvas after the grading is completed.

## CASE

In response to the changes in the business environment, ACDC, an electronics company in a growth stage, has been going through a transformation process that reshaped the strategy, structure, and culture of the organization. This change also reflected many aspects of the work such as job design, incentive systems, and leadership styles. HRM professionals in ACDC realized high levels of intention to quit among employees and an increasing turnover rate after the transformation. In an attempt to diagnose and solve problems, they initiated exit interviews, where employees voluntarily provide information and opinions about their experience in the organization and why they quit. The case below integrates pieces from an exit interview where an employee explains why she resigned. Please read the case and respond to the tasks in accordance with the case (by following the instructions). The case is fictional (including the name of the firm) and designed to be suitable for PSY2405.

“I didn’t sign up for this. This is not working for me anymore. Four years ago, when I started to work at ACDC, the structure was more like a start-up, we were smaller, freer, and more flexible. There was more trust in employees. I could choose the way I do my job and had more responsibility. Things were much more fun and colorful. We could easily team up in different combinations following the needs, and each time I could have different responsibilities to keep me engaged and with different teammates. Now, I feel like a lonely robot, programmed for a simple task and still controlled by the manager every minute. I don’t feel that I have a real contribution, I am doing what I am told, and I cannot see the big picture. I don’t feel listened to or considered in any decision-making process anymore. All I am given is “what” and I am far away to know “why”. How can a robot feel meaningful? Things weren’t like this before. I had a wider array of duties, and I wasn’t feeling bored at all. When the company got bigger and bigger, we needed more employees and more rules. In exchange for less ambiguity and uncertainty, we gave up on our flexibility and freedom. Before, we didn’t need to document everything, our words were enough, and we were trusting each other. We could solve everything with face-to-face communication. Now, we write, sign, and stamp everything and create piles of papers. We did not need a dress code before and I still don’t see a need, but I have five formal notices for not wearing a tie. Nobody yet talked to me about it to convince me. I can understand that the market is more stable today and we have less fluctuating customer expectations, still, I cannot get what these have to do with my tie.

Before, our motto was “fail early, learn early, and create better”, and we were encouraged to make mistakes. I haven’t heard that motto for a long time. Now, everybody is afraid of getting out of the box as we have seen many of us being punished for doing that. We used to tear each other’s ideas apart, now all you hear is silence during the meetings. Also, I admit that I am not the kindest person and I like to remain assertive and voice up when things are not right. Loyalty, harmony, and obedience are not my best qualities. And they were not needed when I was hired. Deviations from the standard are not

welcomed anymore. We exchanged creativity and personal development with stability and routine. Our focus on effectiveness and quality is replaced with efficiency orientation, cost cuts, and “zero defect” policies. The old slogan on the wall “creativity for the best” is just a decoration now.

During this metamorphosis, they also changed my manager. She may be the same person, but her behaviors aren't. Her software changed. She used to spend more time on my professional development, encourage me to question, learn and try new things and even support me personally. I was looking up to her and targeting to be an inspiring leader like her. Now she is distant and controlling and only takes action when we are not doing things according to the book. She doesn't have time for anything anymore as she is always occupied with bureaucracy and control. I sometimes intentionally make mistakes to get feedback from her. She doesn't care for the better, but only the worse, she reacts only when things are below the standard.

I am not happy with the new way of things. I love using my imagination, which was why they hired me, but there is no room for innovation in my job anymore. Everything is about doing the regular, as told, and on time. I am not a very organized, punctual, or tidy person. I cannot fit in strict regulations, deadlines, or meetings where titles are speaking instead of persons. Now, they want me to follow a strict routine. I used to exploit my conceptual skills, imagination, job crafting, and communication skills, but now I feel that those skills are depleting as my tasks no longer require them. I like to be able to chat with people and enjoy their company while doing my job. But in this new order, we are working in silos and see only the same few people.

In the last four quarters, they constantly linked my poor performance with a need for basic training, I have taken the same routine training three times, and nothing changed. They don't see that I could perform much better before, so it shouldn't be a lack of competence, right? I would perform if I would like to, but I don't have any reason or motivation to do so. The only reward they come up with to motivate me is promotion. They always mention that if I can achieve my performance goals, they will make me the team leader. First, there is no team, we are just a bunch of people working separately and happened to be in the same room. I barely can talk to my teammates because of the way we work, and I don't see many of the people I used to see every day. Second, they still cannot realize that I don't want to have any managerial positions. I don't want to be the one who tells others to behave in a way that they don't like to do. I wouldn't exchange it for their love and friendship. Also, I would not be able to bear that much stress. I know myself; I am not good with negativity and harnessing my anger. In addition, there are already too many managers, supervisors and so to control everything again and again. We used to have much fewer managers and layers. And last, I don't feel like accomplishing anything when I get to be the mediocre robot they want me to be. I would create some difference or reach high standards instead. I used to be able to feel that I was demonstrating my difference, but now there is no room or reward for creating a difference.”

## TASKS AND INSTRUCTIONS

There are six tasks listed below. The first task (T1) is compulsory, and you are required to choose two other tasks from the list (T2-T6). In total, the exam demands you to complete and submit three tasks. You should interpret the case against the background of theory and knowledge acquired throughout the course. Theories and concepts that are relevant to the tasks should be briefly explained in your own words (without going too much into detail). Your responses should be built on theory and knowledge, and you should relate to the case and what is demanded in the tasks. The evaluation criteria include both effective usage (and explanation) of theory and knowledge acquired in the course and interpretation of the case in light of this knowledge (please see the grading section below).

T1-) Describe the organizational structure and organizational culture of ACDC before and after the change, by giving examples from the case and using and explaining the right concepts and taxonomies (e.g., elements of an organization structure, competing values model) included in the course and the textbook. Discuss what kind of changes in the business environment and organizational strategy may have led to such transformation.

T2-) Describe the personality of the employee by using (and explaining) the big five personality taxonomy and giving examples from the case. Person-job fit refers to the compatibility between the employee and the job regarding the match between the characteristics of the job and the person. Person-organization fit is about the consonance and harmony between the organizational attributes and personal aspects. In light of these definitions, discuss person-job fit and person-organization fit considering the personality of the employee and the characteristics of the job and the culture and structure of the organization. Discuss which personality aspects would better suit the current requirements of the job and the organization and provide recommendations for selection.

T3-) Evaluate the current job design by using (and explaining) the job characteristics theory and giving examples from the case. Discuss solutions to provide a more motivating job design.

T4-) How did the leadership style of the manager of the employee change? Discuss the change in the leadership style using (and explaining) relevant contemporary leadership theories and examples from the case. Relate the described leadership styles with the requirements of organizational strategy, structure, and culture before and after the change.

T5-) Evaluate the needs of the employee by using (and explaining) McClelland's theory of needs and by giving examples from the case. Discuss how incentives and motivation tools can be better designed following these needs.

T6-) Discuss the motivation process of the employee by using (and explaining) the expectancy theory. In which relationship (step) does the employee have a problem? How does the organization misdiagnose her motivation processes (according to the expectancy theory)? What would you recommend to the organization to have the right actions and exploit the expectancy theory better?

## GRADING

The first task is compulsory, and it is scored up to 40 points. Other tasks (2-6) worth 30 points each (you will choose two of them). In total, you will be responding to three tasks. Submission of any additional (more than three) tasks will not be graded. The exam will be graded on 100 points in total. Please be careful in responding fully to all parts (components) of the tasks. Graders will evaluate each task on a detailed guide under its components. The criteria and scores for grading are given below. This is a summary of the total 100 points. A more detailed grading scheme (including each component under the tasks) will be posted on Canvas after the grading is completed.

### Criteria for evaluation

Criteria	Score (1 <sup>st</sup> task)	Score (tasks 2-6)	Score (tasks 2-6)	TOTAL
<b>Effective use and explanation of knowledge, concepts, and theories:</b> Is the response well-linked and supported by the theory/knowledge acquired in the course? Does the student explain the concepts in his/her own words effectively (and in accordance with the case and contents of the course)? Does the student explain, and use the concepts right in accordance with the case?	14	10	10	34
<b>Linking the case with the knowledge (interpretation of the case):</b> Does the student respond to the questions following the case? Is the answer clear and well supported by the case? Does the response include sufficient and right examples from the case?	24	18	18	60
<b>Structure and clarity:</b> Is the answer easy to follow and well-structured?	2	2	2	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

The total nominal score will be indicative of the final letter grade following the table below:

Scale	Grade Description	Grade
90.00 - 100.00	Excellent	A
80.00 - 89.99	Very Good	B
70.00 - 79.99	Good	C
60 – 69.99	Satisfactory	D
50 -59.99	Sufficient	E
0.00 - 49.99	Fail	F