

Chapter Review

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Work Structuring, Job Design and Business Process Re-engineering

Objectives...

- 1 discuss the strengths and weaknesses of early ideas on the design of work
- 4 list job characteristics thought critical to job satisfaction
- 5 list the main benefits of job enrichment
- 6 evaluate the business process reengineering approach
- 2 identify the main approaches to the design of work
- 3 evaluate the factors likely to influence job/ work design

Key Terms

Business Process Reengineering (BPR)	The redesign of business processes in an effort to reduce costs, increase efficiency and effectiveness, and improve quality. BPR is characterized as radical rather than incremental in its approach to change and broad rather than narrow in its organization impact.
Division of labour	An approach to job design that involves dividing a task down into relatively small parts, each of which is accomplished by a single person.
job design	Involves determining the specific job tasks and responsibilities, the work environment, and the methods by which the tasks will be carried out to meet the goals of operations
Job Enlargement	The horizontal increasing of job responsibility, ie by the addition of tasks of a similar nature to be distinguished from job enrichment.
job enrichment	The process of vertically increasing the responsibilities of a job, by the addition of motivators, eg more discretion, improved job interest etc.
Job satisfaction	An attitude or internal state which is associated with the working environment and working experiences. In recent years it has been closely associated with improved job design and work organisation and the quality of working life.
Job simplification	An approach to job design based on a minimization of the range of tasks into the smallest convenient size to make the job efficient and cost effective.

30. Designing and redesigning jobs is not easy. Changes in one part of a job hierarchy are bound to bring about changes elsewhere. Change maybe welcome in one group, but not in another. This is likely to cause tensions between groups. Individuals may initially welcome change, but then feel less enthusiastic if related job conditions (pay, re-training etc) do not meet their needs. Supervisory staff may feel particularly threatened by any form of job redesign, but will expect to benefit ultimately. However, when work can be redesigned effectively, the rewards are twofold. For individuals, there is the opportunity to find personally challenging and satisfying work. For firms, there is the opportunity to achieve lower costs, better quality and improved productivity through a more effective match between the needs of people and the requirements of technology. The approach to work structuring and job design embodied in some aspects of Business Process Re-engineering focuses on key business processes rather than on tasks and operational structures in designing work. This may lead to job losses for some, but also to more interesting and challenging jobs for others. Organisations employing BPR may enjoy reduced costs of production and improved customer relations.