INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOR

Concept of Interpersonal Behavior
Interpersonal Behavior is basically how "two persons" interact in any setting. It is extremely important in organizations to strengthen interpersonal relationships. When at a basic level, that is, between two people the relationship is strong and pleasant; it will lead to proper behavior. This behavior will result in productive work which is ultimately what organizations are looking for. At the employee level if trust and passion for work exists, the unity between them can achieve great results. These results would be in terms of reduction in the time lag, better quality work, and excellence in working procedures.

The individual's behavior affects and is affected by the behavior of others. Such effect is reflected by change in perception, learning, personality, motivation.

Interpersonal behavior can be of two types: Co-operative or Conflicting.

1) **Interpersonal Co-operative Behavior**: When the interaction between two persons is mutually gratifying, it is co-operative behavior. In this case, both persons are engaged in complementary transactions.

   Out of this interaction, both persons get satisfied over the objectives of mutual interaction. Conditions necessary for co-operative interpersonal behavior are mutual trust and respect, concern for each other needs, and interaction with complementary ego states.

2) **Interpersonal Conflicting Behavior**: Because of several reasons like personality differences, different value systems, interest's conflict, role ambiguity etc. interpersonal conflict may arise in the organization. This type of behavior may not be functional for the organization.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Interpersonal relationship refers to the relationships that exist among people. Interpersonal competence refers to the degree to which one is accurately aware of his impact on others and of the impact of others on him. It is a person’s ability to engage in any mutually helpful relationship. A manager's role in an organization can be viewed as a central role surrounded by at least three types of roles: superiors, colleagues, and subordinates.

Besides, these three types of role, he may have to interact with a lot of other people of different positions: consumers, suppliers, people from regulatory agencies, general public, etc. Interactions with different interest groups demand different types of specific skills and competencies. Possession and understanding of these skills may not guarantee successful human relations, but it can increase one’s interpersonal sensitivity and help to take appropriate action to improve relationships. But any attempt to improve interpersonal competence must begin with knowing oneself more accurately i.e., Self Concept. It refers to the attitude a person has towards himself or herself. A person’s self concept is a reflection of all his past experiences with other persons and includes characteristics that distinguish him from others.
Factors Influencing Interpersonal Relationship

1) **Self Concept:** Self concept is one’s concept about oneself or a through description of oneself. It has three components:
   - **Beliefs:** The belief components represent the content of one’s self.
   - **Feelings:** The feeling component about one’s self is reflected in feeling of self-worth or in general as ‘I’m O.K.’ or ‘I’m not O.K.’.
   - **Behaviors:** The behavioral component is the tendency to act towards one’s self in a self-depreciating or self-enhancing manner.

The mechanisms used to stabilize and make congruent interpersonal interactions are as follows:
   - **Misperception:** When the actual expectations of others are not congruent with one’s self concept or behavior, one may simply misperceive how others see one-self.
   - **Selective Evaluation of Others:** One maximizes congruency by favorably evaluating those who behave congruently towards one’s self and devaluates those who do not.
   - **Selective Evaluation of Self:** One maximizes congruency by altering the values placed on various aspects of one’s self concept so that the various aspects that are in agreement with the perception of one’s own behavior and those of others are most highly evaluated.
   - **Selective Interaction:** One may choose to interact with those persons with whom one can most readily establish congruent relationships.
   - **Response Evocation:** One may intentionally or unintentionally, behave in a way that result in other's behaving towards one self in a congruent fashion. A person in interaction controls the ones provided to others to ensure that he or she will be categorized in certain ways and not in any unexpected way.

2) **Interpersonal Attraction:** The greater the importance of an “object” for two individuals, the greater the attraction between the individuals. An “object” may be physical object, symbol, the other person's self concept or to one’s own self concept.

3) **Interpersonal Needs:** The interpersonal needs are important for the initiation, development and sustenance of dyadic relationship which has lot of relevance for achievement of organization objectives. Schutz has identified the following three interpersonal needs:
   - **Need for Affection:** The need for love and affection.
   - **Need for Control:** The need for control and power.
   - **Need for Inclusion:** The need for interaction and association as member of a group.

4) **Interpersonal Orientation:** Depending upon the orientation of individuals, three interpersonal styles have been identified and these are:
   - Tough battler,
   - Friendly helper; and
   - Objective thinker.

   Each style reflects behavior that, in varying degrees, is effective in some situations and ineffective in others.

5) **Miscellaneous Factors:** The miscellaneous factors influencing dyadic relationships include communication, reciprocity, basic dimensions (i.e., “Dominance-Rejection” or “Acceptance-Rejection”) rewards, norms and rules, etc.

Developing Interpersonal Relationship/Trust

Developing good and enduring relationship with others requires patience, time and effort. Thus, the development of successful relationships takes time. Developing interpersonal relationship involves four stages:

1) **Forming First Impression:** First impression, though inaccurate, are lasting impressions. Initial impressions do not guarantee long-term relationships but they are essential for entering into enduring relationships with others. First impressions are lasting because they influence the way in which people see subsequent data about the perceived object or person. So, whether or not first impressions are correct, it is important for us to make favorable impressions on other people. This is especially important in case of job interviews.

2) **Developing Mutual Expectation:** When people are mutually impressed, they are more likely to enter into a long-term relationship. When this happens, they develop certain expectations about each other. In work organizations, managers may expect new employees to be competent, productive, reliable and loyal and to conform to organizational norms. New employees, on the other hand, expect their superiors to be fair, supportive and considerate of their needs. Unless both the parties develop realistic expectations, the
Interpersonal Skills (Chapter 2.3)

A relationship becomes superficial and less meaningful. The process of working out mutual expectations involves a series of exchanges and adjustments to each other’s expectations. A set of mutual expectations that is worked out and understood by the parties is called a psychological contract. (An effective interpersonal relationship cannot develop and be maintained unless the participants are willing to honor their psychological contracts.)

3) **Honoring Psychological Contract:** Each party expects the other to be faithful in the relationship, not to take arbitrary actions and to be honest with him/her. There will, of course, be times when some of these expectations cannot be fully satisfied. But, when this happens, each party must reassure that the other is acting in good faith.

4) **Developing Trusts and Influence:** The result of meeting the psychological contract is an increased level of trust and influence. When the parties to the contract try to fulfill each other’s expectations, the relationship produces mutual trust and favorable sentiments. The more satisfactory the association becomes, the greater the influence the parties have on each other. Since the relationship is fulfilling, the parties will continue to rely on it to satisfy their needs. This dependency permits them to exert influence on each other.

**Understanding Interpersonal Relationship**

Behavioral scientists recommend the use of Johari Window and Transactional Analysis (TA) to understand inter-personal relations in the organization.

**Increasing Interpersonal Awareness: The Johari Window**

The Johari Window is a conceptual model for studying interpersonal awareness. It was developed by Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham. It is a schematic model that shows how people expose themselves to others and receive feedback from others in their interpersonal relationships. The Johari window diagram (named by combining the first few letters of their names) looks like this.

This model is made up of four different quadrants that together represent total person in relation to others on the basis of awareness of behavior, feeling and motivation. Each quadrant is defined as follows:

1) **The Open Self:** The open quadrant refers to states about an individual such as behaviors, feelings and motives that he knows and is willing to share with others. Sometimes, in a relationship, the individual is straightforward, open and sharing. It is clear to both what he is doing, how do is feeling and what his motives are?

2) **Bind Self:** It reflects behavior, feelings and motives known to other parties but not to self. In other words, in this form of interaction, the individual knows about others but not about himself or herself. The individual irritates others unintentionally. Although the latter could tell the former about this aspect, they may be afraid of hurting his or her feelings.

3) **The Hidden Self:** The hidden quadrant refers to states about the individual known to him or her but not known to others. This is private and only the person concerned knows what is happening. The hidden self is within the vision of the individual but he does not want to share it with others. People learn to hide many feelings and ideas right from their childhood.

4) **The Unknown Self:** The unknown quadrant refers to states that neither the individual nor other people know about him. The unknown self is mysterious. Many times, motives and feelings go very deep and no one, including the person concerned knows about these. People often experience these parts of life in dreams or in deep rooted fears or compulsions. These acts, feelings, and motives remain vague and unclear to people until they allow them to surface.

**Transactional Analysis (TA)**

Transactional Analysis (TA) offers a model of personality and the dynamics of self and its relationship to others that makes possible a clear and meaningful discussion of behavior.

TA refers to a method of analyzing and understanding interpersonal behavior. When people interact, there is social transaction in which one person responds to another. The study of these transactions between people is called Transactional Analysis.
TA was originally developed by Eric Berne for Psychotherapy in 1950. He observed in his patients that often it was as if several different people were inside each person. He also observed that these various ‘selves’ transmitted with people in different ways. Later on, its application to ordinary interactions was popularized by Berne, Harries, and Jongeward. TA involves analysis of transactions, structural analysis (ego states) script analysis and games analysis.

**Objective of TA**
The objective of TA is to provide better understanding of how people relate to each other, so that they may develop improved communication and human relationships.

**Ego States**
According to Berne, people interact with each other from one of the three psychological positions, or behavioral patterns, known as ego states. Thus, ego states are a person’s way of thinking, feeling, and behaving at any time. These ego states are:

1) Parent (Exteropsychic)
2) Adult (Neopsychic)
3) Child (Archaopsychic)

1) **Parent Ego (Exteropsychic):** The parent ego state incorporates the attitudes and behaviors of all emotionally significant people who serve as parent figure above when an individual was a child. Characteristics of a person acting with the parent ego include being over protective, distant, dogmatic, indispensable and upright. Physical and verbal clues that someone is acting with the parent ego include the wagging finger to show displeasure, reference to lows and rules, an reliance on ways that were successful in the past.

There can be two types of parent ego states nurturing and critical.

i) **Nurturing Parent ego** state reflects nurturing behavior not only towards children but also to other people in interaction.

ii) **Critical Parent ego** state shows critical and evaluative behavior in interaction with others.

Each individual has his unique parent ego state which is likely to be a mixture of helpfulness and hurtfulness.

2) **Adult Ego (Neopsychic):** Adult ego state is based upon reasoning, seeking and providing information. Person interacting with adult ego views people as equal, worthy, and responsible human beings. It is based on rationality. The adult is characterized by logical thinking and reasoning. This ego state can be identified by verbal and physical signs which include thoughtful concentration and factual discussion.

3) **Child Ego (Archaopsychic):** Child ego state reflects early childhood conditions and experience perceived by individuals in their early years of life, that is, before the social birth of an individual say, up to the age of five years. Characteristics of child ego include creativity, conformity, depression, anxiety dependence, fear, and hate. Physical and verbal clues that person is acting in the child ego are silent compliance, attention seeking, temper tantrums, giggling and nervousness. The child ego is characterized by non-logical and immediate actions which result in immediate satisfaction.

There are three parts of child ego: Natural, Adaptive and Rebellious.

i) **Natural Child:** The natural child is affectionate, impulsive, and sensuous and does what come naturally. However, he is also fearful, self-indulgent, self-centered and aggressive and may emerge in many unpleasant roles.

ii) **Adaptive Child:** The adaptive child is the trained one and he is likely to what parents insist on, and sometimes learns to feel not O.K. The adopted child when overtly inhibited, often becomes the troubled part of the personality.

iii) **Rebellion Child:** The rebellion child experiences anger, fear and frustration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral Responses with Different Ego States</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent Ego</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rules and laws</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do’s and don’ts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Truths</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrating</td>
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Kinds of Transaction

A transaction is a basic unit of social interaction. It consists of an exchange of words and behavior between two persons. The transaction is routed from ego states. Depending on the ego states of persons involved in transactions, there may be four types of transactions – complementary, crossed, ulterior and gallows transaction.

1) Complementary Transactions or Parallel Transactions: A transaction is complementary when the stimulus and response patterns from one ego state to another are parallel. This is complementary because the stimulus gets the expected response. In such a case, both persons are satisfied and communication is complete. If a supervisor behaves with worker as parent to child the worker behaves as a child to parent. This is parallel transaction because the response is as expected. There can be nine complementary transactions. They are:

i) Adult-Adult Transactions: The manager in the adult ego state tries to reason out issues, clarifies and informs employees of issues, and has concern for facts and figures and human needs. His life position is ‘I am O.K. you are O.K’. This is an ideal transaction. Complementary transactions in these ego states are very effective because both persons are acting in a rational manner. Adult-adult transactions may be presented in the figure aside:

![Figure: Adult-Adult Transaction]

ii) Adult-Parent Transaction: In adult-parent transaction, while the manager attempts to use the information he has processed, the employee in the parent ego prefers to use clichês and rules of the past. The employee tries to control and dominate the manager by using the parent ego. This transaction style can be effective only on a temporary basis.

iii) Adult-Child Transaction: Adult-child interaction can be effective when the manager is aware of ego state of the employee.

![Figure: Adult-Child Transaction]

iv) Parent-Parent Transaction: The parent-parent transaction can beneficial in cases where employee joins forces with the manager and supports him.

v) Parent-Adult Transaction: In this type of transaction, the manager may be frustrated because the employee will not perform as directed and vice-versa. Due to frustration, such a relationship may not last long.

vi) Parent-Child Transaction: This may be the ideal situation if the manager is interacting with parent ego and the employee is acting in his child ego.

![Figure: Parent-Parent Transaction]

![Figure: Parent-Adult Transaction]

![Figure: Parent-Child Transaction]
vii) **Child-Parent Transaction:** The manager in the child ego may contribute very little to the effectiveness of management.

![Child-Parent Transaction](image1)

viii) **Child-Adult Transaction:** In this transaction, the adult employee will control child manager. The employee may become discouraged particularly when the manager makes decisions on the basis of whims, fancies, and emotions which pose problems to employee who wants to interact on the basis of rationality.

![Child-Adult Transaction](image2)

ix) **Child-Child Transaction:** The manager interacting in child-child egos is not capable of leading his employee successfully and proves to be a liability to the organization. This transaction may not be lasting because the organization will review performance.

![Child-Child Transaction](image3)

2) **Non-Complementary Transactions or Crossed Transactions:** In a cross transaction, Stimulus (S) and Response (R) lines are not parallel, but they cross each other. It happens when stimulus does not get the expected response. For example, when a supervisor behaves the worker on adult to adult basis but worker behaves on child to parent basis, it is a non-complementary or cross transaction. The position is not desirable and the communication is blocked between the two persons and further interaction does not take place. The position may be shown in the figure below:

![Non-Complementary Transactions](image4)

3) **Ulterior Transaction:** Ulterior transaction is the most complex because the communication has double meaning. When an ulterior message is sent, it is often disguised in a socially acceptable way. On the surface level, the communication has a clear adult message, whereas it carries a hidden message on the psychological level. Ulterior transactions, like blocked transactions, are undesirable.

![Ulterior Transaction](image5)

4) **Gallows Transaction:** It is signified by inappropriate love or smile in a transaction. A smile in response to a person’s misfortune may serve as gallows transaction. Other examples of gallows transaction can be:
   i) A teacher getting amused at the stupid behavior of her favorite student,
   ii) A mother laughing on the falling of her child,
   iii) A father beaming over the risk his son has taken and thereby losing in business.

**Psychological Games**

Psychological games are a pattern of transactions that have surface logic, but hidden meanings and attempt to draw in an unsuspecting participant. The common features of psychological games are as follows:
1) Transactions are often repeated;
2) They make sense at the superficial or social level;
3) At least one of the transactions is ulterior, i.e., with the intention of passing the buck, making other people commit mistakes, complaining about one's own weaknesses and so on.

Psychological games can be a powerful force in preventing people from emerging winners or in drawing others' attention towards oneself. Generally, people play games for the following reasons:

1) **Strengthening Psychological Position**: Many people hold psychological positions which they like to enforce through games. For example, if a person holds “not O.K.” position, he would try to emphasize it through games, i.e., by putting himself down.

2) **Getting Positive Strokes**: People often want positive strokes for the work done by them. If they don't get such strokes, they would try to set a situation where they can expect positive strokes.

3) **Avoiding Openness**: People who are scared of openness and responsibility in relationships play games to avoid openness. Games block intimacy between people and create distance between them. This is how the game player can shirk responsibility.

**Life Positions**

The individual’s behavior towards others is largely based on specific assumptions that are made early in life. Very early in the childhood, person develops from experience a dominant philosophy. Such philosophy is tied into their identity, sense of worth, and perceptions of other people. This tends to remain with the person for lifetime unless major experiences occur to change it. Such positions are called *life positions* or *psychological positions*. It stem from a combination of two viewpoints i.e. *attitude towards myself* and *attitude towards others*. Either a positive response (OK) or a negative response (not OK) result in four possible life positions as shown in *figure below*:

![Life Positions Diagram](image)

1) **I am O.K. You are O.K.**: “I am OK, you are OK” appears to be an ideal life position. People with these feelings tend to have positive outlooks on life. They seem to be happy active people who succeed. They make use of their happy child and nurturing parent while seldom using their destructive child or critical parent.

2) **I am O.K. you are not O.K.**: This position is taken by people who feel victimized or persecuted. They blame others for their miseries. This is the case of aggrieved person with an attitude that whatever they do is right. This is a distrustful life position.

Managers operating with this position are likely to give critical and oppressive remarks. They tend to point out the flaws, the bad things, rarely giving any warm, genuinely carrying feelings.

3) **I am not O.K. you are O.K.**: This position is common to persons who feel powerlessness in comparison to others. It is based on one’s feelings about oneself. Individuals who feel a clear distinction between themselves and the people around them, who could do many things that the individuals could not do, hold this life position. Managers operating from this position tend to give and receive bad feelings.

4) **I am not O.K. you are not O.K.**: This is a desperate life position. This position is taken by those people who lose interest in living. They feel that life is not worth living at all. In extreme cases, they commit suicide or homicide. This is the case of individuals who are neglected seriously by their parents and are brought by servants. Managers operating from this position are likely to get put down strokes from others.

**Example** shows TA of an adult, a parent and a child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TA of the Not OK and OK Attitudes</th>
<th>As a Parent</th>
<th>As an Adult</th>
<th>As a Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>Not OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictator</td>
<td>Do it my way</td>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my way</td>
<td>Informed critic</td>
<td>Always testing</td>
<td>alternatives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Applications of Transaction Analysis (TA)

1) **Stroking**: Stroking is an important aspect of transactional analysis (TA). It is defined as any act implying recognition of another’s presence. The word stroking has originated from the studies of the needs that babies have for physical affection for complete psychological development. Now it applies to all types of recognition. People seek recognition in interaction with others. Lack of stroking has its consequence both on physiological and psychological well-being of the persons.

**Types of Strokes**

i) **Positive Strokes**: The stroke that makes one feel O.K. is a positive one. Words of recognition, affection, and pat on the back are some of the examples of positive strokes.

ii) **Negative Strokes**: The stroke that makes one feel as not O.K. is a negative one. Criticism, hating, and scolding are the examples of negative strokes. However, people do not always seek positive strokes only. They may seek negative strokes also for such reasons as guilt or a low self-image. The negative stroke completes a social transaction for the people as they think it should be, that is, it provides social equilibrium from their point of view.

2) **TA and Conflict Resolution**: There are several natural connections between TA and the approaches to resolving conflict.

   The Parent ego state may lead to the use of a forcing strategy, while the Child state may smooth over conflicts or try to avoid them. The “I am OK – You are OK” person is more likely to seek a win-win outcome, applying the Adult ego state and a confrontational strategy. Other probable connections are shown in figure below. Once more, the relationship among a number of behavioral ideas and actions is apparent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Position</th>
<th>Conflict Resolution Strategy</th>
<th>Probable Behavior</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am not OK – You are not OK.</td>
<td>Avoidance</td>
<td>Non-assertiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not OK – you are OK</td>
<td>Smoothing</td>
<td>Non-assertiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am OK – You are not OK.</td>
<td>Forcing</td>
<td>Aggressiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am OK – You are OK.</td>
<td>Confronting</td>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure: Probable Relationships of Life Positions with Conflict Resolution Strategies and Behavior

Benefits of Transaction Analysis (TA)

1) **Developing Positive Thinking**: TA is applied to bring positive actions from people because TA brings positive approach towards life and hence positive actions. TA brings a clear change from negative feelings – confusion, defeat, fear, frustration, loneliness, pessimism, and suppression – to positive feelings – clear thinking, victory, achievement, courage, gratification, decision, friendship, optimism, and fulfillment.

2) **Interpersonal Effectiveness**: TA improves interpersonal relationship by providing understanding of ego states of persons involved in interaction. It emphasizes complementary transactions, which ensure complete communication and problem-solving approach. Since complementary transactions can be learned by individuals in the organization, people can improve interpersonal relations through TA.

3) **Motivation**: TA can be applied in motivation where it helps in satisfying human needs through complementary transactions and positive strokes. Managers can enrich jobs for people by helping them to engage in kinds of activities that give them more positive strokes. It emphasizes strokes from the intrinsic value of the work, rather than depending entirely on strokes from outside (extrinsic).

4) **Organization Development**: Organization development applied a humanistic value system to work behavior and a reorientation of man’s thinking and behavior towards his work organization. The major goal of organization development is to fight the past in the present in order to choose freely the future. TA can help in organization development process.

Limitations of Transactional Analysis

i) It is difficult to understand ego states and transactions between people in practice particularly for the less educated people.

ii) TA tends to encourage “amateur psychologizing” if applied without sufficient training.

iii) TA jargons may lead to more “cuteness” than insight into human encounter.

iv) TA can be used as a put down in interpersonal relations. Some people might use this tool to manipulate the behavior of others as in case of ulterior transactions.

v) Very few scientific studies are available to support the effectiveness of transactional analysis in practice.

Thus, transactional analysis should be used with utmost care. For this the executives should learn this technique adequately through practical demonstrations, and practice this technique to manage workers effectively.