

# ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AN INTRODUCTION

**Robert den Broeder  
Joost Kerkhofs**

ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT - AN INTRODUCTION

## Other publications by Van Haren Publishing

Van Haren Publishing (VHP) specializes in titles on Best Practices, methods and standards within four domains:

- IT and IT Management
- Architecture (Enterprise and IT)
- Business Management and
- Project Management

Van Haren Publishing is also publishing on behalf of leading organizations and companies: ASLBiSL Foundation, BRMI, CA, Centre Henri Tudor, CATS CM, Gaming Works, IACCM, IAOP, IFDC, Innovation Value Institute, IPMA-NL, ITSq, NAF, KNVI, PMI-NL, PON, The Open Group, The SOX Institute.

Topics are (per domain):

### IT and IT Management

ABC of ICT  
ASL®  
CMMI®  
COBIT®  
e-CF  
ISO/IEC 20000  
ISO/IEC 27001/27002  
ISPL  
IT4IT®  
IT-CMF™  
IT Service CMM  
ITIL®  
MOF  
MSF  
SABSA  
SAF  
SIAM™  
TRIM  
VeriSM™

### Enterprise Architecture

ArchiMate®  
GEA®  
Novius Architectuur  
Methode  
TOGAF®

### Business Management

*BABOK® Guide*  
BiSL® and BiSL® Next  
BRMBOK™  
BTF  
CATS CM®  
EFQM  
eSCM  
IACCM  
ISA-95  
ISO 9000/9001  
OPBOK  
SixSigma  
SOX  
SqEME®

### Project Management

A4-Projectmanagement  
DSDM/Atern  
ICB / NCB  
ISO 21500  
MINCE®  
M\_o\_R®  
MSP®  
P3O®  
*PMBOK® Guide*  
Praxis®  
PRINCE2®

For the latest information on VHP publications, visit our website: [www.vanharen.net](http://www.vanharen.net).

# **Organizational Behavior Management**

An introduction

Robert den Broeder  
and Joost Kerkhofs

This book is dedicated to  
Pim Arends (1954 - 2015)  
and  
Pierre Storimans (1959 - 2017)



# Colophon

Title:	Organizational Behavior Management - An introduction
Authors:	Robert den Broeder, Joost Kerkhofs
Publisher:	Van Haren Publishing, 's-Hertogenbosch-NL, <a href="http://www.vanharen.net">www.vanharen.net</a>
Translator:	Robert den Broeder (translation from original text in Dutch)
Text editor:	Steve Newton (Galatea)
ISBN Hard copy:	978 94 018 0707 4
ISBN eBook (pdf):	978 94 018 0708 1
ISBN ePUB:	978 94 018 0709 8
Editions:	Dutch edition: First edition, first impression, May 2020 English translation: First edition, first impression, November 2020
Layout and design:	Coco Bookmedia, Amersfoort-NL
Copyright:	© Van Haren Publishing, 2020

For further information on Van Haren Publishing, e-mail to: [info@vanharen.net](mailto:info@vanharen.net).

Nothing from this publication may be reproduced, recorded in an automated database or published on or via any medium, either electronically, mechanically, through photocopying or any other method, without prior written permission from the publisher.

This publication was produced with the utmost care and attention. Nevertheless, the text may contain errors. The publisher and the authors are not liable for any errors and/or inaccuracies in this text.

# Preface

I am pleased to have this book by Robert and Joost in front of me. It shows exactly how you can achieve behavioral change in organizations. After the main theoretical concepts, the steps of behavioral change follow.

OBM is a profession. An applied science. This requires an investment in time to master it. The social sciences are struggling. The natural sciences are doing well. Think of the IT revolution that has been brought about by inventions in electronics. We have also become dependent on science and technology.

This book introduces you to the applied science of behavior, which is a breakthrough for management and organizations. Sooner or later consultancy companies will also embrace OBM simply because it is the best working approach to achieve behavioral change. Clients are fed up with abstract and conceptual theories. They want to see results and OBM ensures and realizes measurable results.

I was lucky enough to bump into Joost while finishing my thesis on Organizational Behavior Management. We established the OBM expertise center ADRIBA at the VU University in Amsterdam and trained hundreds of OBM practitioners there. That put OBM on the map here in the Netherlands.

OBM Dynamics, Robert and Joost's company in the Netherlands, is a spin-off of years of sparring and collecting cases, with which OBM is also expanding internationally. Of course, we are indebted to our common teachers, the Americans Aubrey Daniels and B.F. Skinner. However, truly commercially marketing internationally is something the Dutch have been adept at for centuries.

Joost took Robert to an OBM introduction session once, after which Robert became addicted to OBM. There are worse addictions to have. Due to this positive addiction he has already done a lot of good work.

For example, Robert and I have been teaching the OBM Summer School at the VU University in Amsterdam for years, training dozens of international students and practitioners in the secrets of behavioral change.

Robert also developed and delivers the OBM Foundation training throughout the Netherlands. He discusses the most important OBM concepts, which the participants not only apply in their work on a daily basis, but also in their home life. For example, we have seen many examples come up about raising children, where OBM offered a solution. Such as putting small children to bed on time, or getting them to tidy up their rooms.

We have seen a specific reduction in measurable lead times in organizations, increased productivity and increased safety, for example by having employees wear safety gear more often and having unsafe situations reported.

The beauty of the principles of behavior change is that they apply anywhere, anytime. They have been tested during thousands of laboratory and field experiments. Just as a pen is unlikely to fly to the ceiling when we release it, it is also unlikely that people will perform less if they are rewarded with attention for improved performance.

Nevertheless, we welcome new insights and deviations from the current theory with open arms. Deviations teach us about a poor application of the theory, or inform us about gaps in the theory.

You will have fun and success in applying OBM in both your work and personal situations. Specifically because the principles of behavior analysis dictate that rewards and compliments are way more effective than punishment and criticism in both improving relationships and in increasing the joint results. This makes OBM not only the best, but also the most enjoyable management method.

Dr. Marius M. Rietdijk  
Scientific Director ADRIBA

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

# Acknowledgements

We want to thank everyone who has contributed to this publication. Special thanks go to:  
Paul Wilkinson (Business Development Director at GamingWorks BV)  
Mark Smalley (IT Management Consultant at Smalley.IT)  
Elka Schrijver (Leadership Coach, Facilitator at Lead The Pack Consulting)  
Niels Loader (Partner & Principal Consultant at Quint, Author of *The Lean IT Expert*),  
Lex Tabak (OBM trainer and examiner at ADRIBA - VU University of Amsterdam),  
Steve Newton ( Galatea).

The authors





# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	The role of working conditions in performance issues	2
1.2	Organizations are constantly changing, and with varying degrees of success	3
1.2.1	Realizing behavioral change is the key to success	5
1.2.2	Specifying behavior is difficult	5
1.3	Structure of this book	5
1.4	How this book came about	7
<b>2</b>	<b>Organizational Behavior Management (OBM)</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1	OBM and behaviorism	9
2.2	Building blocks within OBM	9
2.3	Performance in context	10
2.4	Functions of behavior	10
2.5	ABC model and the OBM protocol	10
<b>3</b>	<b>Performance: result and behavior in a context</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1	Result	13
3.2	Pitfalls to avoid when specifying results	14
<b>4</b>	<b>Behavior</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1	Behavior defined	19
4.2	Behavior, an overview	21
4.2.1	Respondent behavior, the reflex	21
4.2.2	Operant behavior	21
4.2.3	Respondent behavior, the unconditioned reflex	22
4.2.4	Respondent behavior, the conditioned reflex	24
4.2.5	The role of classical conditioning in business	25
4.2.6	Operant behavior	26
4.2.7	Response and behavioral chain	28
4.2.8	Verbal behavior	30
4.2.9	Verbal operants	32
4.2.10	Internal verbal behavior	33
<b>5</b>	<b>Additional concepts and approaches related to behavior</b>	<b>35</b>
5.1	Cognitive dissonance	35
5.2	Conscious behavior versus unconscious behavior	36
5.2.1	Unconscious behavior	36
5.2.2	The role of positive consequences: reinforcement and reward	37
5.2.3	Unwanted behavior is usually consciously emitted	38

5.3	Constructs, mindset and intrinsic motivation	39
5.3.1	Constructs	39
5.3.2	Mindset	40
5.3.3	Intrinsic motivation	43
5.4	Visible and invisible organization	47
5.4.1	It is always about behavioral change	49
<b>6</b>	<b>The four functions of behavior</b>	<b>51</b>
6.1	A closer look at the four functions of behavior	53
6.1.1	Internal, biological, neurological ('sensory stimulation')	54
6.1.2	Escape and avoidance	54
6.1.3	Attention	54
6.1.4	(Access to) Tangible items ('tangibles'), preferred items and activities	56
<b>7</b>	<b>The ABC model of operant conditioning</b>	<b>59</b>
7.1	Antecedents	63
7.1.1	Antecedent defined	63
7.2	Antecedents in the working environment	64
7.2.1	Effective antecedents	66
7.2.2	Rule-governed behavior	67
7.3	Consequences	69
7.3.1	Consequence defined	69
7.3.2	Consequences lead to emotions and feelings	70
7.3.3	Deprivation and satiation	72
7.3.4	The role of deprivation in applying consequences	73
7.3.5	The role of satiation in applying consequences	75
7.3.6	Reinforcer	75
7.3.7	Reward versus reinforcer	76
7.3.8	Positive reinforcement, R+	77
7.3.9	Dopamine	80
7.3.10	Negative reinforcement, R-	81
7.3.11	Negative reinforcement in practice	86
7.3.12	The J-curve	88
7.3.13	Punishment, P+	90
7.3.14	It is hard to punish properly and effectively!	92
7.3.15	Punishment in the working environment	93
7.3.16	Effects of applying punishment	93
7.3.17	Unintentional punishment	94
7.3.18	NIMJoD behavior	95
7.3.19	Automatic recovery	96
7.3.20	Penalty, P-	96
7.3.21	No longer reinforcing conditioned behavior leads to extinction	97
7.3.22	Resurgence, spontaneous recovery	98

<b>8</b>	<b>Three pitfalls for leaders during behavioral interventions</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>The parakeet exercise: how do we create passionate employees?</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>The OBM protocol, an overview</b>	<b>109</b>
10.1	Step 0: Context, business case and management summary	110
10.1.1	Case study: IT Service Desk of a health insurer	110
10.2	Step 1: Specifying the performance	112
10.2.1	Start with the result	112
10.2.2	Identify the behaviors that produce the desired result(s)	115
10.2.3	Avoid the 'Activity Trap'	117
10.2.4	Common mistakes in specifying behavior	117
10.2.5	Operationalizing behavior, some examples	119
10.2.6	Specify a performance 'MACRO'	121
10.3	Step 2: Measuring performance	121
10.3.1	Why do we measure performance?	122
10.3.2	Resistance to measurement	123
10.3.3	Create an environment in which people don't mind being measured	124
10.3.4	Measuring results	126
10.3.5	Measure behavior	126
10.3.6	KPIs: Key Performance Indicators	128
10.3.7	KPIs and behavior	130
10.3.8	Tips for good performance indicators	132
10.3.9	'Flip the KPI!'	133
10.4	Step 3: Analysis of the measured performance level using the ABC model	134
10.4.1	The ABC model as an analysis tool: the ABC analysis	135
10.4.2	Step 1 – state the behavior or performance of interest	135
10.4.3	Step 2 – list all relevant antecedents	136
10.4.4	Step 3 – list all relevant consequences	137
10.4.5	Consequence analysis	139
10.4.6	Consequence analysis, some practical tips	140
10.4.7	Analyzing change using the ABC analysis tool	140
10.4.8	The 'can't do - won't do' analysis	143
10.4.9	Back to the case study: ABC analysis and consequence analysis	144
10.5	Step 4: Performance feedback	146
10.5.1	Feedback and feed-forward versus performance feedback	148
10.5.2	Performance feedback: feedback on results and behavior	149
10.5.3	Back to the case study: performance feedback	152
10.5.4	Pinpointing the desired performance, starting with the desired result	153
10.5.5	Graph the results of the baseline measurement	153
10.5.6	Sandwich feedback	154

10.5.7	Undesirable effects of feedback according to the Sandwich method	154
10.5.8	Example of Sandwich feedback: how not to do it	155
10.5.9	Some tips for effectively delivering criticism	155
10.6	Step 5: Setting subgoals	156
10.6.1	The function of subgoals: R+, R+, R+ and R+	156
10.6.2	Good subgoals are set together with the performers	157
10.6.3	Shaping performance	157
10.6.4	Back to the case study: setting subgoals	158
10.7	Step 6: Positive reinforcement	159
10.7.1	How does something become a reinforcer?	159
10.7.2	Primary and secondary reinforcers	160
10.7.3	Satiation with primary and secondary reinforcers	162
10.7.4	The 'Caveman test'	162
10.7.5	Additional classifications of secondary reinforcers	163
10.7.6	Finding and selecting reinforcers	165
10.7.7	The Premack principle	166
10.7.8	Schedules of reinforcement	168
10.7.9	Learning new behavior	169
10.7.10	Maintaining learned behavior	169
10.7.11	Intermittent schedules of reinforcement, a closer look	170
10.7.12	Back to the case study: reward and reward schedules	172
10.8	Dealing with unwanted behavior	173
10.8.1	Just punishment, often not the best option	174
10.8.2	Applying extinction	174
10.8.3	Correcting: the combination of P+ or P- and R+	174
10.8.4	DRA - Differential Reinforcement of Alternative behavior	175
10.9	Step 7: Evaluate, conclude and adjust	177
10.9.1	Evaluate	177
10.9.2	Conclude and adjust	178
10.9.3	Back to the case study: evaluate, conclude and adjust	178
<b>11</b>	<b>Closing remarks</b>	<b>181</b>
	<b>Appendix 1 - Topics overview online learning environment 'Knowingo'</b>	<b>183</b>
	<b>Appendix 2 - Case study – Safety in an industrial environment</b>	<b>185</b>
	<b>Appendix 3 - The non-behavior checklist</b>	<b>195</b>
	<b>Appendix 4 - About the authors</b>	<b>197</b>
	<b>Appendix 5 - The OBM Foundation training</b>	<b>199</b>
	<b>Literature</b>	<b>201</b>

# 1 Introduction

This book is about achieving behavioral change in organizations. We jokingly call this ‘*the best kept management secret*’. This book provides a specific, practically applicable answer to the ‘how’ question of behavioral change, based on scientifically validated principles. This distinguishes this book from many other management books.

Organizational Behavior Management, or OBM for short, is the field that deals with behavioral change in organizations. Some prefer to speak of ‘*targeted behavioral influence*’.

OBM is *not* about *changing* people, nor is it about *manipulating* people. It is about *changing the environment* in which people behave. The goal is to create working conditions that inspire and motivate people to deliver peak performance. Leaders play an important facilitating role in creating and maintaining such working conditions. Paul Gavoni<sup>1</sup> refers to behavioral science as: “*the science of helping others*”. Applying OBM principles properly makes people happy to perform well every day. That’s fun for everyone; it creates an absolute ‘*win-win situation*’.

## **Observable behavior is said to be ‘emitted’**

People exhibit, or display observable behavior all day long. *Observable behavior* is said to be ‘*emitted*’. We intentionally use the word ‘*emit*’ in this book, simply because it is the correct term, and the term can be used in combination with both verbal and non-verbal observable behavior.

Sometimes people emit outright unwanted behavior. Others just don’t do what we agreed upon, or don’t do what they learned in training. Many organizations suffer from clumsy, unwanted, or even dysfunctional behavior in the workplace. For example in the form of ‘*pocket veto*’<sup>2</sup> and ‘*saying yes, meaning no*’, victim behavior, avoidance behavior or escape behavior.

At management levels, we see, for example, ‘*garbage-can decision-making*’<sup>3</sup> and spreadsheet management with a strong focus on *meeting the targets*. Not infrequently, this is combined with an extremely directive management style. The sad thing is that such a way of managing in the workplace leads to rapidly decreasing motivation, increased stress, all kinds of deprivation, reduced involvement, decreased engagement and increased turnover and absenteeism.

We can analyze observable<sup>4</sup> behavior. For this, we use the ABC model, about which more later. In the ABC model, the A stands for Antecedents. An antecedent is everything

---

1 Paul Gavoni, Ed.D., BCBA, Vice President at Brett DiNovi & Associates.

2 Caluwé, L. de, Vermaak, H., *Leren veranderen, Een handboek voor de veranderkundige* (2006), p. 31 (Dutch).

3 Caluwé, L. de, Vermaak, H., *Leren veranderen, Een handboek voor de veranderkundige* (2006), p. 25. (Dutch).

4 Unobservable behavior exists as well. This is mainly respondent behavior. See Sub-section 4.2.3.

that precedes and prompts behavior. B stands for Behavior. C stands for Consequences, everything that follows behavior.

The function of an antecedent is to prompt people to act. In other words: it sets the occasion, or the stage for behavior. Scientific research clearly shows that antecedents *can trigger behavior*, but are seldom strong enough to maintain desired behavior over time. Our brain makes future behavior mainly dependent on the consequences of our current behavior! We think these consequences are more important than, for example, what others say to us. B.F. Skinner put it this way: “*behavior is a function of its consequences*”.

Analyzing observable behavior, for example, answers the following questions:

- “Why are we now specifically emitting this behavior and not other behavior?”
- “How do you get people to *want* to behave differently?”

This book gives answers to these questions and provides executives and other influencers with a solid and evidence-based approach for dealing with behavioral, performance and motivational issues.

## 1.1 The role of working conditions in performance issues

Working conditions can motivate and inspire people, but can also seriously demotivate them. Some of your colleagues go to work every day with a *feeling in the pit in their stomach*. Not because their work is tedious or boring, but because their working conditions consume all their energy. Going to work is a challenge that these people dread taking on every day. Working for long periods under energy-draining working conditions is no fun for anyone. In fact, it makes us ill.

People who are reluctant to work will perform at minimum levels. Managers and other influencers notice this and, from their role or function, use their power and authority to try to boost performance. Frequently their efforts produce a lot of hassle and have little success as a result.

Restoring motivation and job satisfaction and thus improving job performance is a journey full of pitfalls and seemingly unexpected twists. If, after a number of management interventions, it appears that the performance level of an employee is still below par, it is not uncommon to start a process in which both parties eventually part ways. A ‘*lose-lose situation*’ for everyone involved.

Research by the real estate organization CB Richard Ellis (CBRE) and the University of Twente<sup>5</sup> clearly demonstrates that a healthy office contributes to happier and more productive employees. People are usually perfectly capable of adapting to changes in the physical

---

5 Nelson, E. C., CBRE en Universiteit Twente, *Het sneeuwbaaleffect van Healthy Offices* (2017).

environment. Consider, for example, relocating within a building, or to another building, or switching to another employer. Sometimes it takes a while to get used to different sounds, different acoustics and colors and a different room layout. People who are unexpectedly confronted with such changes in their familiar environment may be emotionally affected. The process of getting used to and adapting to a new or changed environment is called '*adaptation*<sup>6</sup>'. Adaptation, generally speaking, is temporarily at the expense of performance.

The *social conditions* in which people perform are very important. The interaction with colleagues and leaders at work directly influences well-being and, therefore, directly and indirectly affects people's performance levels and motivation. Social circumstances are about matters such as:

- How do we interact?
- How do we communicate with each other?
- Do we really recognize and accept each other sufficiently?

In this context we often speak of '*social and psychological safety*'. Lack of psychological safety undermines confidence, respect and trust. Without confidence, respect and trust it is difficult to become a good team<sup>7</sup>. Without confidence, respect and trust, it is difficult to perform well as an individual, team or organization.

How do you build respect and trust? We want to answer that question too. It is common knowledge that leaders play a vital role in the process of cultivating and maintaining respect, trust and psychological safety. Their leadership style, feedback (or lack thereof!), in short, their leadership behavior, is the key to improved performance, and to more inspired and motivated employees. Often performance improvement of an individual or a team starts with a different style of leadership!

## 1.2 Organizations are constantly changing, and with varying degrees of success

Organizations are constantly changing. We distinguish between '*organic changes*' and '*planned changes*'. The organic changes occur naturally and spontaneously: new people come in, people change places, roles and positions, people leave the organization. Other examples of such organic changes are adjustments and improvements in working methods that we implement almost unnoticed. Simply because it is possible and because the new way works better, simpler, or easier.

Planned changes are the focus of organizational change management. Much has been published about organizational change management. There are very thorough training

---

6 Holland, J. and Skinner, B.F., *The analysis of behavior*, (1961), p. 215.

7 See Patrick Lencioni, *The five dysfunctions of a team* (2002).



courses and it is an attractive field for many people to work in. There is a great need for the successful implementation of planned organizational changes. Consider, for example, the introduction of completely new ways of working, the implementation of complex IT systems, or organizations that grow and change by taking over other organizations. These kinds of changes usually have characteristics of well thought-out, planned and managed organizational changes.

It is not easy to manage and successfully complete such planned organizational changes. A characteristic of the present time is the rapidly changing environment, which forces organizations to make changes as well:

- Market needs are rapidly changing. Not responding to these changing needs quickly jeopardizes your organization;
- Changing laws and regulations, and continuous technological developments are important influencers of your market, your competitors and, above all, your own organization.
- The world around us is digitizing, automating and robotizing extensively and at high speed. These developments undeniably affect the way your organization works and does business.

Such changes often lead to organizational change initiatives. The following also applies: *“during the renovation, the store will remain open for customers.”*

If we look at the kind of changes that modern organizations are mostly engaged in, we see that they are involved with, or have a strong focus on:

- Digital transformation;
- Introducing agile ways of working;
- Organizing self-organization, or self-managing teams;
- Culture programs because *“attitude and behavior will have to change, to make the customer’s journey even better”*.

Reports about successfully planned change programs create an ambiguous picture. We explain this ambiguity partly with the simple observation that the definition of *“a successfully planned change”* is sometimes not clear enough for all involved. This makes it possible for a change to be successful from one perspective, but unsuccessful (or less successful) from another perspective.

Ed Kerkman – editor of *Management Executive* – writes<sup>8</sup> about the so-called 70% myth that invariably rears its head during planned changes: *“The 70% failure myth is based on the book ‘Reengineering the corporation’, in which Hammer and Champy claim that according to a ‘non-scientific estimate’ 50% to 70% fail. Which later was conveniently simplified by others to 70%. And it took on a life of its own.”*

---

8 <https://www.managementimpact.nl/artikel/veranderen-helemaal-niet-zo-moeilijk> (visited 07-01-2020). (Dutch).

On the other hand, McKinsey<sup>9, 10</sup> confirms that only 30% of the change initiatives actually results in successful organizational change. You may also wonder what the definition of ‘*success*’ is. Perhaps companies take it for granted that only three or four out of five objectives defined in the business case are actually achieved? In short: an ambiguous picture with a range of opinions and ideas, with “*the truth*” probably somewhere in the middle. Still, reason enough to deal more effectively with organizational change initiatives. Especially, because attitude and behavior are usually in the top three causes of the failure of the change program. The new system or process has been introduced but is not yet sufficiently used or followed.

### 1.2.1 Realizing behavioral change is the key to success

Regardless of the type of change or development an organization is going through, *people* are the all-determining success factor. More specifically, the *observable behavior* of those people is the all-determining success factor!

We often mention behavior together in one sentence with *culture* and *attitude*. It is obvious that achieving successful organizational change requires that culture, attitude and behavior all change.

### 1.2.2 Specifying behavior is difficult

During OBM training and workshops, we have noticed time and again that people find it difficult to specify behavior in concrete terms. Being able to specify behavior is a prerequisite for being able to change it in a targeted manner. And if that behavior changes, we also want to be able to establish and prove that change occurred. What proof do we have that behavior has indeed changed?

Establishing a cause-effect relationship between *unwanted behavior* and *reduced performance* proves to be difficult. The other way around: establishing a cause-effect relationship between emitting, or exhibiting desired behavior more often and the resulting improved performance also proves to be difficult.

In this book we explain what behavior is, and how behavior and work performance are related. We also show how you can demonstrably improve work performance through behavioral change in a way that everyone involved enjoys!

## 1.3 Structure of this book

This book guides the reader through a number of basic concepts from the field of Organizational Behavior Management, OBM.

---

9 <https://www.aascu.org/corporatepartnership/McKinseyReport2.pdf> (visited 07-01-2020).

10 <http://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/leadership/changing-change-management> (visited 03-02-2020).

Chapter 2 places OBM within the field of '*Applied Behavior Analysis*', or 'ABA' for short. We also introduce the most important 'building blocks' of the OBM philosophy.

Chapter 3 deals with the first OBM building block: '*performance*'. We explain how performance is defined within OBM and what role performance plays in organizational change processes.

Chapter 4 examines the difference between respondent behavior and operant behavior. The distinction is interesting because of the differences in conditioning of both forms of behavior.

Chapter 5 briefly discusses popular concepts and approaches to behavior and behavioral change. Concepts and constructs such as intrinsic motivation, mindset, top-current and undercurrent are covered.

Chapter 6 deals with the second OBM building block: '*the four functions of behavior*'. Observable behavior always serves one or more functions for the performer. Understanding the function of observable behavior contributes to understanding what needs to be done to influence behavior more effectively.

In Chapter 7 we discuss the '*ABC Model*'. This model is at the heart of OBM and OBM interventions. The model helps us to explain why behavior occurs, or why it does not occur in a way that a leader or an influencer would like to see.

Chapter 8 shows '*the three pitfalls*' an influencer should avoid. By avoiding these pitfalls, the probability of a successful intervention significantly increases.

In Chapter 9 we use a true story about '*conditioning a parakeet*' as a mirror for interventions on attitude and behavior in organizations. The parallels are recognizable and interesting.

Chapter 10 discusses the '*OBM protocol*'. This protocol is the guideline we use to approach and structure OBM interventions. Using this protocol greatly increases the probability of successful change.

Finally, the appendices contain an overview of the topics from our online learning environment, a sample case of an OBM intervention and a so-called "*non-behavior checklist*". That is a list of '*descriptions of behavior*', which are generally considered *to be* actionable behaviors, but in fact are not. To make these descriptions actionable, they should be operationalized first.

## 1.4 How this book came about

This book is the end result of Robert den Broeder's education to become a '*Certified OBM Expert*' at the VU University in Amsterdam. Robert did this training under the guidance of Dr. Marius Rietdijk.

Robert undertook extensive literature studies while writing this book. The results of these literature studies were combined with his own training and consultancy experiences and the experiences of other OBM practitioners and coaches in the Netherlands.

The first version of the manuscript was assessed with great dedication and precision by Joost Kerkhofs in his role as reviewer and experienced OBM professional. Joost put so much energy into it that Robert suggested completing the manuscript together. With his knowledge and insights, Joost made an important and enriching contribution to the final manuscript. This is how this book was born.



# 2 Organizational Behavior Management (OBM)

## 2.1 OBM and behaviorism

OBM is Applied Behavior Analysis in organizations. Applied Behavior Analysis is defined<sup>11</sup> as: “an evidence-based method of examining and changing what people (and other living creatures) say and do.”

Applied Behavior Analysis, when dealing with behavioral issues, mainly focuses on the *environment of the individual*. The goal is to analyze and understand behavior in the context within which the behavior takes place. Changes in the environment lead to changes in behavior and behavioral patterns. It is always about *changing the environment* and *not* about changing or manipulating people.

Applied Behavior Analysis is derived from the field of Experimental Behavior Analysis. That is, the principles of behavior are established in laboratories and controlled experiments. In practice, we apply these principles via the OBM protocol.

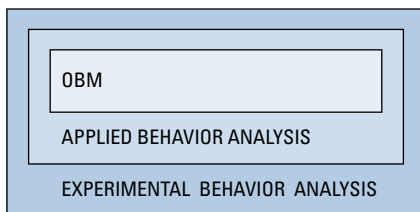


Figure 1 OBM, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Experimental Behavior Analysis.

*Behaviorism* is the philosophy of science of Behavior Analysis. Philosophy of science is the part of philosophy that deals with critically examining the assumptions, methods and results of the sciences. Behaviorism is therefore concerned with the critical examination of the assumptions, methods and results of Behavior Analysis and other behavioral sciences.

## 2.2 Building blocks within OBM

OBM has a number of ‘building blocks’, namely:

- Performance in a context;
- The functions of behavior;
- The ABC model;
- The OBM protocol.

---

<sup>11</sup> Mayer, G.R., Sulzer-Azaroff, B. & Wallace, M., *Behavior analysis for lasting change 4th edition* (2019), p. 5-7.