

BRITISH AIRWAY'S ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE & CULTURE

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Course

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Introduction

People's behaviour at the workplace and the organisation's processes and management practices all contribute to the organisation's overall behaviour (Chandan, 2009). An organisation's operations are directly affected by the interaction between these different facets of the organisation's behaviour. Different parts of the structure and culture of an organisation, as well as management styles and leadership styles, and theories of employee motivation, need to be examined in depth to fully comprehend organisational behaviour (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2019).

By connecting organisational behaviour with the organisation's aims and objectives, such principles create a better workplace environment. The efficacy and efficiency of a company are directly impacted by the behaviour of its employees, whose attitudes and performance are defined by their actions in the workplace. A solid understanding and implementation of these concepts become more imperative for enterprises. This paper addresses these concepts in connection to how British Airways' organisational performance depends on an appropriate culture and structure for achieving stated organisational goals. It also discusses how various variables might influence British Airways employees' behaviour.

Background of British Airways

The leading airline in the U.k., British Airways (BA), offers local and international air travel services for people and cargo. They have their headquarters in Waterside, and their primary hubs, from which they fly both short- and long-haul flights, are London Heathrow Airport and Gatwick Airport (Karami, 2017). The British Overseas Airways Corporation, British European Airways, Cambrian Airways, and Northeast Airlines were all managed by the British Airways

Board, which the United Kingdom government established in 1972. On March 31, 1974, all four companies formed British Airways. After nearly 13 years as a state-owned corporation, British Airways was sold to private investors in February 1987. (Karami, 2017).

They first expanded in 1987 when they bought British Caledonian, then again in 1992 when they bought Dan-air, and most recently in 2012 when they bought British Midland International (Woodley, 2022). The International Airlines Group (IAG) was established on January 21, 2011, following the merger of British Airways and Iberia (Hsu and Flouris, 2017). IAG is the second biggest international airline in Europe and the third biggest airline worldwide, measured by its annual revenue.

IAG is also listed on the London Stock Exchange and is a component of the FTSE 100 index. British Airways has around 42,000 employees and operates over 280 aircraft, including Boeing and Airbus. They have operations in 75 nations and 150 destinations, which are spread over the continents of Europe, North America, Central America, and Latin America (Woodley, 2022).

Organisational Structure and Culture

British Airways is the country's principal airline service provider, and the company believes to have the largest fleet size and number of aircraft in the country. The organisational structure at British Airways specifies how roles and decision-making powers have been defined inside the organisation. In contrast, organisational culture describes how employees, procedures, and management choices are made. Structures such as flat, tall and matrix can be found in most organisations depending on the power distribution within their respective departments and divisions.

British Airways has an entrepreneurial structure and power culture, as evidenced by several facts and studies. Employees at a company with an entrepreneurial structure and a culture of power lack agency, and the top executives make most decisions. All decisions are made at the highest levels of British Airways. This means that the organisation's aims and objectives determine the structure and culture of British Airways, but both are intertwined.

Organisational Structure

The organisational make-up of British Airways is unique in that the corporation is led by a general manager who is responsible for reporting to the board of directors of the organisation. British Airways has many offices worldwide because it is a worldwide corporation. Branch managers report directly to the general manager, who oversees the whole network of locations. Each branch has divisions for settlement, imports, handling, customer service, finance, and sales. The British Airways One of the first companies to create an inclusive workplace culture was British Airways (Balmer, 2001).

Understanding and valuing the uniqueness of each employee is at the heart of the airline's corporate culture. To meet the diverse demands of its consumers, the airline has set out on a new course of action. All areas of the company's products and services have been designed to incorporate a diverse workforce. Because of the airline's global reach has set out on a recruitment drive to find and keep top-notch personnel who can positively influence its client base.

In order to foster creativity and new ideas, the airline has hired a diverse group of individuals from various backgrounds. This plan is driven by a team of diversity champions across the company. Additionally, the airline has a culture where staff groups gather regularly to discuss

various race-related topics, sexual orientation, flexible schedules, handicaps, and religion. British Airways promotes its diversity concerns to its employees through the workplace newspaper, the diversity staff network, diversity workshops, and the firm's intranet site.

To help employees better understand the importance of diversity in the workplace, the airline produces monthly newsletters called "Religious Festivals" and "Diverse Times." Much effort has been put into ensuring customers are happy with their service. The company's reputation has been built on its excellent customer service. Despite representing all of the airline's divisions, the customer service department's staff are well-versed in how to provide the most satisfactory possible service to the company's clients.

Management at British Airways has been characterised as autocratic, with an elite group controlling decisions worth hundreds of millions of pounds each year. Example: Willie Walsh was initially viewed as the company's central decision-maker due to his airline president and CEO position. Walsh has been dictatorial and charismatic as a leader (Grundy and Moxon, 2013). The British Airways advertising campaign features Commercials, infomercials, celebrity endorsements, and other traditional and emerging media used by British Airways to promote its services.

Cultural Practices

A diverse workforce is an asset to every company, and that is because various people contribute a variety of life experiences to their jobs. Since they make decisions and determine the company's strategic direction, the founder, executives, and managers impact the organisation's cultural climate. As a result, an organisation has its values, practices and beliefs that it holds dear.

Culture, on the other hand, defies easy categorisation. According to Hofstede, organisational culture is how members of an organisation interact with one another, their job, and the outside world as it relates to other organisations (Bhatt, 2020). Beliefs, values, and norms, together with symbols such as dramatised events and persons, that make up an organisation's particular character and create a backdrop for activity inside and by the organisation, are all considered part of its culture.

British Airways' cultural practice consists of its organisational structure, beliefs, regulations, and policies. The cultural practices of British Airways are founded on the organisation's hierarchical structure. The information is transmitted from the board members to the executive management. From there, it is distributed to several divisions so that each manager can keep an eye on everything that is going on. The information is then passed on from the managers to the executive directors, who then pass it on to the board members, where any concerns regarding the content will be discussed.

Among Charles Handy's four categories of culture, British Airways prefers role and task culture (Heller, 2001). Evolution and culture cannot be discerned using the Charles Handy paradigm. Employees in a role culture know precisely what they are supposed to do and to whom they should report. Task culture is where a group works together to accomplish a single goal. In a task culture, employees' motivation is improved since they are more eager to make decisions within the team.

Throughout British airways' history, it has been a habit to work with people from all walks of life and treat them equally and without prejudice. They also make it a priority to offer the highest possible level of pleasure to their customers at all times. They always give the highest level of

safety and a friendly environment for all passengers when they allow them to board their flights. British Airways places a high value on the health and safety of all passengers, which is why they prioritise providing a safe atmosphere for them and guaranteeing their safety.

British Airways has a long-standing tradition of providing a safe and pleasant working environment for its staff and customers. Before the first passenger boards the aircraft, the flight crew thoroughly review the flight plan. This is done because they do not want to jeopardise the safety of their passengers. Customers expect the best service from airlines that only use the best planes and have the best facilities available.

Schein's Model on British Airways Cultural Practice

A manager's ability to affect cultural change within the organisation is more important than the manager's ability to bring about cultural change at the national level through shared learning, according to Rajala et al. (2012). British Airways offers various management training programs to foster a positive work environment for all its workers.

Because Schein is interested in the relationship between leadership and an organisation's culture, the cultural practices of British Airways would be a good fit for the theoretical framework Schein has developed. In addition, the Schein model emphasises how the values, beliefs, assumptions, and behaviours of the leader contribute to the development of the organisation's culture (Schein, 2010). Symbols, beliefs, language, behaviour and values contribute to British Airways' identity and stability in the workplace. British Airways can better understand its culture if Schein's methodology is applied. Second-level morals and high aesthetics, for example, can be processed by British Airways and displayed oddly at the third-level

Artefacts

British Airways' emblem, influenced by the union jack and resembling the speed bird sign, is among their most notable relics. The British Airways brand is another vital relic to the airline because it is what they stand for. When defining their brand, they focus on the phrase "To Fly. To Serve" (Coughlan, 1992). This has been their company motto for many years, and it embodies all they stand for and everything they promise their clients. Over 300 British Airways uniforms dating back to 1980 are another piece of British Airways memorabilia. British Airways employees are always expected to dress appropriately and adhere to criteria.



Figure 1 British Airways logo

Value

British Airways staff are fully appreciated since they influence the company's culture. The opinions of British Airways workers have a considerable impact on the culture of the organisation. British Airways' corporate culture is shaped by the attitudes and behaviours of its workers. The vision and mission statements of British Airways are as follows:

- "To be the most exclusive and first choice airline for all airline travellers" and
- "One destination seeks to ensure our customers fly confidently that, together, we are acting responsibly to take care of the world we live in" (Coughlan, 1992).

Assumption

During the most fundamental and significant level, British Airways culture aspects unseen and identified intellectually through employees' daily interactions are implicitly assumed. British Airways often avoids discussing these aspects of the company's culture. Over time, British Airways has developed a set of unspoken norms that have become a part of their culture. Because of this, they conduct surveys and informal interviews with staff, although these are ineffective in identifying specific characteristics. British Airways should be aware that organisational behaviourists typically overlook the importance of culture at this level when making decisions.

Conclusion

An organisation's efficient and productive results are greatly influenced by the behaviour of its employees and processes and the company's whole behaviour. Organisational behaviour can be better understood by looking at the various factors included in this study. It is also worth noting that each organisation's structure and culture are unique. These findings support that British Airways is structured hierarchically, with specific roles and responsibilities assigned to employees.

This analysis concludes that British Airways needs a culture that demonstrates how every other department operates together and how communication is transferred up and down the organisation's structure. Additionally, British Airways must consistently demonstrate its worth to customers by ensuring their needs are met to the fullest extent possible. Organisational structure and culture, as stated above, both play a part in how things get done at a company. This task greatly aided the practical application of all the course concepts. The information in this paper will help readers better comprehend these ideas and implement them in their companies.

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