

# Organization Citizenship Behavior

Behavior in organizations is primarily a function of two fundamental forces: organizational demands prescribed by the organization and individual needs that arise from within the individual.

**Organizational citizenship behavior** *is beneficial and functional behavior that is not prescribed by the organization but occurs freely from individuals to help others achieve in the organization.*

The construct has five key features that define and explain the nature of organizational citizenship: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue (Organ, 1988).

- *Altruism* is giving freely on one's time and helping others, especially new colleagues, to be successful in the organization. Although it is directed toward task accomplishment, it also contributes to group efficiency by enhancing performance.
- *Conscientiousness* is going beyond the minimum expectations to be successful; it enhances both the efficiency of the individual and group.
- *Sportsmanship* is fair treatment of others that avoids complaining and whining, and improves the time spent on constructive organizational behavior.
- *Courtesy* is being thoughtful in interactions with others by giving advance notices and reminders, and communicating appropriate information to prevent problems and to facilitate constructive use of time.
- *Civic virtue* is meeting the basic responsibilities of group behavior such as serving on committees, voluntarily attending functions, and doing a little extra to promote and serve the interests of the organization.

In sum, **organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) goes beyond expected obligations and responsibilities and emerges freely from individuals, without expectation of compensation or recognition, to help others achieve and be successful**; such behavior is characterized by altruism, conscientiousness, fair treatment of others, courtesy, responsibility and civility. For a measure of OCB, go to *Research Instruments* at ([www.waynekhoy.com](http://www.waynekhoy.com)).

For further development of organizational citizenship behavior, see (DiPaola & Hoy, 2005).