

Behaviour and behaviour change

Ditto Sustainability



DITTO
— sustainability —



Have you ever watched a group of children play?

They might laugh and run around. They might fight and hit each other. They might form a little group, with a leader naturally taking charge and the others following. What they do can tell you a lot about what the children are feeling and thinking. Their actions can also tell you more about their behaviour and relationship to each other.

Human behaviour is the term used to describe the range of actions and mannerisms made by individuals, organisms, systems, or artificial entities in conjunction with themselves or their environment; which includes the other systems or organisms around, as well as the (inanimate) physical environment.

It is the response to various stimuli or inputs, whether internal or external, conscious or subconscious, overt or covert, and voluntary or involuntary.

**Organisations rely
on employees to
deliver high-quality
goods and services**





Employees are shaped by their culture and by the organisation's culture

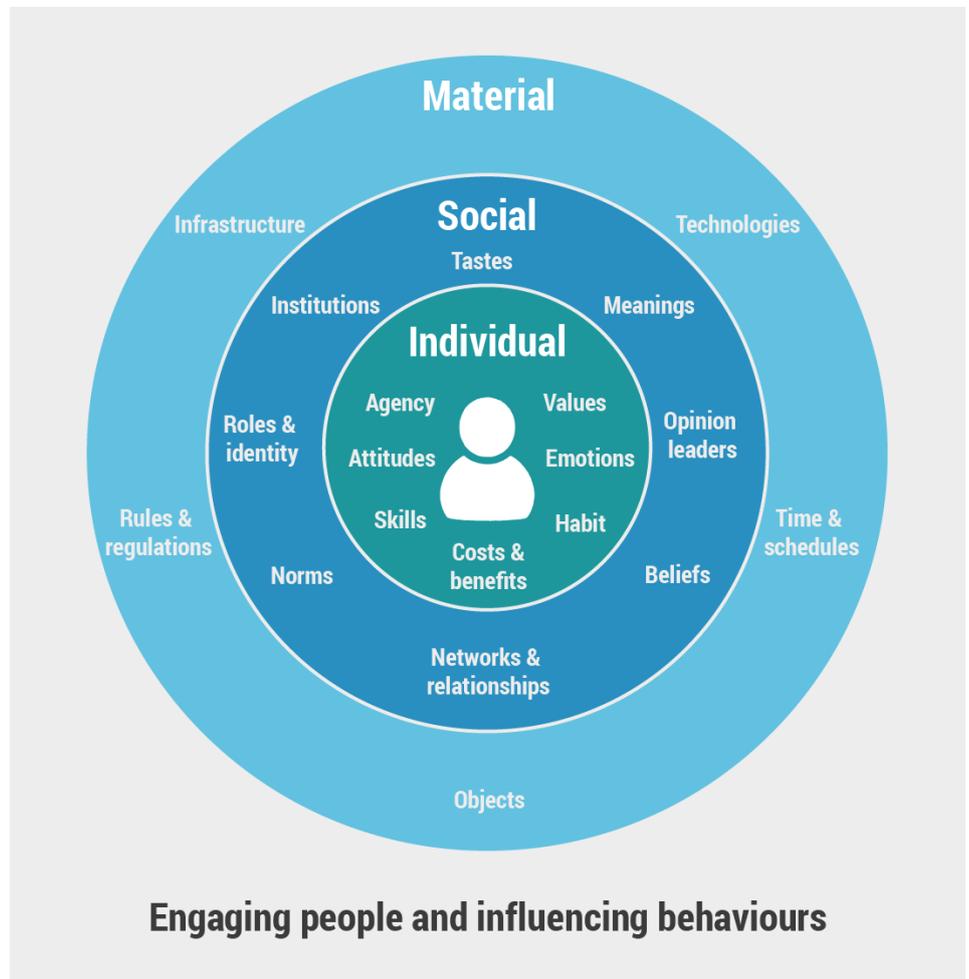
So, what does all this equate to? You need to be aware of the forces that can have an impact on behaviour and shape this behaviour with a strong organisational culture. Failure to do either of these things can spread the wrong message through your workforce, reducing productivity and preventing the organisation from hitting targets.

You want everyone working together with a clear vision of what is expected from them.

Introduction

The Individual, Social and Material (ISM) model is a practical approach to influence people's behaviours and bring about change.

It was originally designed to offer an alternative to the wide array of existing behavioural models and theories and has been developed in the context of environmental sustainability and influencing people's behaviours; however, it is also applicable to a range of other areas.



Overview

The three contexts of I, S and M can be understood as follows:

The individual context: includes the factors held by the individual that affect the choices and the behaviours he or she undertakes. These include an individual's values, attitudes and skills, as well as the calculations he/she makes before acting, including personal evaluations of costs and benefits.

The social context: includes the factors that exist beyond the individual in the social realm; yet shape his or her behaviours. These influences include understandings that are shared amongst groups, such as social norms and the meanings attached to particular activities, as well as people's networks and relationships, and the institutions that influence how groups of individuals behave.

The material context: includes the factors that are 'out there' in the environment and wider world, which both constrain and shape behaviour. These influences include existing 'hard' infrastructures, technologies and regulations, as well as other 'softer' influences such as time and the schedules of everyday life.



Theoretical basis

The factors and influences which appear as labels in the model are principally drawn from three of the most prominent disciplines in studies of human behaviour: behavioural economics, social psychology and sociology.

Part of the practical strength of the model is that each of its underpinning disciplines offers a different view of human conduct and the role of the individual. Whilst it is obviously challenging to sum up entire disciplines within a few sentences, brief and simplified descriptions are provided as follows:

In behavioural economics, the individual takes the central role. The traditional economic representation is that of a 'rational person' – an individual operating usually in isolation to maximise his/her own personal good. Behaviours are understood as decisions, which are ideally arrived at through cost-benefit calculations. In terms of theoretical constructs, behavioural economics incorporates ideas from other disciplines, mostly psychology, to provide decision-making principles which develop this traditional economic view.

In social psychology, the individual is viewed more as a social animal, whose mental calculations are informed as much by emotion as cold calculus. Vitally, the individual also operates as part of a collective, behaving in ways which simply copy the behaviour of others. Nonetheless, behaviours are seen as choices, which ultimately flow from the motivations of the individual, and their identity as part of a group (or in opposition to a group). Social psychology provides myriad models of behaviour, which identify the factors which most strongly bring about the behaviour in question.

Theories of practice within sociology take social practices as the central focus of enquiry, and in so doing move individuals into the background. Social practices can be explained as patterns of action which bring together different ways of 'doing and saying'. No matter how many people are involved in undertaking a practice in a particular time and place, practices are always shared and social; people recognise a practice when they see it and are therefore (more or less) able to reproduce it elsewhere – hence practices also tend towards the regular and routine. These come together to sustain particular practices or split apart when practices fall out of daily use. Practice-based approaches to social change are therefore concerned with intervening at the level of elements, rather than pursuing individuals in order to change 'hearts and minds'.



Conclusion

The ISM model is presented as an approach to help achieve change, which draws on multiple theories and disciplines. The ISM model starts from an understanding of individual behaviour, but sets that within its social and material contexts, illustrating how action on multiple levels by multiple actors is required for inclusive and lasting change.

Changing behaviour with Ditto Sustainability

Traditional training methods tend to focus on imparting and assessing knowledge. The only purpose this traditional form of training serves is checking that learners understand the content. It takes no steps to ensure that it is implemented and adopted, there needs to be a full engagement piece to ensure it is.

How to change employee behaviour

Engagement: If you have any hope of achieving effective behaviour change then you need to engage your learners! A study from Gallup revealed that 63% of learners are not engaged with their workplace learning. To remedy this, you need to utilise engaging interactive content, setting your learners off on a quest to learn. This motivation for the learner to advance through any formal learning programme gives a better shot at shaping employee behaviour.

Social: The 70:20:10 model reveals that only 10% of workplace knowledge is gained from formal learning. The solution is to embrace social learning and retain the 90% of workplace knowledge you should be offering. Through knowledge sharing, your department or wider organisation will soon have an exciting and engaging workplace culture that reinforces positive employee behaviour.

Personalisation

When purchasing learning, a tailored learning experience is more engaging and effective than standard off-the-shelf content. This lets you better shape employee behaviour as the content is more relevant to them and they can see how it can be applied in the workplace.

A constant process

Learning is a constant process, as we acquire new information and knowledge on a daily basis. But learning itself is a process that requires adjustment and to get the best effect from this takes time and dedication. Change doesn't come easily, and the following three points outline how to change behaviour through the learning process.



1. Provide an outline and purpose

The first step should be to assess the current state and then look at the desired end result. It's relatively easy to create exciting new learning experiences then and there, whether in the classroom or from an online perspective.

Before providing learning to your people, it's important to think about just what you feel they should be gaining from the process and just what they are expected to learn and report back on. By providing them with a clear outline and intended purpose on just what they should be learning from this experience will ensure they don't go in feeling unprepared and as though the event is not worth their while, as this will only incite the same behaviour and not encourage a change.

At Ditto Sustainability, we can work with you to ensure the most suitable online learning is available and that your learning outcomes are achieved.



2. Focus on the absorption of learning objectives

This will largely depend on how you take in the information. For a learning experience to be effective and behaviour to progress, we know that this requires the need for it to be engaging, but the learner also needs to be able to perceive its relevance. For example, if the learner has an opportunity to be able to apply what they already know, to then build relevant skills and knowledge to practice in the workplace, they will return prepared to apply exactly what they have learned. If this isn't the case, then there's only so much an awareness and passion for the learning content can do.

When providing learning, it's crucial to seek those out that focus on the relevant learning style, skills and knowledge of the student. This will ensure that whatever is learned in this environment will stick with the person. We understand the need for the learning experience to be able to translate back into the 'real world'.

At Ditto Sustainability, our online learning taps into different learning styles, so whether you are a visual, auditory or kinaesthetic learner, our engaging interactive online content has something for everyone.



3. Apply it in the working world

The practicality of applying what's just been learnt is a massive part of the learning process itself. This part involves using the skills and knowledge within your work environment to ensure that the learning is made a permanent fixture and in turn, creates a behaviour change that produces desired results.

In this last step, it is important that strong management support is provided in order to experience success. It's likely that it will be a difficult process to apply what has been learned if this support isn't there. As is human nature, people and processes can be resistant to change and as learning is changing behaviour, it is inevitable that this resistance will still come.

But if support, encouragement and the right coaching is provided, this behaviour adaptation will be easier to create.

At Ditto Sustainability, our Customer Success team will support you to ensure that learning and learning transfer is as successful as you would expect it to be; we can also provide other online tools and data monitoring solutions to track progress and performance.



To find out more about our behaviour based online learning and how Ditto Sustainability can help your organisation, please visit <http://www.dittosustainability.ai/learning>.

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