

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT (OC)

Organizational Commitment is the ability and willingness to align one's own behaviour with the needs, priorities and goals of the organization, and to promote organizational goals or meet organizational needs. It also includes acting in accordance with organizational decisions and behaving with integrity.

<i>This Means...</i>	<i>This Doesn't Mean...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> publicly voicing acceptance of organizational goals and placing emphasis on those tasks which are priorities to the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complaining about organizational objectives and the difficulties they impose on your work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implementing a organization change thoroughly, even if it does not benefit your department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> withholding effort on organization changes if you or your immediate work group do not benefit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> questioning established procedures and policies which no longer are effective in achieving organization objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> feeling that things should be done differently, but keeping those feelings to yourself
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explaining to team members how a new procedure will benefit both clients and team members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pointing out the flaws in a new procedure, without providing suggestions on how to make it work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suggesting courses of action that others can take to improve client service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> making no effort to help colleagues improve client service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrating responsibility for the overall effectiveness of the group by supporting others' initiatives and professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> giving negative feedback or criticizing the overall effectiveness of the group

Developmental Activities

Level 1-2 Activities

Practice your follow-through in making agreements and commitments to others (e.g., other team members, team leader or manager, or other teams).

- Choose your commitments carefully by evaluating your ability to follow-through before making them.

- Recognize if you have a tendency to make commitments in order to buy more time or to appease others.
- Keep a running list of the commitments or indirect promises you have made to others:
 - ⇒ Check off those you have followed through on.
 - ⇒ Assess how well you deliver on the promises made to others.

Look for opportunities to offer assistance to individuals within your team or in other teams.

- Identify ways in which you or your team can change processes or procedures to help out other teams or functions.
- Ensure you take the time to listen when others request assistance. If you cannot personally help out, suggest someone who can.

Reflection Tip:

- * Make a list of thought leaders in your branch/organization and share it with others.

Analyze the organization to develop a complete picture of the organizational values.

- Identify and select functions and branches which you know very little about.
- Take action to learn more about their values (e.g., read internal documentation developed by the team or function).
- With your manager's approval, contact key people in the team or function to learn more about what they do and how they are impacted by the organization.

Reflection Tips:

- * Use this information to assess how your actions fit with the organization's values.
- * Think about the greater good your organization is trying to accomplish.

Volunteer for a project or assignment that will provide an opportunity to develop a broad understanding of how your organization functions.

- Ask your manager to identify current or planned projects that involve multiple teams and/or functions within the organization.
- Solicit his or her support to join or contribute to the project in some way.
- During your involvement, focus on developing your understanding of the relationship between various organization functions and how you or others fit into the organization.

Reflection Tip:

- * Share your key learnings with your team.

Identify a role model.

- Observe people (particularly senior managers) who are considered good representatives of the organization and people who are or act like shareholders.
- Analyze what they do that makes them good representatives.
- Consider how you might adapt your own behaviour to better support the organization.

Reflection Tip:

- * Think about ways you can give more to the organization that also fulfills some specific need you have.

Monitor your negative and positive comments for a time.

- Record the number of positive and negative comments you make over a two-week period, also noting the context in which the comments were made.
- Review the above, and for each negative comment, decide if it was appropriate and necessary.
- For those negative comments that were necessary, write a new version that conveys the same information, but has a positive tone and can be perceived as constructive criticism.
- Carefully consider comments before delivering feedback to ensure that it is delivered as constructive criticism.
- Make a concerted effort to steadily increase the amount of positive feedback you provide so the ratio of positive to negative is about three to one.

Reflection Tips:

- * Ensure that you deal directly with individuals with whom you are displeased, rather than complaining to others.
- * Check to ensure that you speak positively about the strengths and capabilities of others and refrain, wherever possible, from criticizing others in your conversations.

Level 3 Activities

Find creative alternatives to get the work done and demonstrate your commitment to the organization when you are not able to put in the extra time and effort at work.

- Ask others for help.
- Suggest alternative work arrangements (e.g., working from home).
- Redefine the request or project in order to free up more time, or re-examine your job tasks in order of priority.
- Consider sacrificing other less important responsibilities to accomplish the task at hand.

Reflection Tip:

- * Which of the items on your "To Do" list are most important to the organization?

Identify the behaviours that keep you from making a full commitment to the organization. Complete the following activities:

- Write down the behaviours (e.g., what you do, say to others and/or think to yourself while on the job) which put down or go against the organization's values.
- Identify the most frequent of these behaviours.
- For each behaviour; identify what you gain by continuing the behaviour (e.g., sense of security, greater time with family).
- For each behaviour, identify your cost for continuing the behaviour (e.g., lost opportunity for doing interesting and challenging work; staying at the same level).
- Select one behaviour you feel you can and want to change over the next month.
- Determine the specific actions needed to overcome this behaviour.
- Commit yourself to taking those actions.

Reflection Tip:

- * Share your action plan with someone you trust. Ask for their ongoing feedback and support.

Clarify the contribution of your role to the organization.

- Review the products or services provided by your branch and identify how they fit the goals and mission of the organization.
- Try to get to a point where you can describe briefly and succinctly what your role is, what your branch is responsible for, and your branch's role in achieving the goals of the organization.
- Initiate a discussion with those inside and outside of the organization regarding your branch's role and your place within that mandate.
- Try to get to a point where the people you talk to can clearly understand what it is you do and why you do it.
- Explain to them how your role and services help the organization reach its goals.

Reflection Tip:

- * If someone outside the organization asked you what you do, what would you say?

Think about the big picture.

- Volunteer for projects or assignments that will provide you with an opportunity to see the "big picture". Work to depend your understanding of the relationship between various organizational entities and an understanding of how your organization fits into the network.
- When working with your employees or co-workers, explain your actions or decisions in the context of the "big picture" of your organization.
- Encourage others to see their activities in the light of their contribution to the mission and goals of the department and the organization.

Reflection Tip:

- * Think about the goals and objectives of your colleagues. Try to understand what they are trying to achieve.

Describe your reasons for working for your organization.

- On your own, try to articulate the reasons why you work for the organization:
 - ⇒ Describe the benefits you achieve personally, and the services and benefits you provide to the organization.
 - ⇒ How are the benefits you receive, and those you give, of value to yourself and the organization?

⇒ Write down your reasoning and refer to your notes once a month.

⇒ Make changes as your role changes and expands.

- When dealing with others, both within and outside of the organization, keep these points in mind. Explain to them how your role and services help the organization to reach its goals.
- Consider what it is that you can do to support the activities of your colleagues so that you can meet your shared objectives and the mission and goals of your organization.

Reflection Tip:

- * How are your values similar to organizational values? How are they different? How will you reconcile a discrepancy between them?

Identify a decision that was made by the organization that you may not have initially supported.

- Identify one or two organization-wide initiatives (e.g., new policy or policy change) that will have a major impact on you or a group function (if possible, select an initiative that you may not fully agree with).
- Ask your manager to discuss how the decision was made, especially if he or she is in strong support of the change. Keep the following in mind during your discussions:
 - ⇒ Listen to the views of your manager to get a clear understanding of why he or she is in support of the initiative.
 - ⇒ Set aside your own perspective while listening to the rationale.
 - ⇒ Develop a list of questions or probes you can use to gain more information about his or her point of view (e.g., "Tell me more about why you think that"). Use these probes to help you resist solidifying your opinion about the issues.
 - ⇒ Ask if there are options or viewpoints you have not considered.
- Think of the supporting rationale for the decision and create an argument that you (as the decision maker) would use to defend it.

Think of yourself as a primary stakeholder.

- When faced with a personally difficult decision, consider what you would do if you owned the organization or were the principal stakeholder of the organization.
- Adopt the view that your responsibility goes beyond your specific job accountabilities to include identifying and seizing opportunities that will benefit the larger organization, even when it requires personal or departmental sacrifices.

Evaluate the explicit and implicit contract that you have with the organization.

- What commitments have you made to the organization in terms of the hours you will work and the amount of extra effort you will exert?
- What is your commitment to the organization in comparison to your professional and/or family life?
- What conflicts have occurred in the past regarding these items? What conflicts do you expect to occur in the future?
- Work through any conflicts that you identify, and determine what changes, if any, you need to make to enhance your contribution to the organization while still maintaining a healthy balance with the other areas in your life.

Reflection Tip:

- * Discuss your conclusions with your manager.

Level 4-5 Activities

Enhance your ability to adopt and support organizational perspectives that may not be consistent with your own personal view.

- Identify one or two organization-wide initiatives.
- Set aside your own perspective while listening to the rationale of others.
- Listen to the views of others to get a clear understanding of why they are in support of the initiative.

Reflection Tip:

- * Ensure that you fully understand how the initiative fits into the big picture.

Evaluate if your short and long-term goals are aligned with the organization's mission and strategy.

- Discuss your goals with your manager.
- Identify ways in which you can create, modify, or delete services, processes and/or procedures that would assist the attainment of the organization's long-term goals.
- Discuss your goals that do not directly support the organization's desired outcomes.
- Take action to modify those goals that do not fall in line with the organization's mission or strategy.

Reflection Tip:

* Are any of the Ministries short-term goals out of synch with the long-term strategy?

Help others to understand the needs of the larger organization/organization and the need of personal or departmental sacrifice in order to support this broader perspective.

- Be the first to volunteer to make required changes when the organization faces a crisis or requires changes to meet strategic objectives.
- Be willing to sacrifice in the short-term for long-term gains in the welfare of the organization.
- Where necessary, ask others to make personal sacrifices in order to achieve the long-term goals of the organization.

When current strategies are not working, stop and think about the situation in terms of its impact on the organization.

- Acknowledge that it is not working.
- Make necessary adjustments in your plans, activities, objectives, or behaviours.
- Be willing to make midstream adjustments when things are not going well or when situations change.

Reflection Tip:

* Is there anything that consistently gets in the way of branch/Organization goals? How can you remove the obstacle?

Evaluate whether your branch's short and long-term goals are aligned with the organization's mission and strategy.

- Identify ways in which your department can create, modify, or delete services and procedures that would further the attainment of your organization's long-term goals.
- Re-evaluate those goals that do not directly support desired organizational outcomes, and consider whether they are worthy of further investment.

Before making major decisions and/or prioritizing branch or organization goals, evaluate the consequences those actions will have on other parts of the organization and on the organization as a whole.

- Ask yourself who or what groups will benefit from this action and who will be negatively affected.

- Make sure you work with other branches/ministries who will be affected by your decisions to minimize the impact whenever possible.
- Consider whether the long-term gain to the organization would out-weigh short-term consequences.
- Communicate your reasoning with stakeholders.

Address performance issues.

- Constructively address situations where people's performance does not meet organizational standards.
- Point out the impact the person's performance has on the organization's ability to meet its objectives.
- Discuss any barriers that might be getting in the way of full performance.
- Encourage the person to come up with alternatives. Solutions generated by the individual are more likely to be accepted.
- Consider consulting human resource professionals if repeated attempts do not result in improvement.

Reflection Tip:

- * Be sure to recognize and reinforce improvements in performance, especially in the early stages.

Foster an environment where people take ownership of the organizational objectives.

- Schedule regular individual discussions with members who have engagement, management or performance counseling responsibilities to discuss the progress of their teams and the achievement of their own personal goals.
- Schedule regular team meetings to discuss initiatives that reinforce the mission, values and goals of the branch or organization.
- Ask your project managers to provide regular updates on their progress. If a key result is falling short of target, work with them to identify specific actions to get it back on track.
- Encourage others to set personal objectives that are aligned with the strategic direction of your branch or organization.
- Act as a role model by aligning your own personal objectives and actively supporting organizational initiatives.