

# ‘Advances in the Treatment of Context in Organizational Research’

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## Abstract

This presentation will offer some reflections on the state of the art of including context in organizational research. I will present some data showing that context has been ignored in much past research. At the same time, evidence will be offered that there is increasing interest in incorporating context in such research, and that this is part of a larger trend in the social, behavioral, and medical sciences. Reasons for the increased interest in context will be explored. The criteria for good theories incorporating context will be presented and illustrated with examples from trait activation theory, event system theory, and a contextual theory of social media. Examples of the impact of context on absenteeism from work and on personality will be offered. I will discuss the fallacy of “controlling away” context, the issue of measuring context, and the use of meta-analysis with macro data to explore context effects. I will conclude by emphasizing the capacity of context to integrate as well as to differentiate organizational phenomena.

## Bio

Gary Johns (PhD, Wayne State University) is Professor Emeritus of Management in the John Molson School of Business, Concordia University, Montreal. He has research interests in absenteeism from work, presenteeism, personality, job design, research methodology, and the impact of context on organizational behavior. He has published in *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *Personnel Psychology*, *Journal of Management*, *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *Canadian Psychology*, *Human Resource Management Review*, *Human Relations*, *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, *Cross Cultural Management*, and *Psychology Today*. Co-author of *Organizational Behavior: Understanding and Managing Life at Work* (10th Edition, Pearson). Recipient of Academy of Management Organizational Behavior Division's New Concept Award, Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology's Edwin E. Ghiselli Research Design Award, the Canadian Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology's Award for Distinguished Contributions to Industrial and Organizational Psychology, the Concordia University Research Award, the award for the Best Article published in *Human Relations* in 2007, the award for the Outstanding Paper published in *Cross Cultural Management* in 2013, the 2016 Academy of Management Review Decade Award, and the 2017 Google Scholar Classic Paper Commendation.