

# Operant conditioning essay sample

[Psychology](#), [Behaviorism](#)



Rico is a six-year old boy who does not want to eat his vegetables. His mother knows how important it is for Rico to be conditioned into a vegetable diet to avoid future health ailments. Rico's family has a condition of hypertension and his mother does not want him at risk. Using counter-conditioning, how will you condition Rico to eat vegetables?

Every six-year old boy loves smoothies and juices and Rico will probably like that too. In this study, vegetables will be the unconditioned stimulus which gives displeasure to Rico; and the juicing will be the conditioned stimulus which gives him the unconditioned response of pleasure. When vegetable was combined with his favorite juice we will get this unconditioned response of likeness. When we turned the vegetable into a juice we will get this conditioned response of pleasure, vegetable juicing will make Rico drink all the juice he wants and get the vitamins and minerals he needed.

### Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory

Applicable for Case 1:

Positive Reinforcement:

Negative Reinforcement:

Rico will get a chocolate for drinking vegetable juice. Chocolates aren't harmful if they were given just enough and is also good for the brain. The vegetable juice should taste good to remove that disgust taste a child expects from a vegetable. Positive Punishment:

Negative Punishment:

Rico will be scolded for not drinking the vegetable juice.

Rico wouldn't be allowed to play outside if he didn't finish the vegetable juice.

Teacher Coney is having problems with Kevin, a seven-year old first-grader. During class, he would walk around the classroom, write on his classmates' work activity and sometimes stick gum on his classmates' hair. At play, he would grab the ball and run off with it causing his classmates to cry. Several complaints reached the guidance office from parents regarding Kevin's behavior.

The school counselor was asked by the school principal to look into the matter. The counselor sat quietly at the back of the classroom and started observing the whole class including Teacher Coney, not only Kevin. During the counselor's observations, she noticed that Teacher Coney and Kevin's classmates paid more attention to Kevin only when he is doing "naughty" things but not when he is behaving properly. After her observation, the counselor had a conference with Teacher Coney, and together they diagrammed a plan to shape Kevin's behavior. How do you think they are going to do it?

Shaping-Training Behavior:

Kevin is a typical kid who loves attention. When you get what you want for being naughty then you'll keep doing it. A good deeds chart will be a nice idea, where he will get a silver star for every 3 good deeds and a gold star for a remarkable one. Knowing that you have a competition among your classmates will give Kevin the motivation to do better and earn more stars.

Eventually, he will get used to being nice and won't have to do it for the rewards anymore.

Procedures in Shaping Behavior:

1. Determine the Goal:

Shape Kevin's behavior by praise, positive attention and ignoring, pre-teaching and teaching, logical consequences and rewards system. 2. Take note of the Natural Behavior:

Kevin loves attention, and he was being naughty to get his teacher's and classmate's attention. If he is ignored for being naughty, there will be a high possibility that he will refrain doing it, and if he is praised for being nice and quiet there's a chance that he will be more of like that. 3. Schedule of Reinforcement:

Fixed Interval

Fixed Ratio

1: 1 Being nice for 1 day without bullying, running and being naughty will give Kevin little rewards such as candies, stickers and you should give different rewards that will excite and surprise him. 3: 1 It would be nice to make a good deed chart for the entire class wherein, for every 3 good deeds such as remaining seated and quiet for the duration of the class will give them a silver star. Kevin will notice if his classmates have more stars than him and will strive harder to do better than them. Variable Interval

Variable Ratio

It would be nice if the teacher would praise Kevin for being nice every now and then, if Kevin won't know when the teacher is looking or not, he will

remain nice longer until he is noticed. Getting a gold star for unremarkable good deed. If you give rewards for higher good deed, then there will be a possibility that he will do it again and be used to it without him noticing.

### Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory

Applicable for Case 2:

Positive Reinforcement:

Negative Reinforcement:

Kevin will get a corresponding star depending on the weight of his good deed. He should be ignored if he is being naughty.

Positive Punishment:

Negative Punishment:

Kevin will be lectured for being naughty.

Kevin would be given a time out for being naughty.

Application of Learning Theories:

A Project in General Psychology

References:

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