

# Debt equity ratio persuasive essay



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Measurable and relatively permanent change in behavior through experience, instruction, or study. Whereas individual learning is selective, group learning is essentially political its outcomes depend largely on power playing in the group. Learning itself cannot be measured, but its results can be. In the words of Harvard Business School psychologist Chris Argyris, learning is "detection and correction of error" where an error means "any mismatch between our intentions and what actually happens." Read more: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/learning.html#ixzz2NXOatdhg>

Definition: To gain knowledge or information of; to ascertain by inquiry, study, or investigation; to receive instruction concerning; to fix in the mind; to acquire understanding of, or skill; as, to learn the way; to learn a lesson; to learn dancing; to learn to skate; to learn the violin; to learn the truth about something.

3 INTRODUCTION I want to talk about learning. But not the lifeless, sterile, futile, quickly forgotten stuff that is crammed in to the mind of the poor helpless individual tied into his seat by ironclad bonds of conformity!

I am talking about LEARNING - the insatiable curiosity that drives the adolescent boy to absorb everything he can see or hear or read about gasoline engines in order to improve the efficiency and speed of his 'cruiser'. I am talking about the student who says, "I am discovering, drawing in from the outside, and making that which is drawn in a real part of me." I am talking about any learning in which the experience of the learner progresses along this line: "No, no, that's not what I want"; "Wait! This is closer to what I am interested in, what I need"; "Ah, here it is!"

Now I'm grasping and comprehending what I need and what I want to know!

" CarlRogers 1983: 18-19 Learning is a powerful incentive for many employees to stick to certain organizations. Learning has a significant impact on individual behavior as it influences abilities, role perceptions and motivation. Along with its role in individual behavior, learning is essential for knowledge management. Knowledge management enhances an organization's capacity to acquire, share and utilize knowledge in ways that improve its survival and success. MEANING AND DEFINITION

Learning is defined as " a relatively permanent change in behavior that occurs as a result of prior experience. " Learning is understood as the modification of behavior through practice, training, or experience. This is supplemented with five important components of learning: 1. Learning involves change: a change may be for good or bad. Change may not be evident until a situation arises in which the new behavior can occur. Learning is not always reflected in performance 2. Not all changes reflect learning: to constitute learning, change should be relatively permanent.

Temporary changes may be only reflective and fail to represent any learning. This requirement, therefore, rules out behavioral changes caused by fatigue or drugs. 3. Learning is reflected in behavior: a change in an individual's thought process or attitude, not accompanied by behavior, is no learning. It should be further clarified that learning needs to result in behavior potentiality and not necessarily in the behavior itself. The reason for this distinction lies in the fact that an individual may learn but owing to lack of motivation, may not exhibit any changed behavior. 4.

The change in behavior should occur as a result of experience, practice or training: this implies that behavior caused from maturity, disease, or physical damages does not constitute learning 4 5. The practice or experience must be reinforced in order for learning to occur: if reinforcement does not accompany the practice or experience, the behavior will eventually disappear. 6. Though not implied in any standard definition of learning: contrary to popular belief, learning is not confined to one's schooling. Learning occurs throughout one's life 5 THEORIES OF LEARNING There are four theories which explain how learning occurs.

They are 1. Classical conditioning 2. Operant conditioning 3. Cognitive theory 4. Social learning theory Classical Conditioning Classical conditioning is based on the premise that a physical event - termed a stimulus - that initially does not elicit a particular response gradually acquires the capacity to elicit that response as a result of repeated pairing with a stimulus that elicits a reaction. Learning of this type is quite common and seems to play an important role in such reactions as strong fears, taste aversions, some aspects of sexual behavior and even racial or ethnic prejudice.

Classical Conditioning Classical conditioning is based on the premise that a physical event - termed a stimulus - that initially does not elicit a particular response gradually acquires the capacity to elicit that response as a result of repeated pairing with a stimulus that elicits a reaction. Learning of this type is quite common and seems to play an important role in such reactions as strong fears, taste aversions, some aspects of sexual behavior and even racial or ethnic prejudice.

Despite the theoretical possibility of the widespread applicability of classical conditioning, most theorists agree that it represents only a very small part of total human learning. Skinner, in particular, felt that classical conditioning explains only respondent (reflexive) behaviors. These are the involuntary responses that are elicited by a stimulus. Skinner felt that the more complex human behaviors cannot be explained by classical conditioning alone. He felt that most human behavior affects, or operates on, the environment. The latter type of behavior is learnt through operant conditioning.

In an organizational setting we can see classical conditioning operating. For example, at one manufacturing plant, every time the top executives from the head office would make a visit, the plant management would clean up the administrative offices and wash the windows. This went on for years. Eventually, employees would turn on their best behavior and look prim and proper whenever the windows were cleaned even in those occasions when the cleaning was not paired with visit from the top brass. People had learnt to associate the cleaning of the windows with the visit from the head office.

The first model, classical conditioning, was initially identified by Pavlov in the salivation reflex of dogs. Salivation is an innate reflex, or unconditioned response, to the presentation of food, an unconditioned stimulus. Pavlov showed that dogs could be conditioned to salivate merely to the sound of a buzzer (a conditioned stimulus), after it was sounded a number of times in conjunction with the presentation of food. Learning is said to occur because salivation has been conditioned to a new stimulus that did not elicit it initially.

The pairing of food with the buzzer acts to reinforce the buzzer as the prominent stimulus. Operant Conditioning Operant conditioning also called instrumental conditioning refers to the process that our behavior produces certain consequences are. If our actions have pleasant effects, then we will be more likely to repeat them in the future. If, however, our actions have unpleasant effects, we are less likely to repeat them in the future. Thus, according to this theory, behavior is the function of its consequences.

The famous Skinner box demonstrated operant conditioning by placing a rat in a box in which the pressing of a small bar produces food. Skinner showed that the rat eventually learns to press the bar regularly to obtain food. Besides reinforcement, punishment produces avoidance behavior, which appears to weaken learning but not curtail it. In both types of conditioning, stimulus generalization occurs; i. e. , the conditioned response may be elicited by stimuli similar to the original conditioned stimulus but not used in the original training.

Stimulus generalization has enormous practical importance, because it allows for the application of learned behaviors across different contexts. Behavior modification is a type of treatment resulting from these stimulus/response models of learning. It operates under the assumption that if behavior can be learned, it can also be unlearned. Operant conditioning emphasizes voluntary behaviors. Researchers call them "operant behavior" because they operate on the environment - they make the environment respond in ways that we want. Operant conditioning has a great impact on human learning.

It also explains much of organizational behavior. For example, it might be said employees work eight hours a day, six days a week, in order to feed,

clothe and shelter themselves and their families. Working is instrumental only in obtaining food, clothing and shelter. Some significant insights can be gained directly from this kind of analysis. The consequences of organizational behavior can change the environmental situation and greatly affect subsequently employee behaviors. Managers can analyze consequences of organizational behavior to help accomplish the goals of prediction and control. Cognitive theory of learning

Contemporary perspective about learning is that it is a cognitive process. Cognitive process assumes that people are conscious, active participants in how they learn. Cognitive theory of learning assumes that the organism learns the meaning of various objects and event and learned responses depending on the meaning assigned to stimuli. Wolfgang Kohler showed that a protracted process of trial-and-error may be replaced by a sudden understanding that grasps the interrelationships of a problem. This process, called insight, is more akin to piecing together a puzzle than responding to a stimulus.

Edward Tolman (1930) found that unrewarded rats learned the layout of a maze, yet this was not apparent until they were later rewarded with food. Tolman called this latent learning, and it has been suggested that the rats developed cognitive maps of the maze that they were able to apply immediately when a reward was offered. The cognitive theory of learning is relevant in the contemporary managerial practices. Many motivation theories center around the concept of cognition. Expectations, attributions and locus of control are all cognitive concepts requiring attention while motivating employees.

Social learning theory Also called observational learning, social learning theory, emphasizes the ability of an individual to learn by observing others. The important models may include parents, teachers, peers, motion pictures, TV artists, bosses and others. An individual acquires new knowledge by observing what happens to his or her model. This is popularly known as vicarious learning. A learner acquires tacit knowledge and skills through vicarious learning. Social learning has considerable relevance in organizational behavior.

A great deal of what is learned about how to behave in organizations can be explained as the result of the process of observational learning. A new hire acquires job skills by observing what an experienced employee does. Observational learning also occurs in a very informal, unarticulated manner. For instance, people who experience the norms and traditions of their organizations and who subsequently incorporate these into their own behavior may be recognized as having learned through observation. Social learning is also valuable because it enhances the self-efficacy of the learner.

Self-efficacy refers to a person's belief that he or she has the ability, motivation and situational contingencies to complete a task successfully. People strong in self-efficacy have a 'can do' attitude towards a specific task and, more generally, with other challenges in life. Social learning increases self-efficacy because people gain greater self-confidence after observing someone else do it than if they are simply told what to do. Managers can shape employee behavior by systematically reinforcing each successive step that moves the individual closer to the desired response.



If an employee, for example, who has been chronically a half-hour late for work comes in only twenty minutes late, the boss can reinforce that improvement.

### PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

Principles of learning are highly useful for trainer in order to impart maximum knowledge and skills to the trainees. However, blind adherence to these principles can cause more harm than good. Each principle should, therefore, be interpreted and applied carefully in full consideration of the particular task being learned and the most important of them are

- Motivation
- Reinforcement
- Whole versus part learning
- Learning curves
- Meaningfulness of material
- Learning styles

**Motivation** The concept of motivation is basic because, without motivation learning does not take place or, at least, is not discernible. Motivation may be seen at different levels of complexity of a situation. A thirsty rat will learn the path through a maze to a dish of water; it is not likely to do so well, or even more purposefully at all, if it is satiated. On a broader level, a college student must have the need and drive to accomplish a task and reach a specific goal.

**Reinforcement, punishment and extinction**

Reinforcement, punishment and extinction play a key role in learning process. Reinforcement is used to enhance desirable behavior; punishment and extinction are employed to minimize undesirable behavior. Reinforcement is the attempt to develop or strengthen desirable behavior. There are two types of reinforcement: positive and negative. Positive reinforcement strengthens and enhances behavior by the presentation of positive reinforcers. There are primary reinforcers and secondary reinforcers. Primary reinforcers satisfy basic biological needs and include food and water. However, primary reinforcers do not always reinforce.

For instance, food may not be a reinforcer to someone who has just completed a five-course meal. Most behaviors in organizations are influenced by secondary reinforcers. These include such benefits as money, status, grades, trophies and praise from others. These include such benefits as money, status, grades, trophies and praise from others. These become positive reinforcers because of their associations with the primary reinforcers and hence are often called conditioned reinforcers. It should be noted that an event that functions as a positive reinforcer at one time or in one context may have a different effect at another time or in another place. For example, food may serve as a positive reinforcer for a person who is hungry, but not when the person, as stated above, has already a large meal. Clearly, a stimulus that functions as a positive reinforcer for one person may fail to operate in a similar manner for another person. Within itself, positive reinforcement has several principles. • The principle of contingent reinforcement states that the reinforcer must be administered only if the desired behavior has occurred.

A reinforcer administered when the desired behavior has not been performed becomes ineffective. • The principle of immediate reinforcement states that the reinforcer will be most effective if administered immediately after the desired behavior has occurred. The more time that elapses after the behavior occurs, the less effective the reinforcer will be. • The principle of reinforcement size stated that the larger the amount of reinforcement delivered after the desired behavior, the more effect the reinforcer will have on the frequency of the desired behavior.

The amount or size of reinforcer is relative. A reinforcer that may be insignificant to one person may be significant to another person. Thus, the

size of the reinforcer must be determined in relation both to the behavior and the individual. • The principles of reinforcement deprivation states that the more a person is deprived of the reinforcer, the greater effect it will have on the future occurrence of the desired behavior. However, if an individual recently has had enough of a reinforcer and is satisfied the reinforcer will have less effect.

In negative reinforcement, an unpleasant event that precedes a behavior is removed when the desired behavior occurs. This procedure increases the likelihood that the desired behavior will occur. Just as there are positive reinforcers, there are the stimuli that strengthen responses that permit an organism to avoid or escape from their presence. Thus, when we perform an action that allows us to escape from a negative reinforcer that is already present or to avoid the threatened application of one, our tendency to perform this action in the future increases.

Some negative reinforcers such as intense heat, extreme cold, or electric shock, exert their effects the first time they are encountered, whereas others acquire their impact through repeated association. We see negative reinforcement in organizations and in personal life. Supervisors apply negative reinforcement when they stop criticizing employees whose poor performance has improved. By withholding the criticism, employees are more likely to repeat behaviors that enhance their performance. Negative reinforcement also occurs when parents give in to their children's tantrums- especially in public places, such as restaurants and shopping malls.

Over time, the parent's tendency to give in may increase, because doing so stops screaming. Thus, both positive and negative reinforcement are procedures that strengthen or increase behavior. Positive reinforcement strengthens and increase behavior by the presentation of desirable consequences. Negative reinforcement strengthens and increases behavior by the threat of and the use of an undesirable consequence or the termination or withdrawal of an undesirable consequence. Negative reinforcement is sometimes confused with punishment, because both use unpleasant stimuli to influence behavior.

However, negative reinforcement is used to increase the frequency of a desired behavior, whereas punishment is used to decrease the frequency of an undesired behavior. Schedules of reinforcement, positive or negative, need to be properly scheduled. Schedules of reinforcement determine when reinforcers are applied. Psychologists have identified several different schedules of reinforcement. When reinforcement is administered uninterrupted, it is called continuous reinforcement. Instead, in organizations, reinforcers are administered following partial reinforcement schedules.

Four varieties of partial reinforcement schedules have great relevance to organizations. They are

- Fixed interval schedule: It means providing reinforcement on a predetermined, constant schedule. The first desired behavior to occur after the interval has elapsed is reinforced. Eg: monthly pay cheque
- Variable interval schedule: It also uses time as the basis for applying reinforcement, but it varies the intervals between reinforcements.

Fixed ratio schedule: Reinforcement is administered after the desired behaviors occur a specified number of times. Eg: Piece rating •

Variable ratio schedule: in this a certain number of desired behaviours must occur before the reinforcer is delivered, but the number of behaviours varies around some average. This type of reinforcement schedule provokes most interest and is preferred by employees for some tasks. It tends to be the most powerful of all the reinforcement schedules. Slot machines and a number of gambling devices operate on a variable ratio schedule. Most of the time when people put a coin into the slot they lose. But, after some unknown number of plays, the machine will payoff. Punishment is the attempt to eliminate or weaken undesirable behavior. It is used in two ways. One way to punish a person is to apply a negative consequence called punishers - following an

21 CONCLUSION Learning is the acquisition and development of memories and behaviors, including skills, knowledge, understanding, values, and wisdom. It is the product of experience and the goal of education. Learning ranges from simple forms of learning such as habituation and classical conditioning seen in many animal species, to more complex activities such as play, seen only in relatively intelligent animals.

Some years ago Saljo (1979) carried out a simple, but very useful piece of research. He asked a number of adult students what they understood by learning. Their responses fell into five main categories: 1. Learning as a quantitative increase in knowledge. Learning is acquiring information or 'knowing a lot'. 2. Learning as memorising. Learning is storing information that can be reproduced. 3. Learning as acquiring facts, skills, and methods

that can be retained and used as necessary. 4. Learning as making sense or abstracting meaning.

Learning involves relating parts of the subject matter to each other and to the real world. 5. Learning as interpreting and understanding reality in a different way. Learning involves comprehending the world by reinterpreting knowledge. (quoted in Ramsden 1992: 26) As Paul Ramsden comments, we can see immediately that conceptions 4 and 5 are qualitatively different from the first three. Conceptions 1 to 3 imply a less complex view of learning. Learning is something external to the learner. It may even be something that just happens or is done to you by teachers (as in conception 1).

In a way learning becomes a bit like shopping. People go out and buy knowledge - it becomes their possession. The last two conceptions look to the 'internal' or personal aspect of learning. Learning is seen as something that you do in order to understand the real world. In today's fast-changing world, an employee is periodically required to learn new knowledge and skills. This is dramatically apparent from the mushrooming uses of the Internet, as it changes the ways people perform routine functions and discover new ways of obtaining and acting on information