



INTEGRATED INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT

Our Accreditations



Our Standards



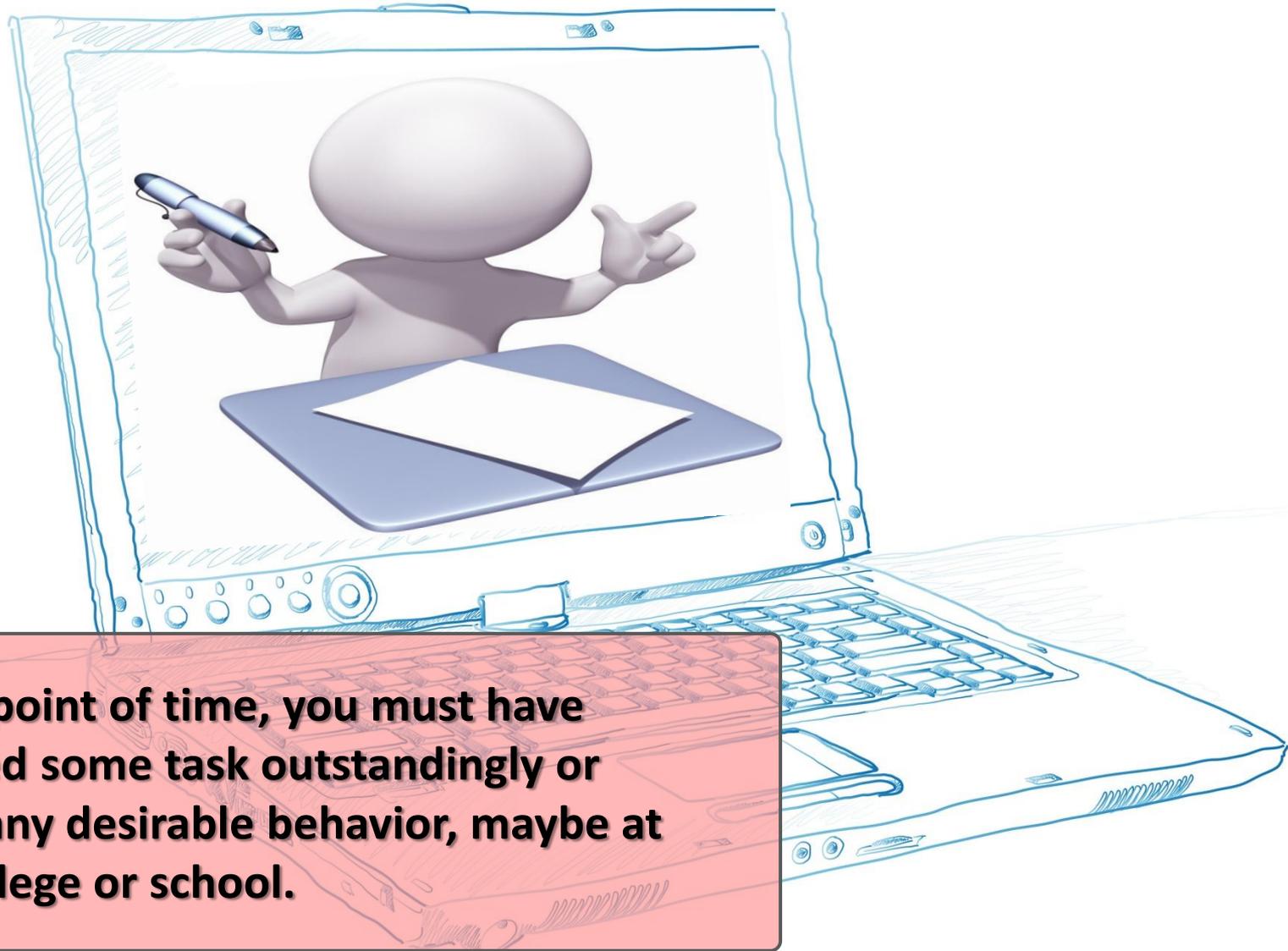


Reinforcement Theory of Motivation

Course Objectives

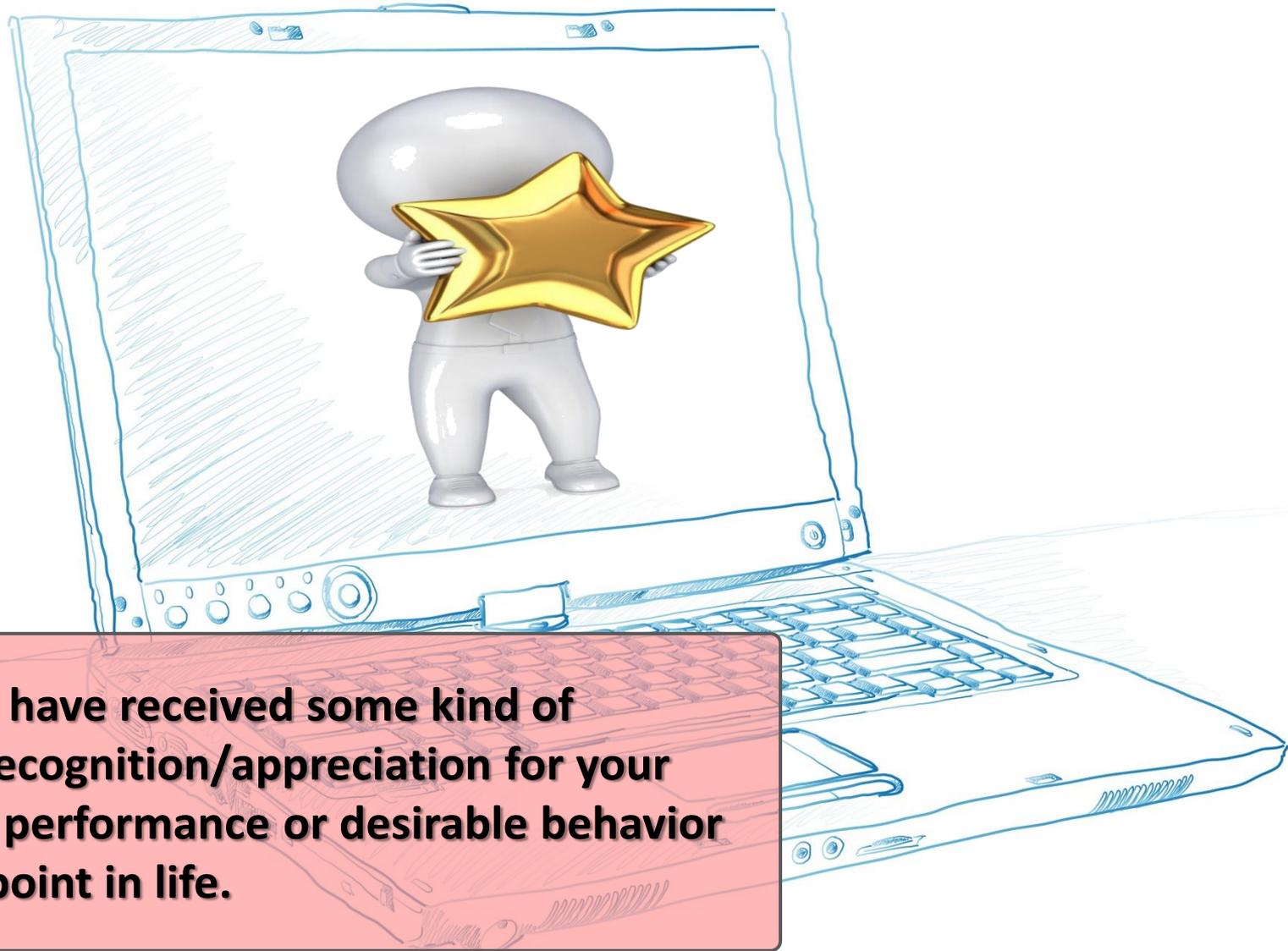
- Explain What is the Reinforcement Theory of Motivation
- Explain What is meant by the 'Law of Effect'
- Explain What is meant by the 'Quantitative Law of Effect'
- Explain the Types of Reinforcement
- Describe the Methods to Increase Desirable Behaviors
- Explain What is meant by Avoidance Learning
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Introduction



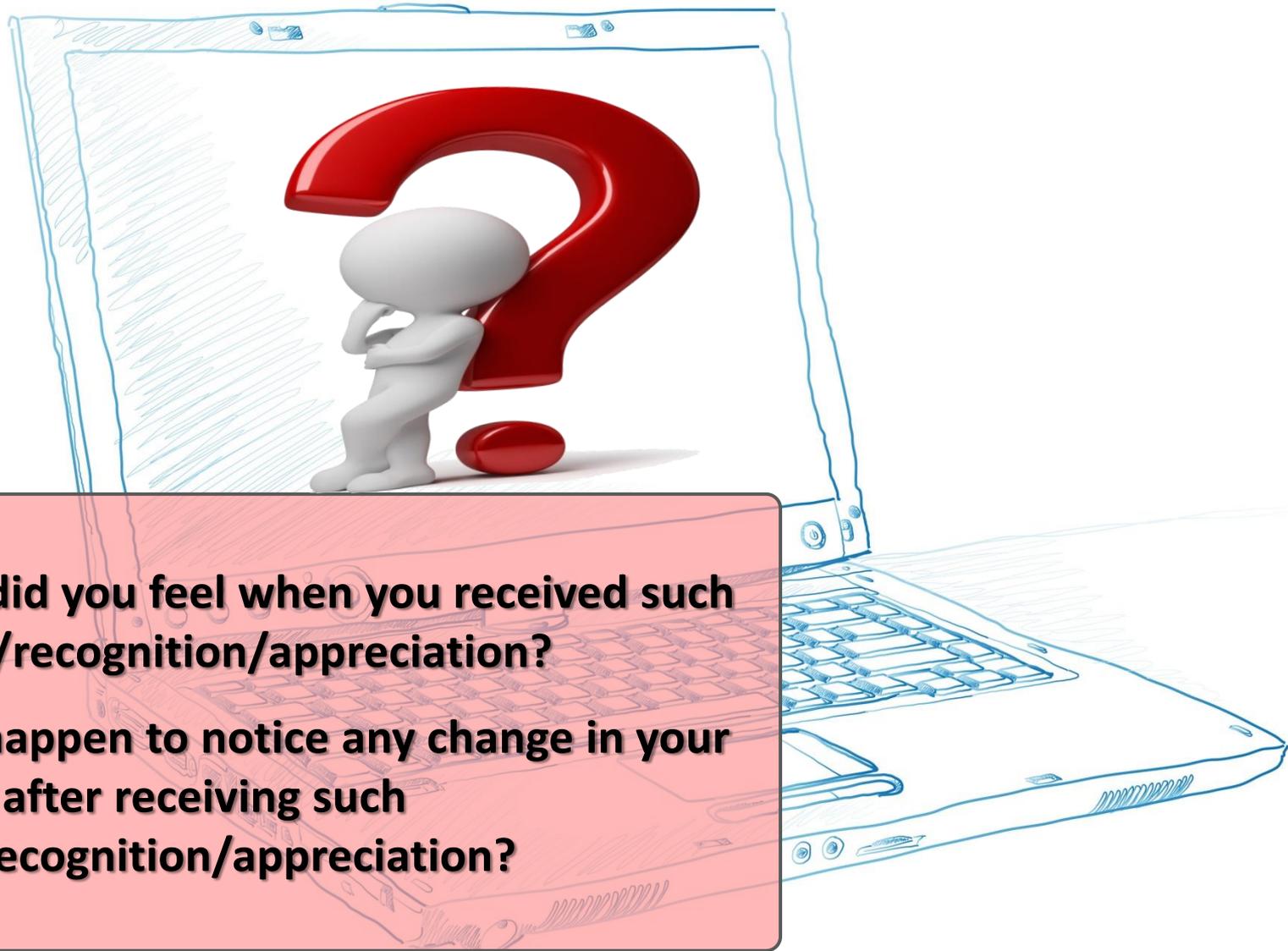
- **At some point of time, you must have performed some task outstandingly or showed any desirable behavior, maybe at work, college or school.**

Introduction



- **You must have received some kind of reward/recognition/appreciation for your excellent performance or desirable behavior at some point in life.**

Introduction



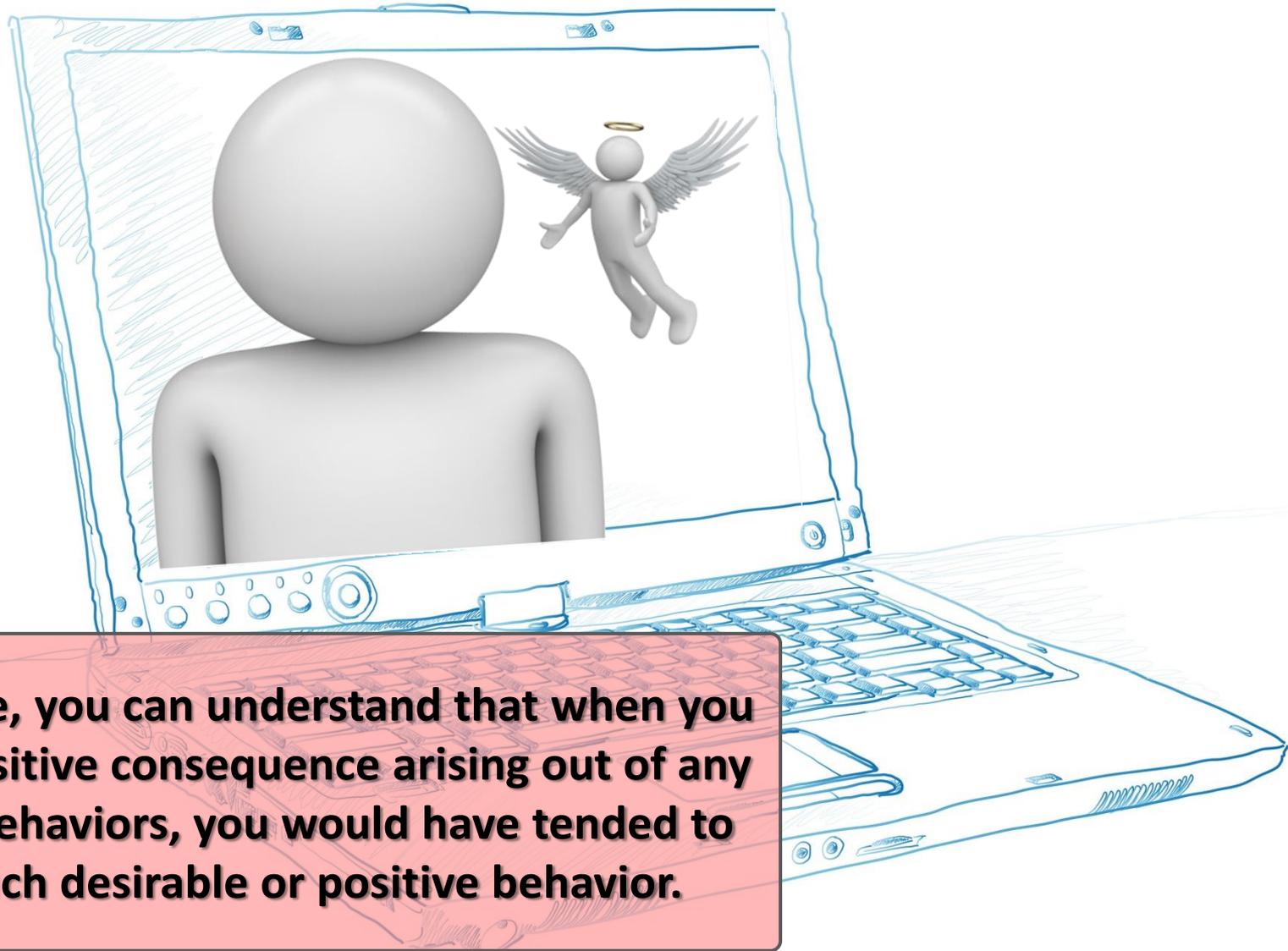
- **So, how did you feel when you received such a reward/recognition/appreciation?**
- **Did you happen to notice any change in your behavior after receiving such reward/recognition/appreciation?**

Introduction



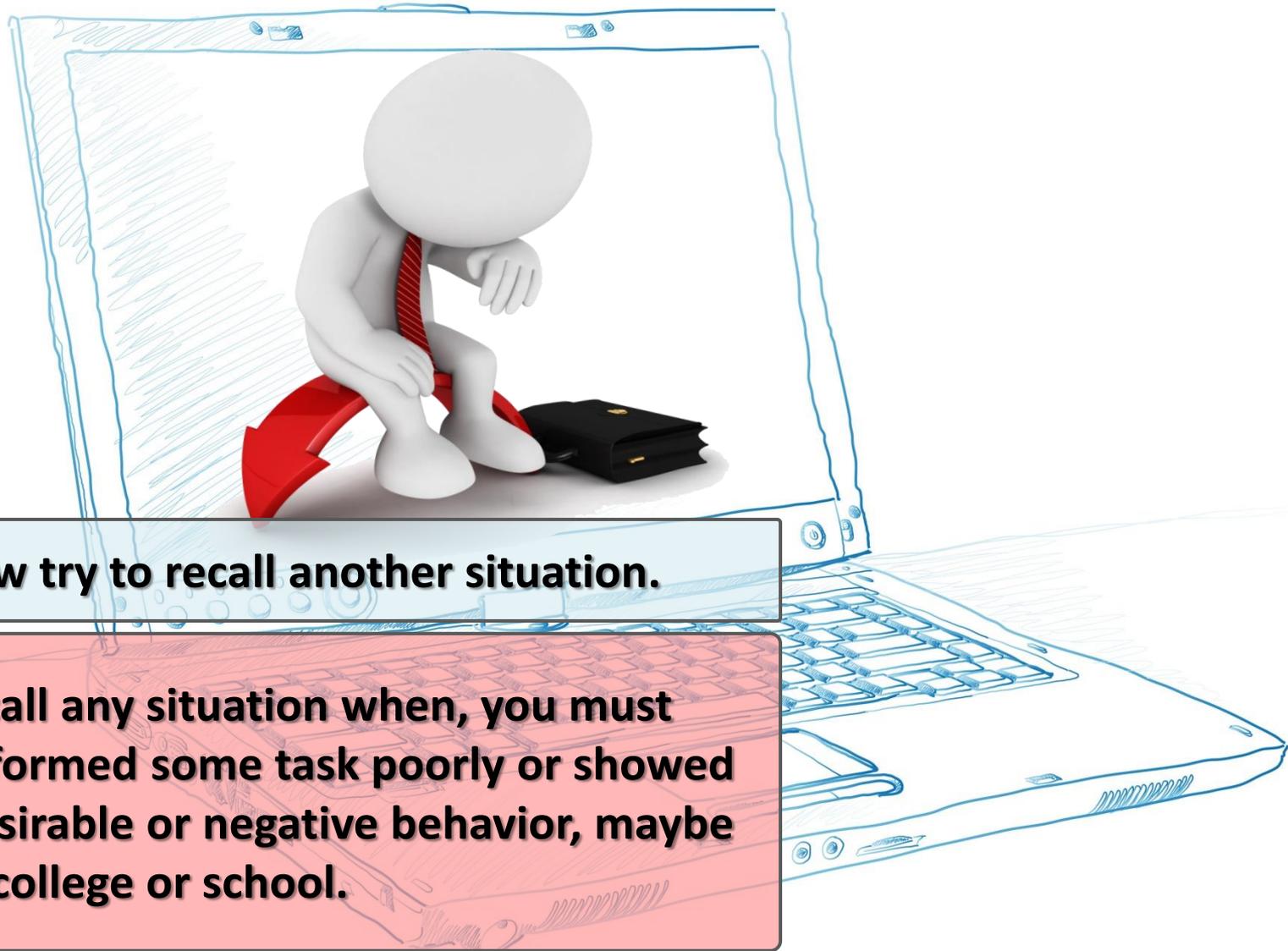
- **It is but obvious that on receiving any reward / recognition/ appreciation, you must have felt exhilarated and very proud of yourself. If you would recall, when you receive such reward/ recognition/ appreciation, your aim would always be to behave or repeat such behaviors that lead you to receive such reward/ recognition/ appreciation.**

Introduction



- **Therefore, you can understand that when you saw a positive consequence arising out of any of your behaviors, you would have tended to repeat such desirable or positive behavior.**

Introduction



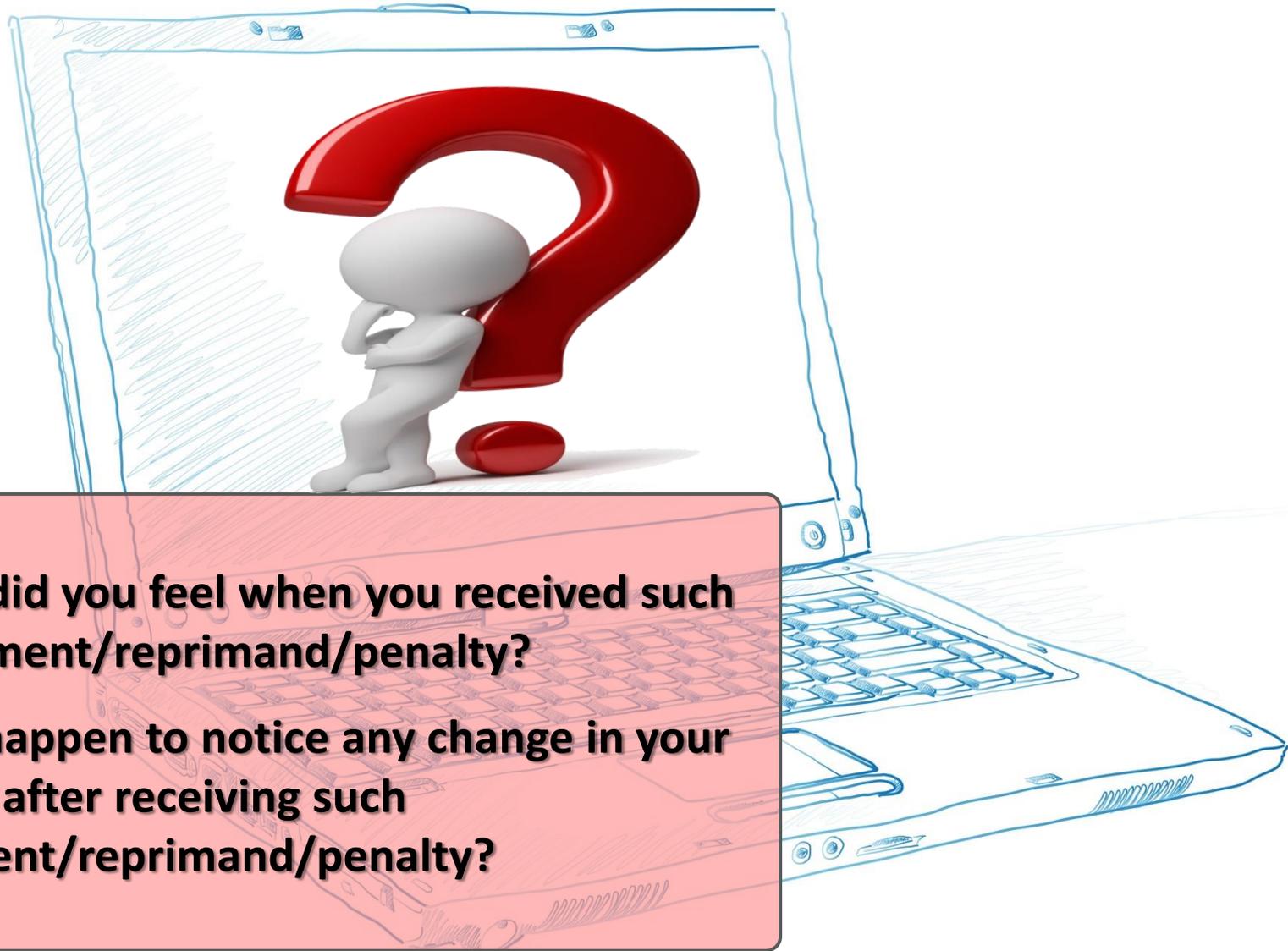
- **Let us now try to recall another situation.**
- **Try to recall any situation when, you must have performed some task poorly or showed any undesirable or negative behavior, maybe at work, college or school.**

Introduction



- **You must have received some kind of punishment/reprimand/penalty for your poor performance or undesirable behavior at some point in life.**

Introduction



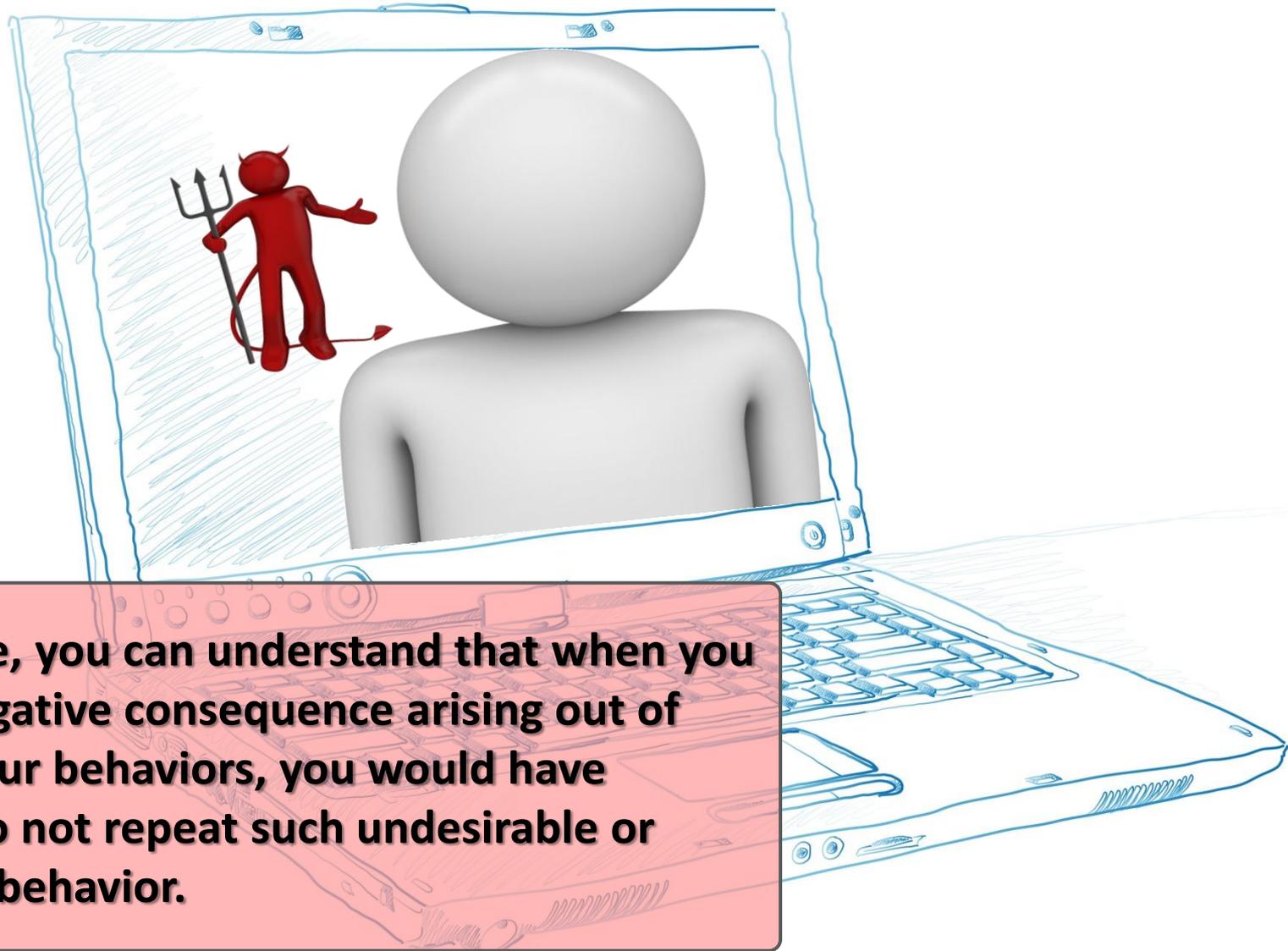
- **So, how did you feel when you received such a punishment/reprimand/penalty?**
- **Did you happen to notice any change in your behavior after receiving such punishment/reprimand/penalty?**

Introduction



- **It is but obvious that on receiving any punishment/reprimand/penalty, you must have felt unhappy and dejected with yourself. If you would recall, when you receive such punishment/reprimand/penalty, your aim would always be to not behave or to not repeat such behaviors that lead you to receive such punishment/reprimand/penalty.**

Introduction



- **Therefore, you can understand that when you saw a negative consequence arising out of any of your behaviors, you would have tended to not repeat such undesirable or negative behavior.**

Introduction



Let us learn about
**'Reinforcement
Theory of Motivation'**
in detail.

- **Based on such human behaviour, B. F. Skinner and his associates proposed a theory of motivation known as 'Reinforcement Theory of Motivation' which states that individual's behavior is a function of its consequences. It is based on 'law of effect', that is, individual's behavior with positive consequences tends to be repeated, but individual's behavior with negative consequences tends not to be repeated.**

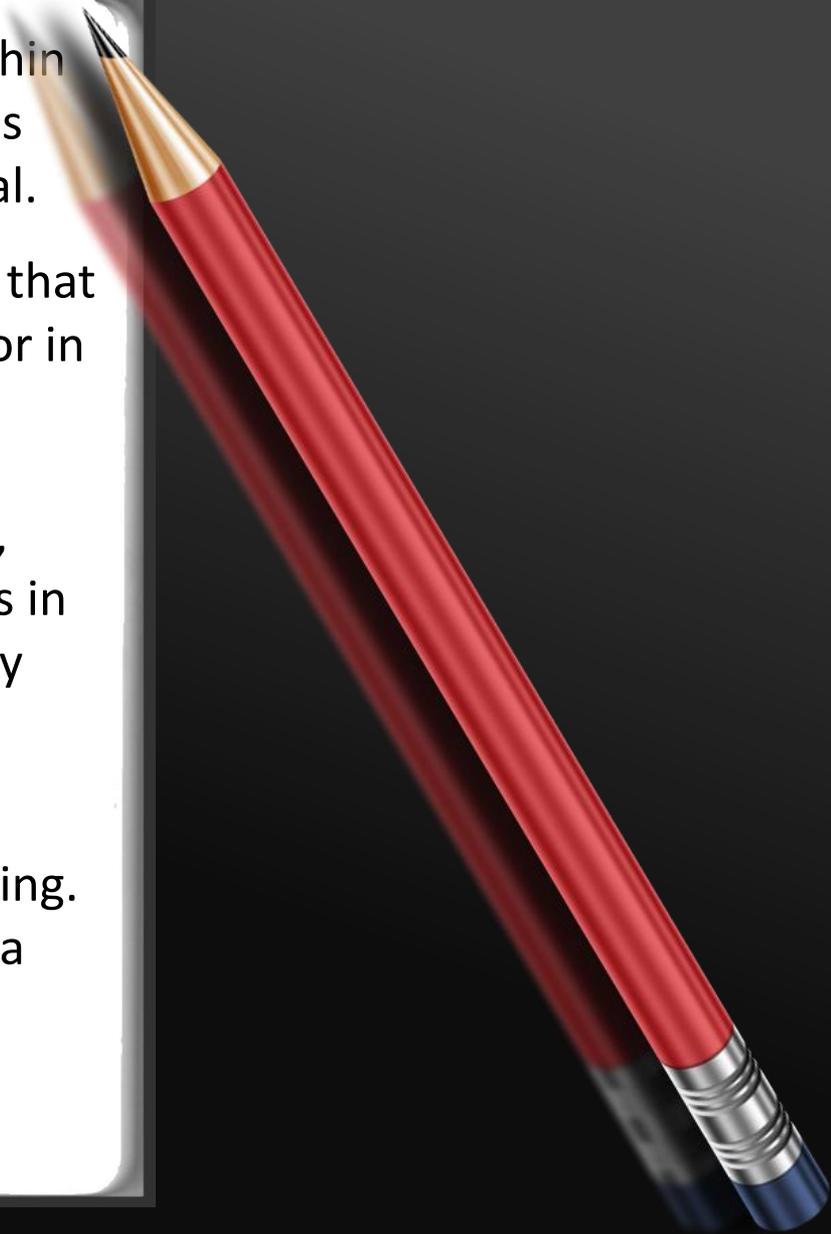
What is Motivation?

Motivation is an inferred process within an animal or an individual that causes that organism to move towards a goal.

Motivation is the underlying process that initiates, directs and sustains behavior in order to satisfy physiological and psychological needs or wants.

Motivation determines the direction, intensity of behavior/effort and helps in sustaining that direction and intensity over time.

Motivation is an integral element in becoming successful in any undertaking. Motivation has also been defined as a desire or need which directs and energizes behavior that is oriented towards a goal.



Objective

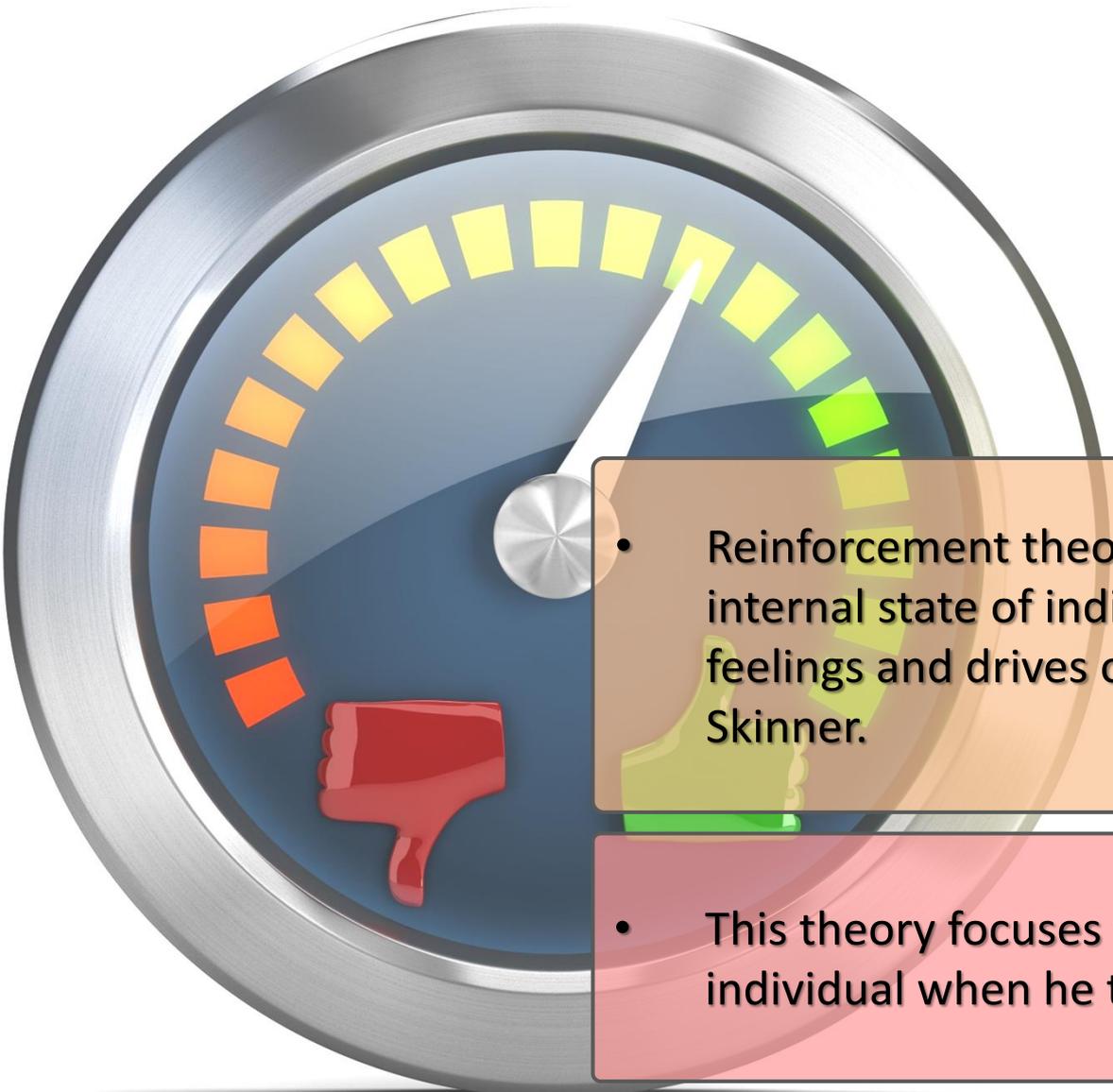
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What is Reinforcement Theory of Motivation?

- Reinforcement theory of motivation was proposed by BF Skinner and his associates.
- It states that individual's behavior is a function of its consequences.
- It is based on "law of effect", that is, individual's behavior with positive consequences tends to be repeated, but individual's behavior with negative consequences tends not to be repeated.



What is Reinforcement Theory of Motivation?

- 
- Reinforcement theory of motivation overlooks the internal state of individual, that is, the inner feelings and drives of individuals are ignored by Skinner.
 - This theory focuses totally on what happens to an individual when he takes some action.

What is Reinforcement Theory of Motivation?

- Thus, according to Skinner, the external environment of the organization must be designed effectively and positively so as to motivate the employee.
- This theory is a strong tool for analyzing controlling mechanism for individual's behavior.
- However, it does not focus on the causes of individual's behavior.



Importance of Reinforcement Theory of Motivation

Reinforcement Theory is a motivation theory model. It can be used to motivate people and to put them in action. Motivation is very important because of the following benefits it provides:

Puts human resources into action

Improves level of efficiency of people

Leads to achievement of organizational or individual goals

Builds friendly relationship due to internal satisfaction

Importance of Reinforcement Theory of Motivation

Roll your mouse
over the icon,
to learn more.

Did you
know?

Helps an individual to achieve his personal goals

Motivated individual will feel job satisfaction

Helps in self-development of individual

Leads to high morale of an individual

Did You Know?

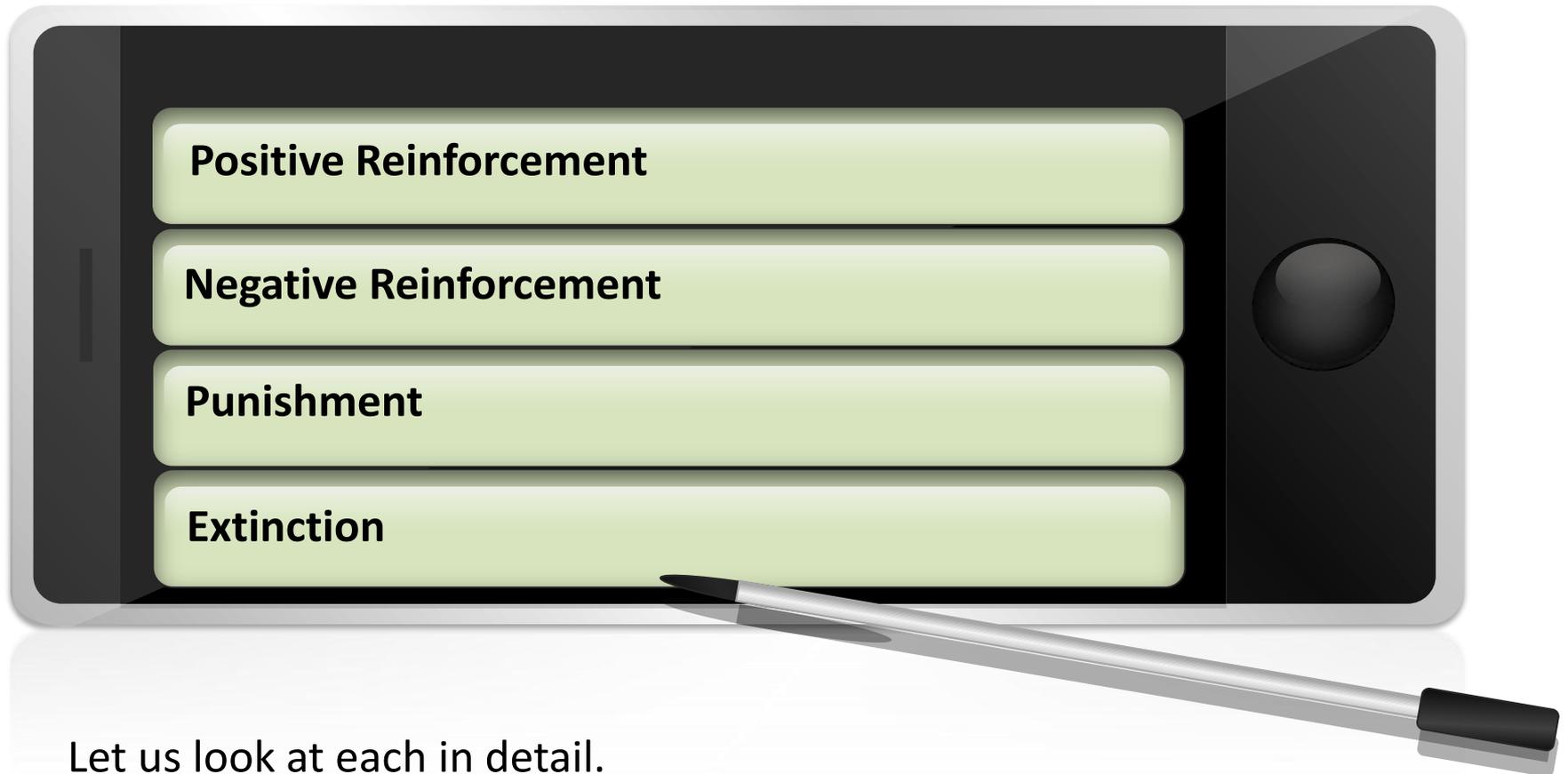


‘Reinforcement Theory’ is also known as ‘Behaviorism’ or ‘Operant Conditioning’. Behaviorism evolved out of frustration with the introspective techniques of humanism and psychoanalysis.

Hence, such researchers turned to exploring only the behaviors that could be observed and measured and worked away from the mysterious workings of the mind.

Methods used by Managers to Control Employee Behavior

The managers use the following methods for controlling the behavior of the employees:



Let us look at each in detail.

Positive Reinforcement

Positive Reinforcement

Negative Reinforcement

Punishment

Extinction

'Positive Reinforcement' implies giving a positive response when an individual shows positive and required behavior. For example: Immediately praising an employee for coming early for job. This will increase probability of outstanding behavior occurring again. Reward is a positive reinforce, but not necessarily. If and only if the employees' behavior improves, reward can said to be a positive reinforcer. Positive reinforcement stimulates occurrence of a behavior. It must be noted that more spontaneous is the giving of reward, the greater reinforcement value it has.

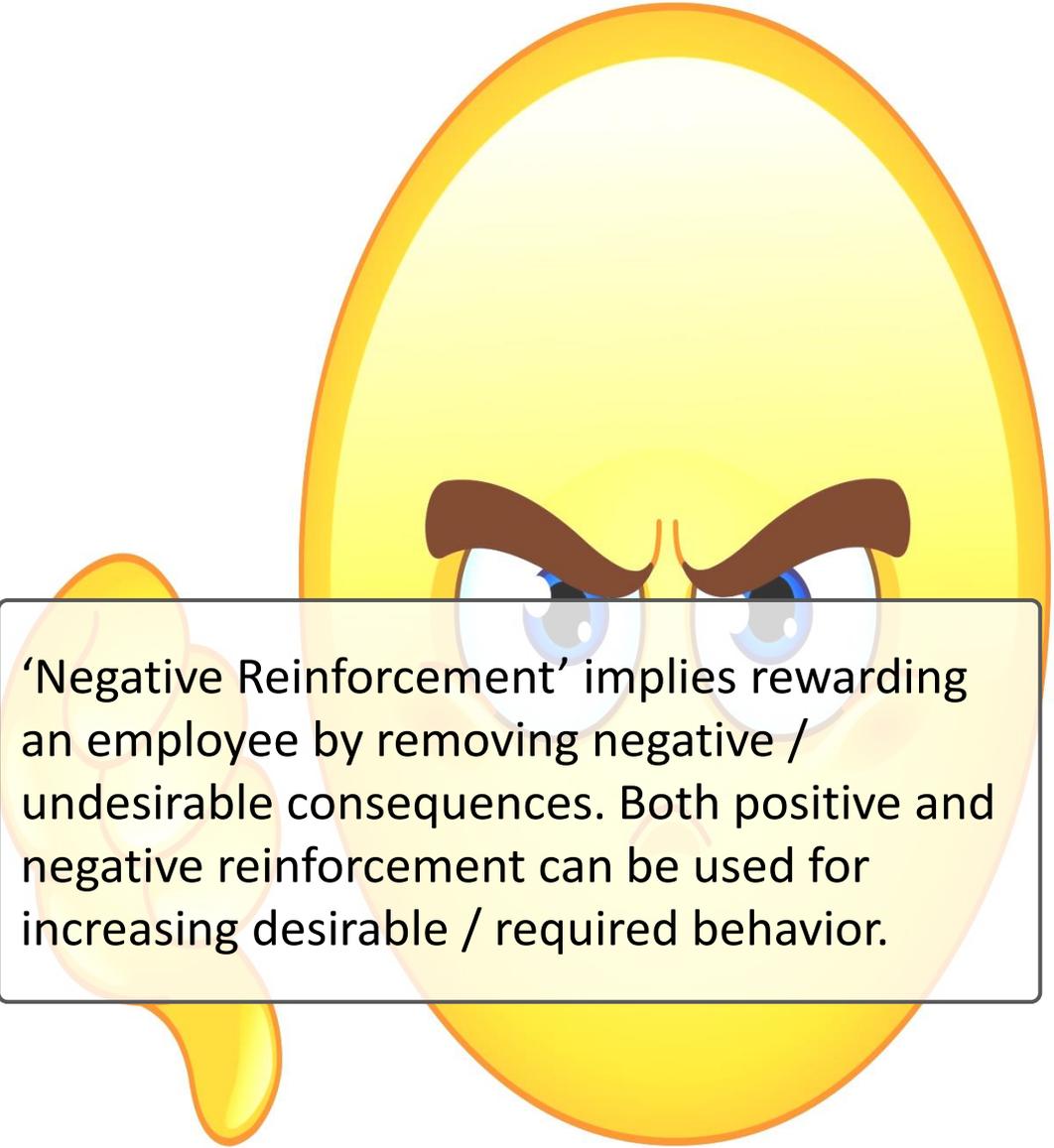
Negative Reinforcement

Positive Reinforcement

Negative Reinforcement

Punishment

Extinction



'Negative Reinforcement' implies rewarding an employee by removing negative / undesirable consequences. Both positive and negative reinforcement can be used for increasing desirable / required behavior.

Punishment

Positive Reinforcement

Negative Reinforcement

Punishment

Extinction

'Punishment' implies removing positive consequences so as to lower the probability of repeating undesirable behavior in future. In other words, punishment means applying undesirable consequence for showing undesirable behavior.

For example: Suspending an employee for breaking the organizational rules. Punishment can be equalized by positive reinforcement from alternative source.

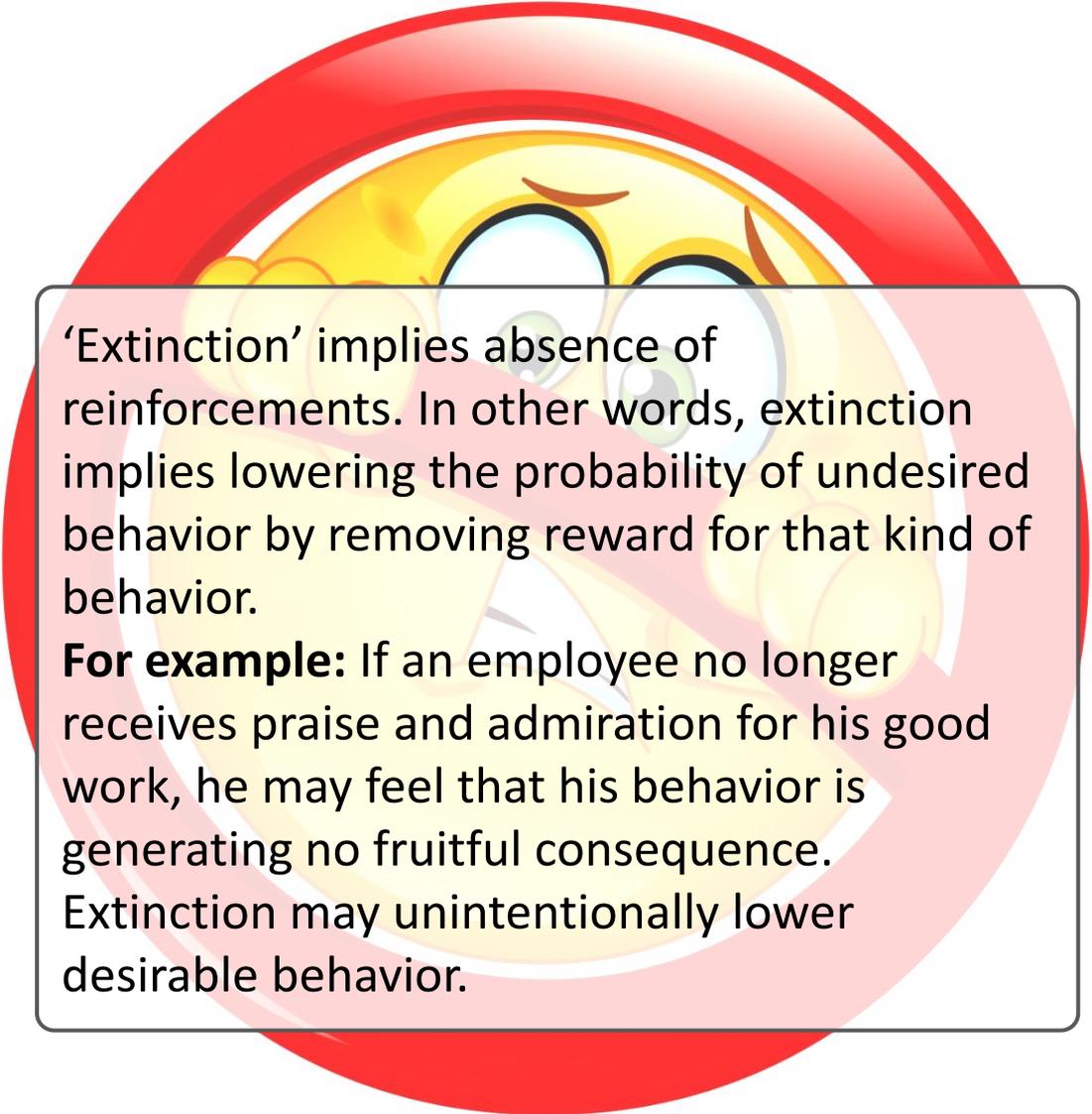
Extinction

Positive Reinforcement

Negative Reinforcement

Punishment

Extinction



'Extinction' implies absence of reinforcements. In other words, extinction implies lowering the probability of undesired behavior by removing reward for that kind of behavior.

For example: If an employee no longer receives praise and admiration for his good work, he may feel that his behavior is generating no fruitful consequence. Extinction may unintentionally lower desirable behavior.

Reinforcement Theory to Control Behavior of Others



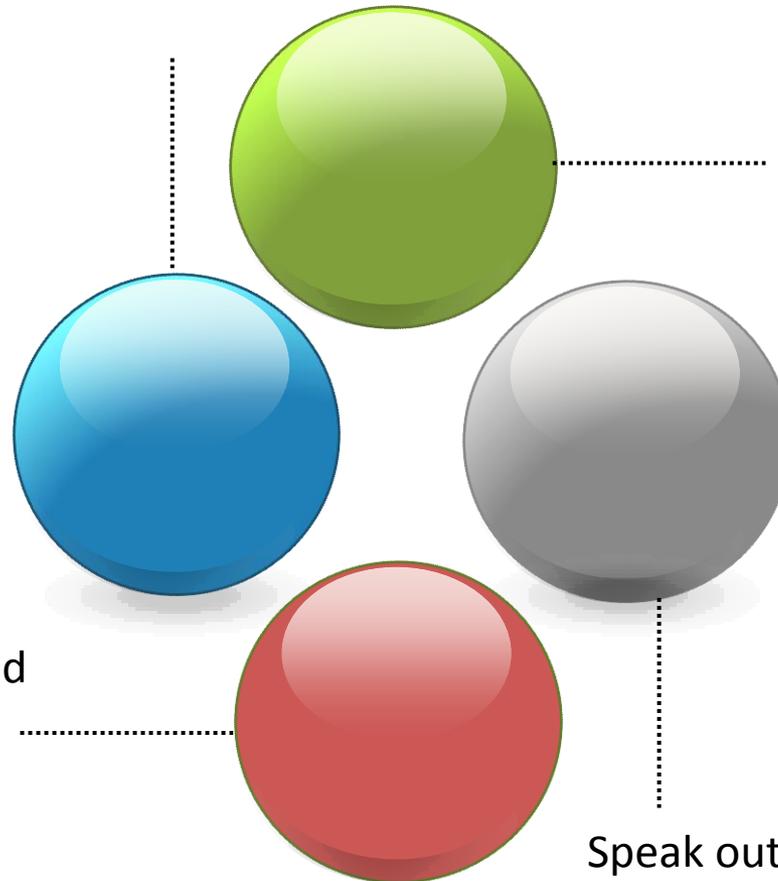
The only way you will be able to motivate others is when you learn to control the behavior, actions and attitudes of other people.

Reinforcement Theory to Control Behavior of Others

Following are some of the key points to keep in mind in order to control the behavior, actions and attitudes of other people:

Watch your posture at all times.

We have to adopt the attitude we want others to express.



People react and respond in a like manner to the attitude and action expressed by you.

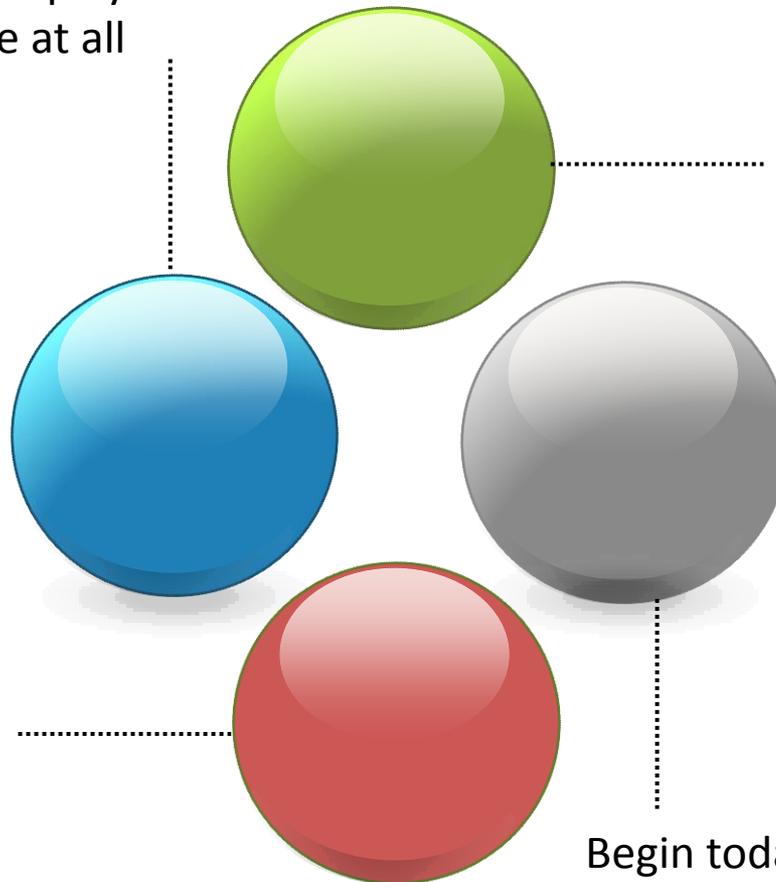
Speak out with confidence and grit.

Reinforcement Theory to Control Behavior of Others

Following are some of the key points to keep in mind in order to control the behavior, actions and attitudes of other people:

Hold your head up and display a positive body language at all times.

Remember to be enthusiastic because enthusiasm is contagious and spreads from one person to another and so does indifference and lack of enthusiasm.



Confidence breeds confidence. If we believe in our self, and act as if we believe in our self, others will believe us.

Begin today to develop an enthusiastic, confident attitude and manner.

Implications of Reinforcement Theory



Reinforcement Theory explains in detail how an individual learns behavior.



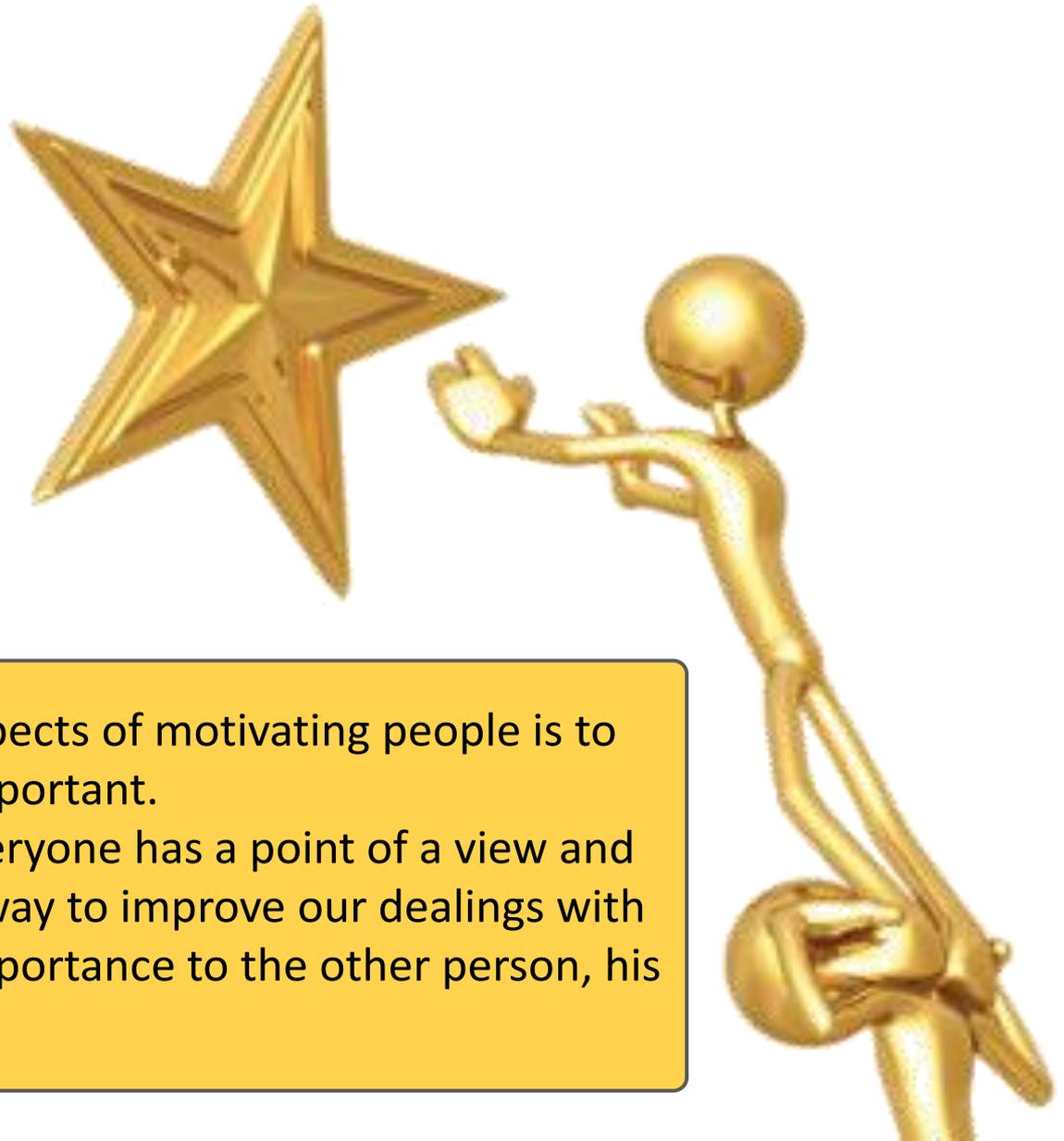
Managers who are making attempt to motivate the employees must ensure that they do not reward all employees simultaneously.



They must tell the employees what they are not doing correct.

They must tell the employees how they can achieve positive reinforcement.

Motivation and Reinforcement Theory



One of the most important aspects of motivating people is to first of all make people feel important. You should remember that everyone has a point of a view and an ego in them. The quickest way to improve our dealings with people is to begin by giving importance to the other person, his feelings, his opinions etc.

Elements of Motivation



Motivation starts with the desire to be free, to be free from dependency on others, freedom to live the lifestyle we dream of, freedom to explore our ideas.

Total freedom is not possible or desirable, but the struggle to achieve that ideal is the basis for motivation.

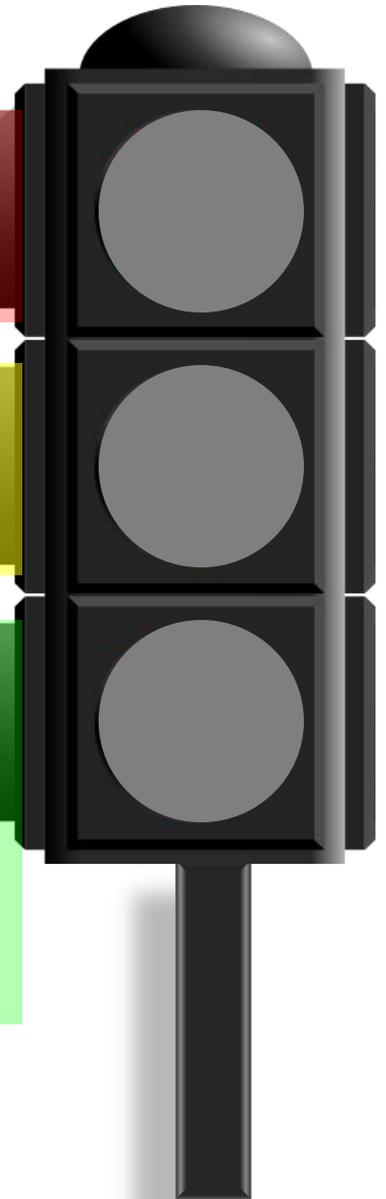
Elements of Motivation

Motivation is built on three basic elements:

Motivation starts with a need, vision, dream or desire to achieve the seemingly impossible. Creativity is associated with ideas, projects and goals, which can be considered a path to freedom.

Develop a love-to-learn, become involved with risky ventures and continually seek new opportunities. Success is based on learning what works and does not work.

Developing the ability to overcome barriers and to bounce back from discouragement or failure. Achievers learn to tolerate the agony of failure. In any worthwhile endeavor, barriers and failure will be there. Bouncing back requires creative thinking as it is a learning process. In addition, bouncing back requires starting again at square one.



Video

Look at the video given below to understand operant conditioning in Reinforcement Theory.

Click on the video link to play it!

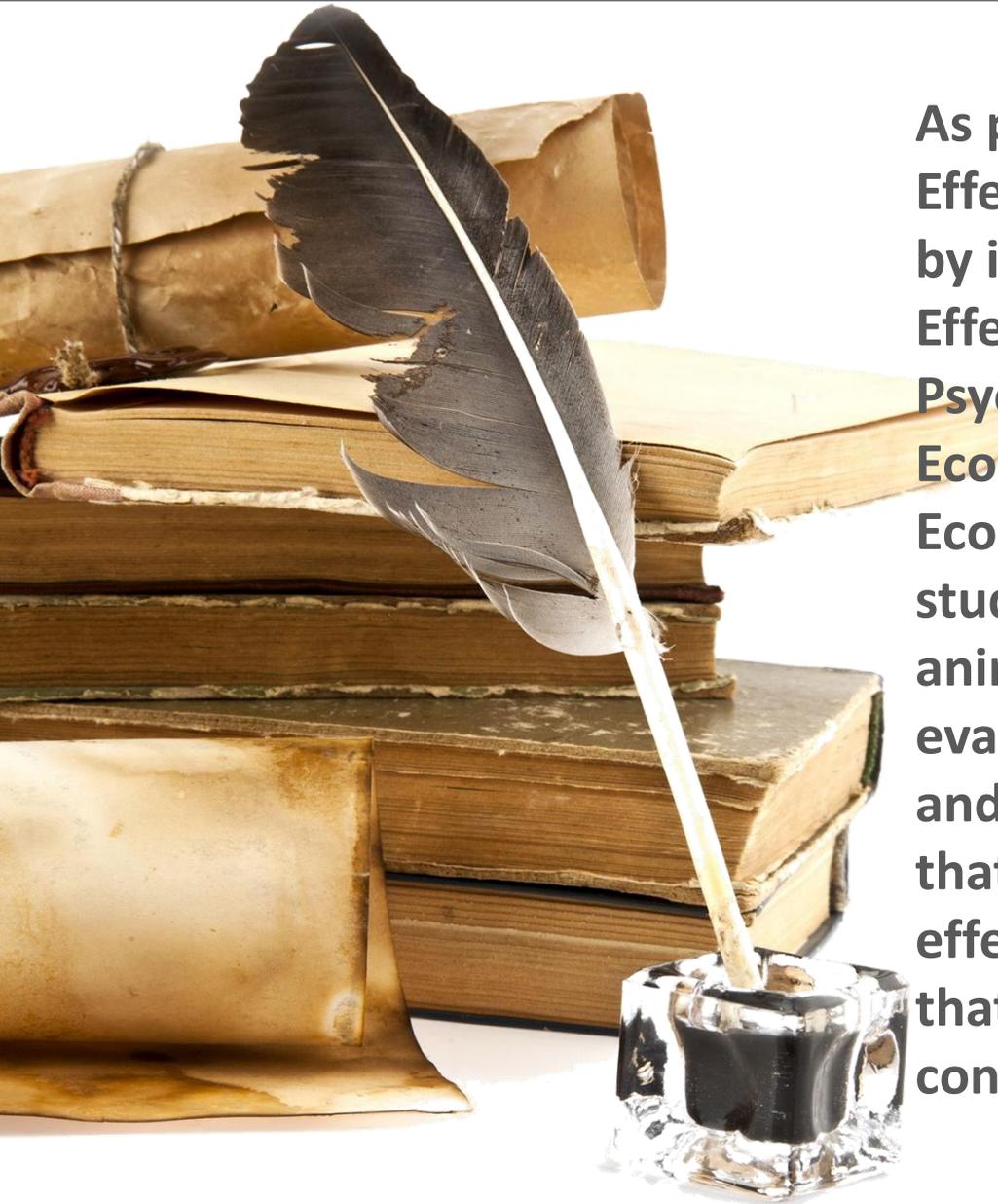
URL for Video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHH9gu5h2Qg>

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What is meant by the 'Law of Effect'?

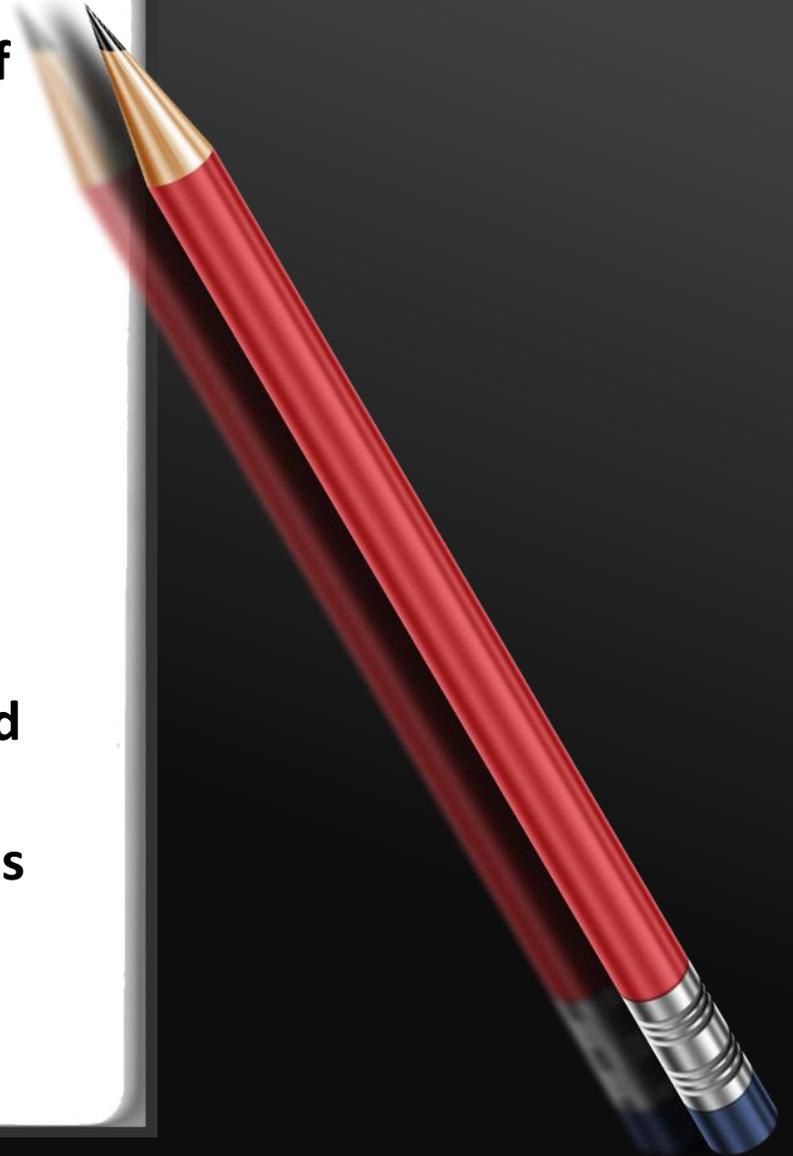


As per psychologists, the 'Law of Effects' implies that behavior is shaped by its consequences. The 'Law of Effects' is an important concept in Psychology as well as in the field of Economics. Psychologists as well as Economists use the 'Law of Effect' to study and understand how various animals try different behaviors, evaluate the effects of their behavior and then do more of those behaviors that have better consequences or effects and do less of those behaviors that have bad or undesirable consequences or effects.

What is meant by the 'Law of Effect'?

The 'Law of Effect', a principle of learning was proposed by the American Psychologist Edward Lee Thorndike in 1911. As per Thorndike, the 'Law of Effect' states that:

“responses that produce a satisfying effect in a particular situation become more likely to occur again in that situation, and responses that produce a discomforting effect become less likely to occur again in that situation.”



What is meant by the 'Law of Effect'?

This means that people engage in behavior that have pleasant outcomes and avoid behavior that has unpleasant outcomes.

On this view, the behaviorally important consequence of a behavior is the information it provides about behavioral outcomes.



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What is meant by 'Quantitative Law of Effect'?

- The 'Quantitative Law of Effect' is one of the fundamental principles of the Reinforcement Theory.
- The 'Quantitative Law of Effect' was published in a paper in 1970 by R. J. Herrnstein, a student of B.F. Skinner.
- Herrnstein described the 'Quantitative Law of Effect' and defined it as: "A hyperbolic rate equation that states that the rate of behavior R as a function of the reinforcement r ."



What is meant by 'Quantitative Law of Effect'?

- It is given by the following equation:

$$R = (k * r) / (r + r_e)$$

- Where:
 - constant k is the asymptote of the hyperbola
 - constant r_e determines how fast the function reaches the asymptote



What is meant by 'Quantitative Law of Effect'?

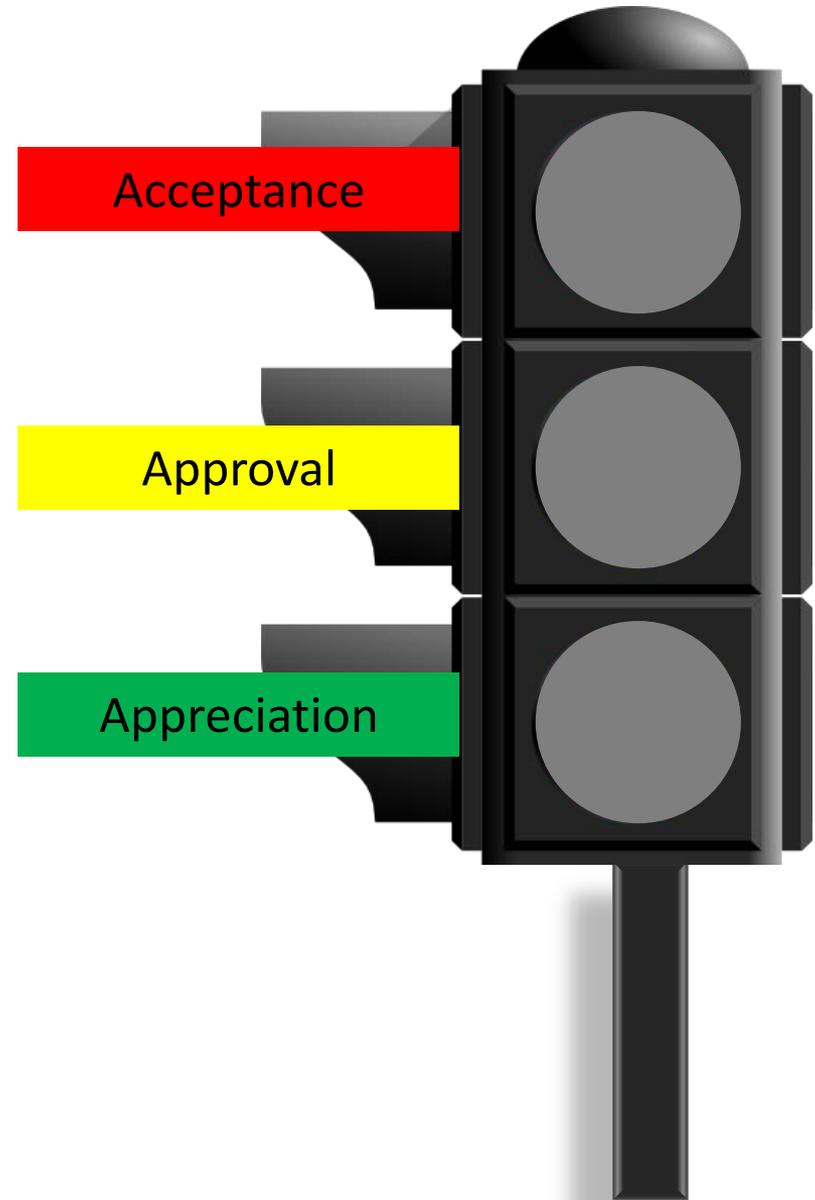
- You need to understand here that an asymptote is a line that a function approaches ever so closely, but never touches.
- The value of constant k depends on the amount of effort the behavior requires, and the value of r_e depends on other sources of reinforcement in the environment.
- Therefore, as per the 'Quantitative Law of Effect', the rate of a particular behavior depends both on its own reinforcement rate and on the reinforcement rate of other behaviors.



Reinforcing Desirable Behavior



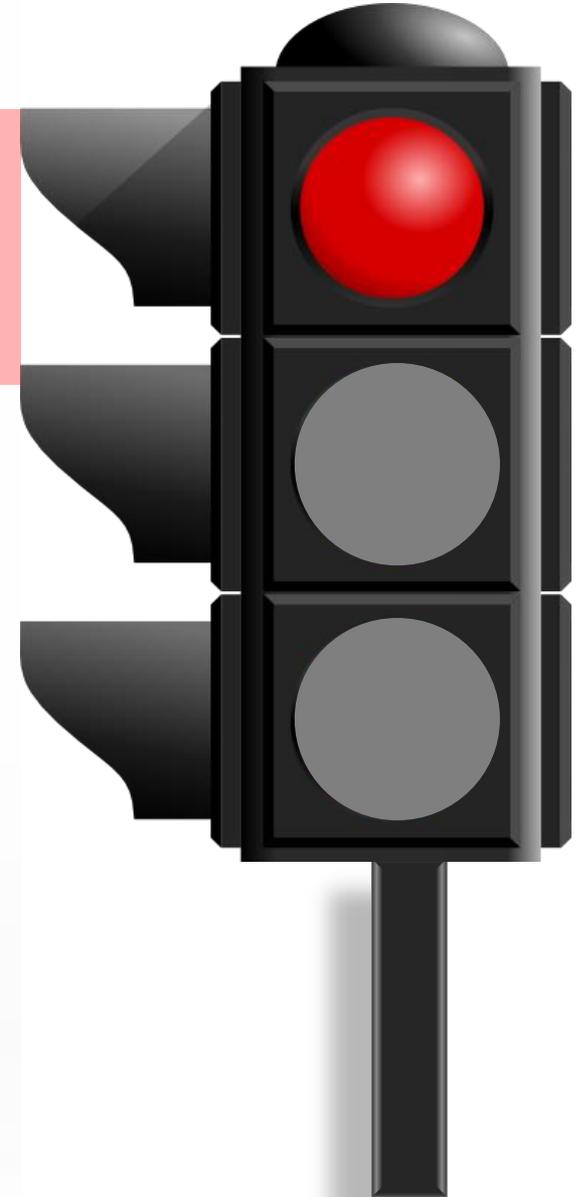
The key to motivating others and reinforcing desirable behavior is by attracting them to you. You can use the following ways to attract people towards you.



Let's look at each in detail.

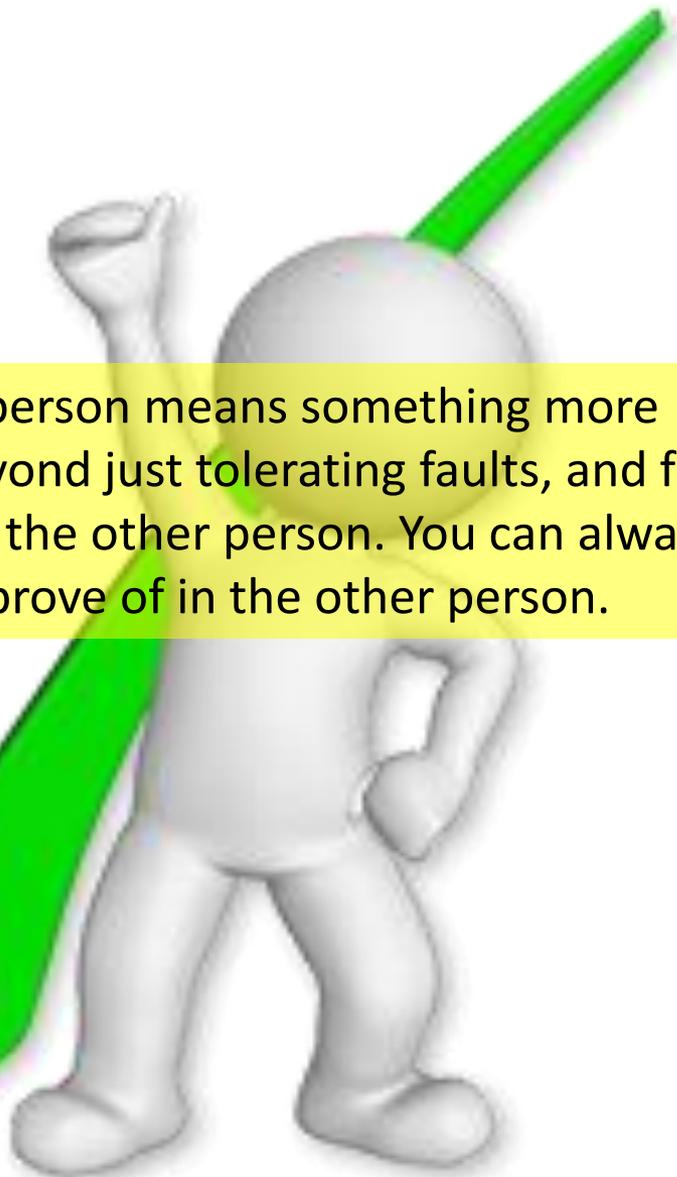
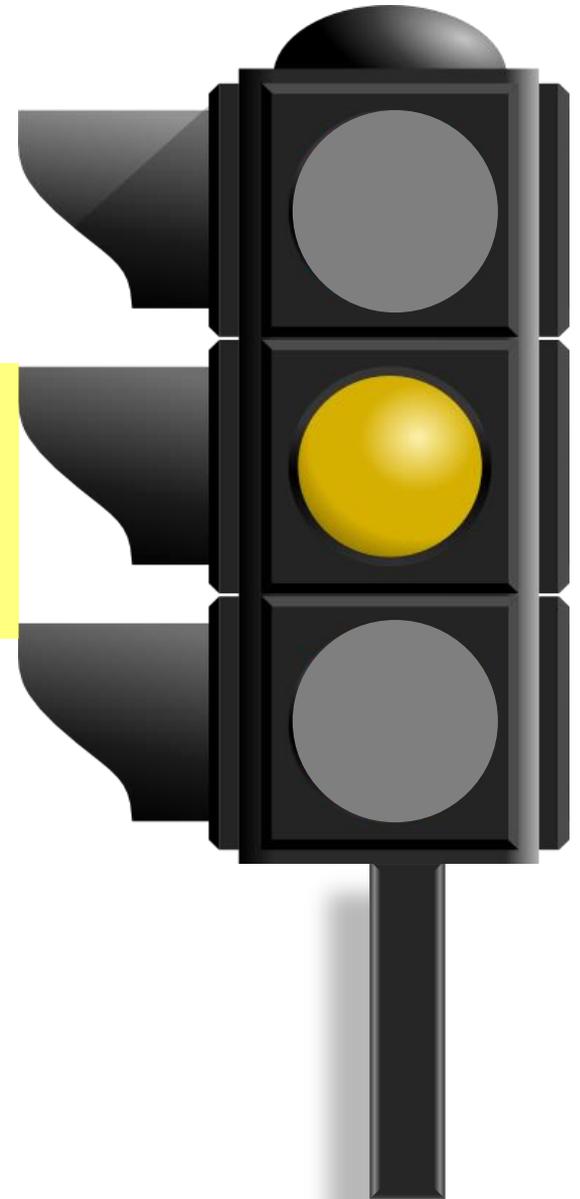
Acceptance

It is essential to accept people as they are; allow them to be themselves. Those who accept and like people, and accept them just as they are, have the most influence in changing other's behavior for the better.



Approval

Approval of another person means something more positive as it goes beyond just tolerating faults, and finds something you like in the other person. You can always find something to approve of in the other person.

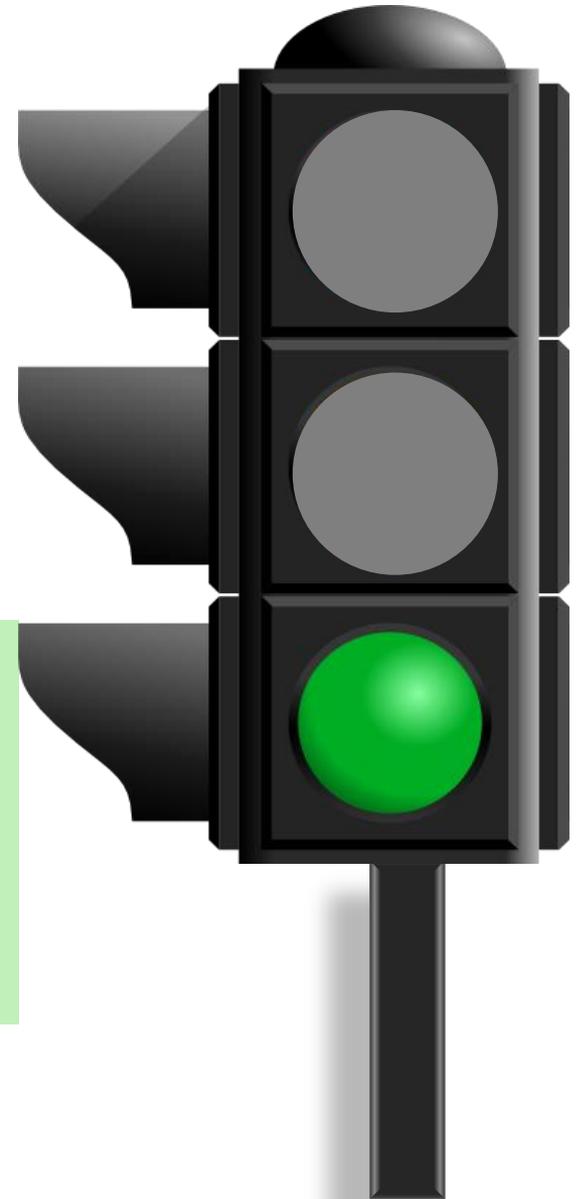


Appreciation



To appreciate a person means to raise his value and worth. You can show appreciation to people in the following ways:

- Don't keep people waiting
- Thank people
- Treat people as 'Special'



Create a Good Impression to Reinforce

It is important that you should create a good impression of yourself among others in order to be able to motivate them and reinforce desirable behavior. The World forms its opinion of us largely from the opinion we have of ourselves.

The following are a few ways through which you can create a good impression:

- Don't wear a disguise
- Don't knock the competition
- Learn to Communicate Effectively
- Don't try to be perfect
- Get people talking about themselves
- Don't tease and don't be sarcastic

Let us look at each in detail.

Create a Good Impression to Reinforce

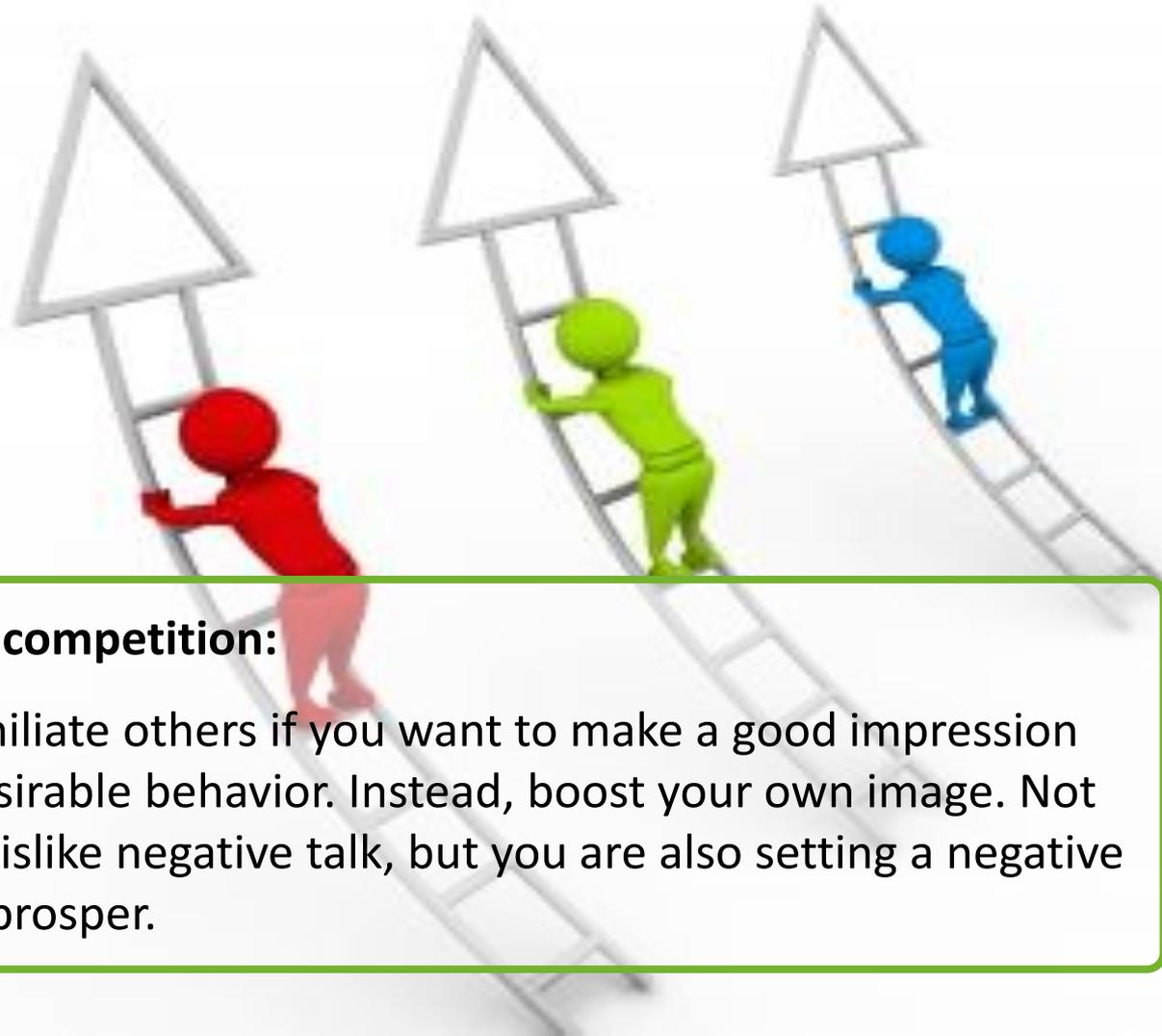
- Don't wear a disguise

Don't wear a disguise:

People are much smarter than you realize. The conscious mind may not be smart enough to analyze and see through the disguise that people wear, but our subconscious mind does identify the fakeness and disguise that people put on.

Create a Good Impression to Reinforce

- Don't knock the competition



Don't knock the competition:

Never try to humiliate others if you want to make a good impression and reinforce desirable behavior. Instead, boost your own image. Not only do people dislike negative talk, but you are also setting a negative environment to prosper.

Create a Good Impression to Reinforce

- Learn to Communicate Effectively

Learn to Communicate Effectively:

One thing successful reinforcing people have in common is skill in using words. Learn to communicate openly, honestly and passionately to motivate people.

Create a Good Impression to Reinforce

- Don't try to be perfect

Don't try to be perfect:

No one can fascinate every minute. Never try to motivate people by trying to be perfect. People will be motivated by people like them, with faults.

Create a Good Impression to Reinforce

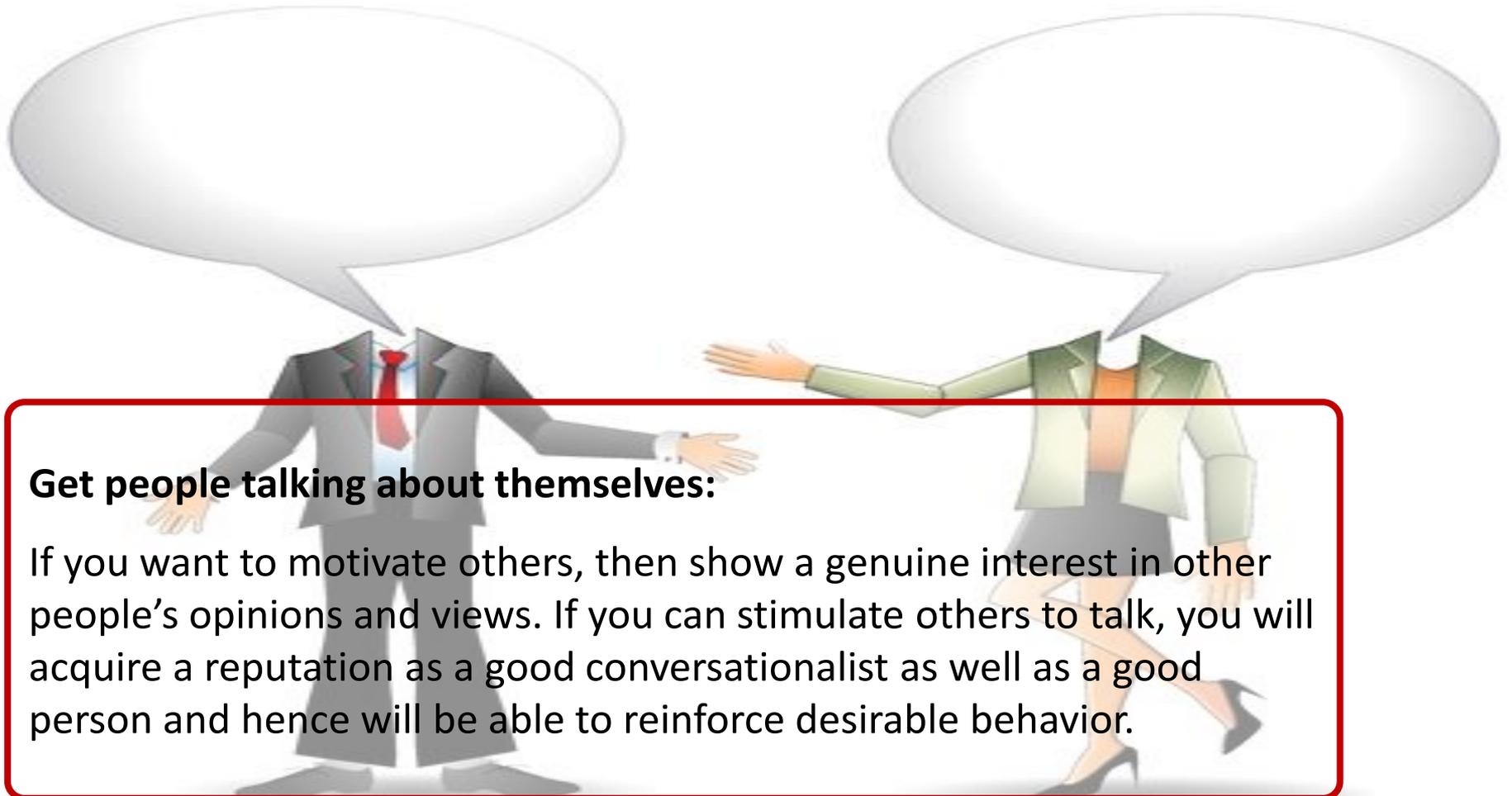
- Don't tease and don't be sarcastic

Don't tease and don't be sarcastic:

Teasing and sarcastic remarks are both aimed at the self esteem of others. Do not tease or pass sarcastic comments as they threaten the self-esteem of the other person and make you less likable.

Create a Good Impression to Reinforce

- Get people talking about themselves



Get people talking about themselves:

If you want to motivate others, then show a genuine interest in other people's opinions and views. If you can stimulate others to talk, you will acquire a reputation as a good conversationalist as well as a good person and hence will be able to reinforce desirable behavior.

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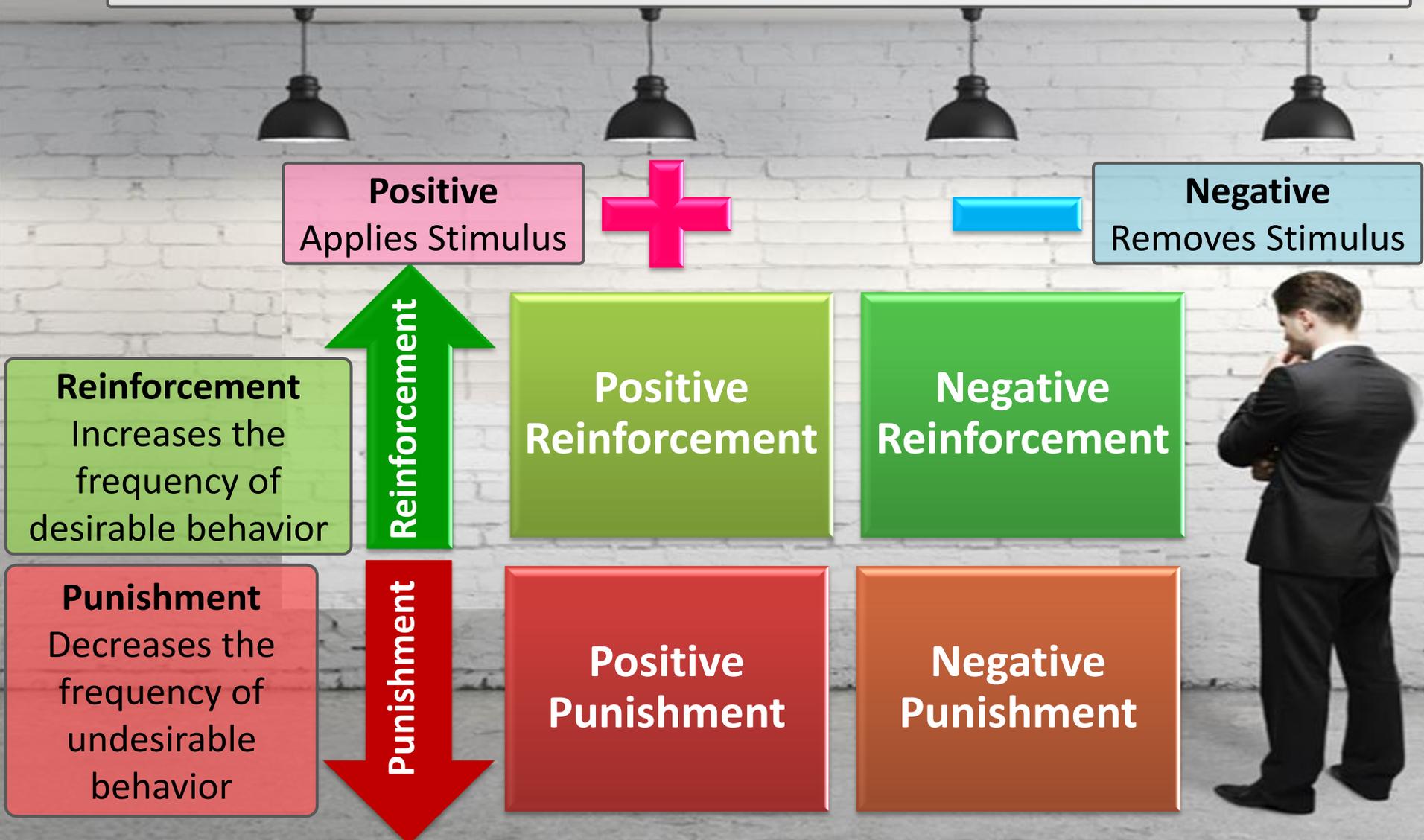
Types of Reinforcement

The four methods employed in operant conditioning are:



Types of Reinforcement

The given image shows the four methods employed in operant conditioning.



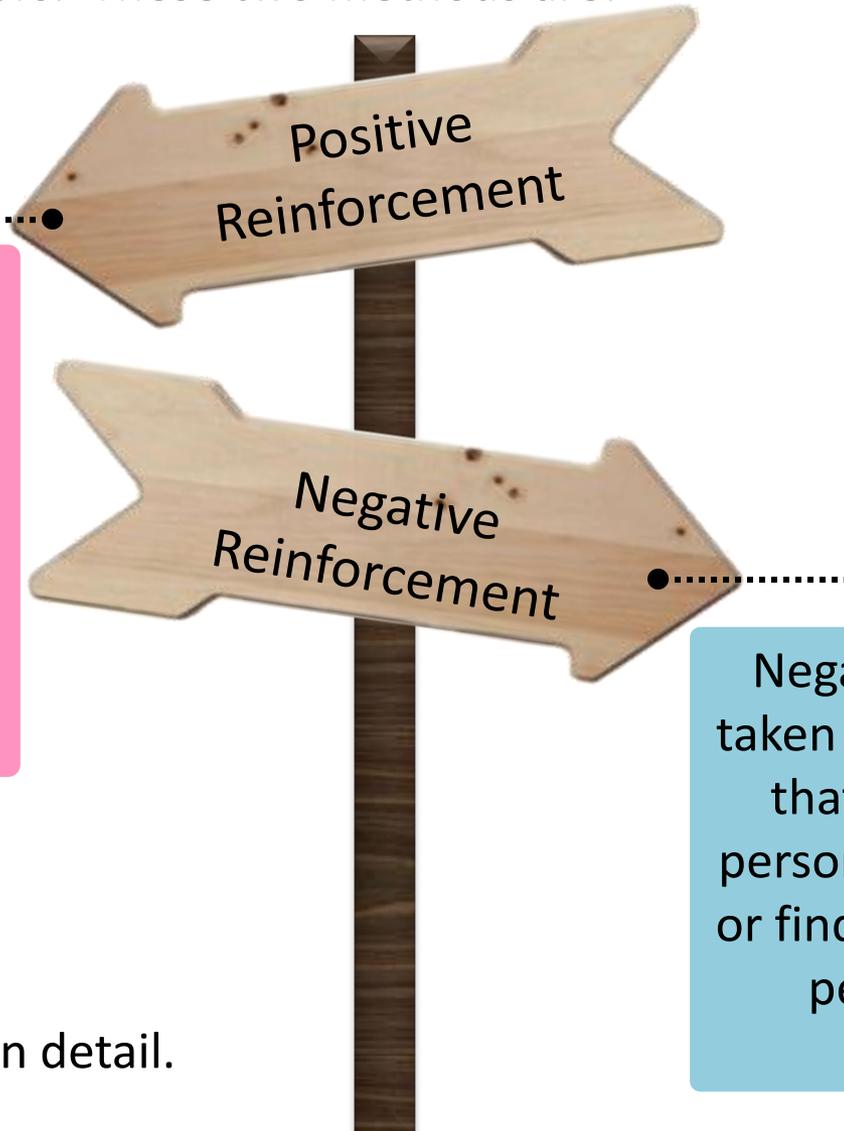
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Increasing Desirable Behaviors



There are two methods proposed by 'Reinforcement Theory' to increase desirable behaviors. These two methods are:



Positive reinforcement is taken as '+' sign which means that giving (+) a person what he likes or finds desirable when he performs a desirable behavior.

Negative reinforcement is taken as '-' sign which means that removing (-) from a person what he does not like or finds undesirable when he performs a desirable behavior.

Let's look at each in detail.

Positive Reinforcement

- 'Positive Reinforcement' means 'any pleasant or desirable consequence that follows a behavior and increases the probability that the behavior will be repeated'.
- Therefore, rewards and awards serve as one of the most common means of positive reinforcement. It has been found that just simply rewarding a person may not result in the desired effect or behavior.
- This means that the positive reinforcer should be highly motivating to the individual so that the reward can stimulate the person to produce the desired behavior.



Positive Reinforcement

There are various kinds of rewards that can be given to a person in the workplace, such as follows:

- Monetary Bonuses
- Promotions
- Appreciation/Praise
- Paid Holiday Leave
- Attention
- Salary Hike

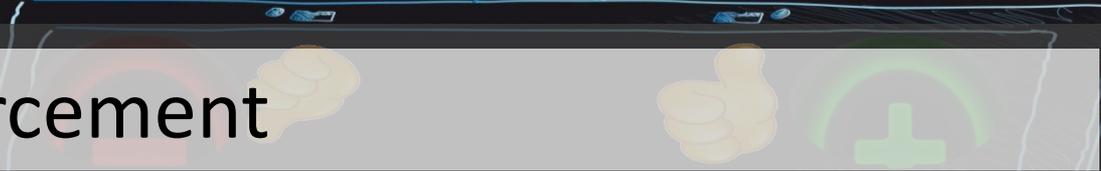
Negative Reinforcement



Negative
Reinforcement

- ‘Negative Reinforcement’ means, ‘removal of an unpleasant stimulus when a desired response occurs leading to psychological reinforcement’. You should always keep in mind that, in the case of negative reinforcement, ‘negative’ does not mean ‘bad’, it just means the removal of an unpleasant stimulus.
- Therefore, rewards and awards serve as one of the most common means of negative reinforcement. You can just simply reward a person for desired behavior by removing something unpleasant. This removal of something unpleasant is the reward for the person.

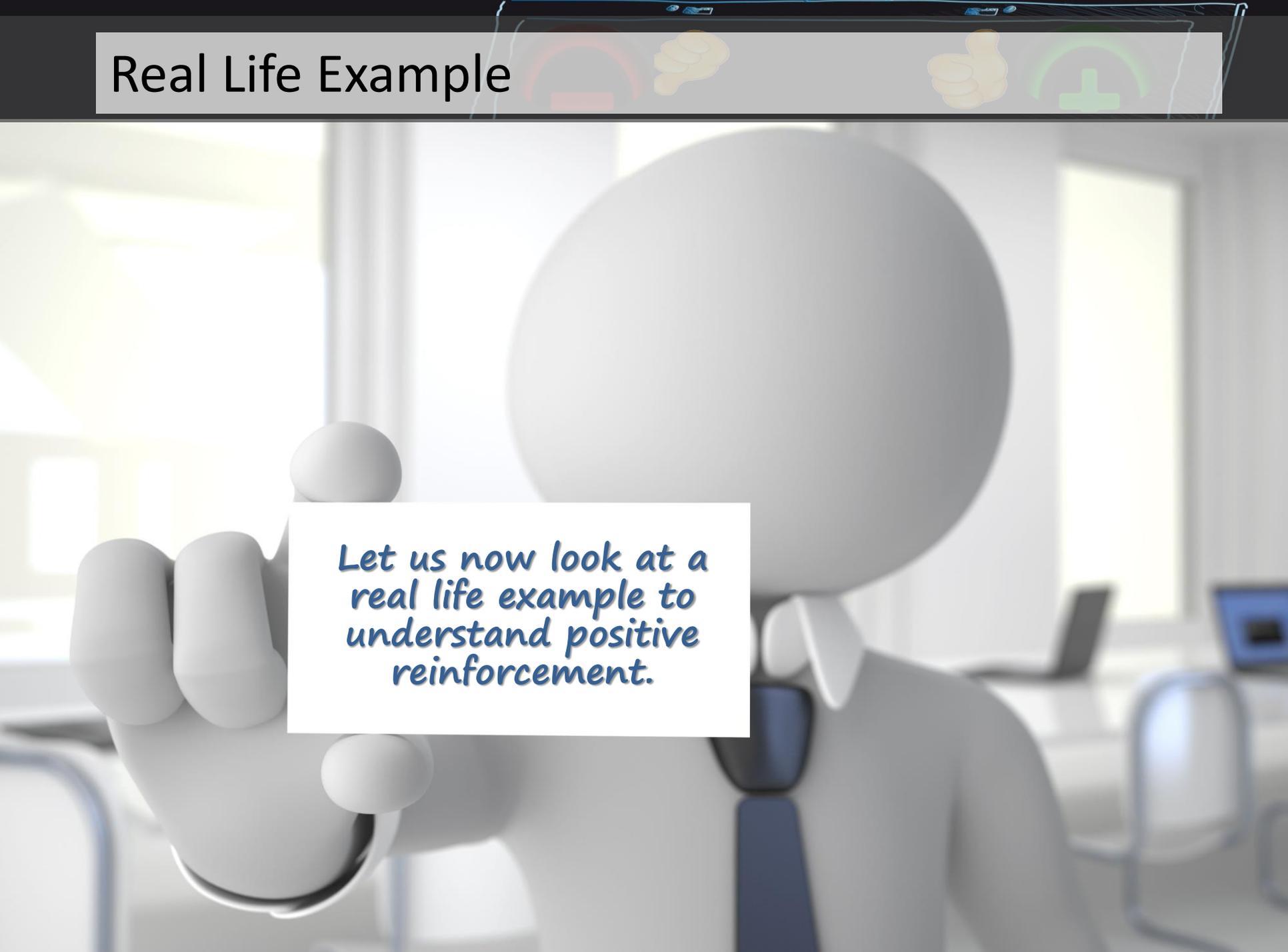
Negative Reinforcement



There are various kinds of rewards that can be given to a person in the workplace, such as follows:

- Removing close monitoring
- Lesser micromanagement
- Lesser protocols to follow
- Reducing long work hours
- Removing extra hours of work time
- Removing unpleasant people from working together as a team

Real Life Example

A 3D rendered white figure in a suit and tie is holding a white rectangular sign. The figure is positioned in the center of the frame, with its right hand holding the sign. The background is a blurred office environment with large windows and desks. At the top of the image, there is a dark grey banner with the text 'Real Life Example' and several colorful icons: a red arch, a yellow hand, a yellow hand with a pointing finger, and a green arch.

Let us now look at a real life example to understand positive reinforcement.

Real Life Example



Jasper Smith works as a Software Tester at Globus Inc.

Jasper has always been a very helpful person.

All his colleagues go to him whenever they need any help, both on the professional as well as personal front.

Real Life Example

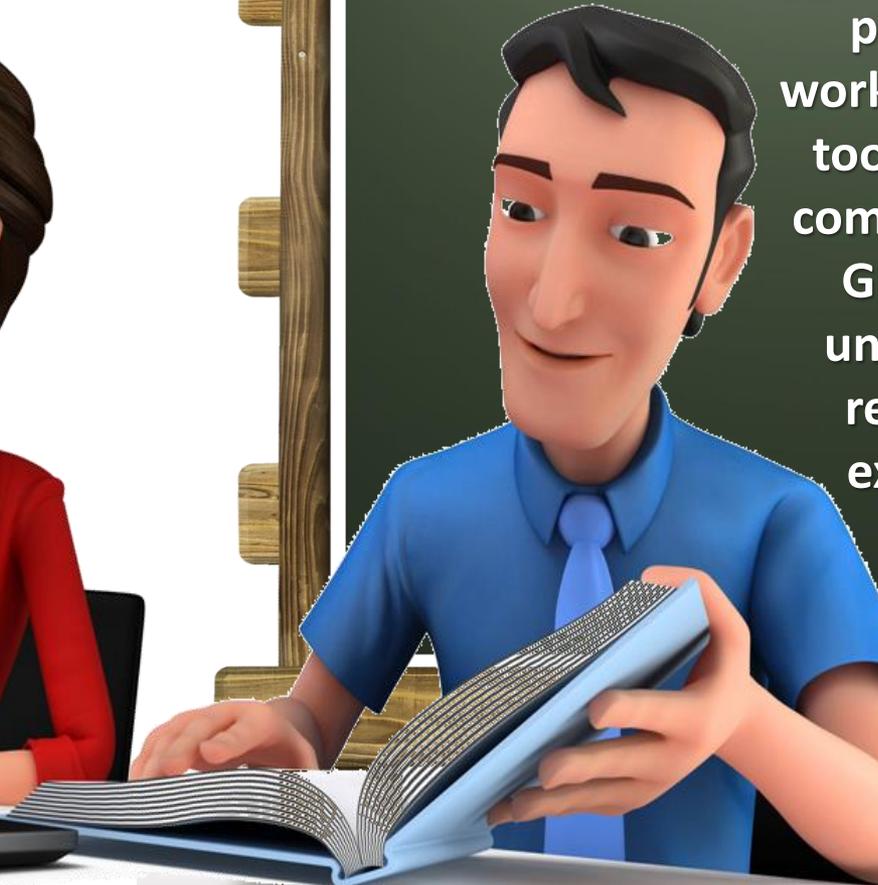


Gloria Weston joins Globus as a Trainee Software Tester. Right from the first day, Jasper tries to help Gloria get settled in her new job.

He also helps Gloria to understand the company culture and policies.

Gloria's manager has given her a month's time to settle in before he can assign her a project to work on. Jasper explains the working process at Globus.

Real Life Example



He explains the kind of clients that they work for, the various projects that they have handled in the past, the current projects they are working on, the testing tools that they most commonly use, etc. to Gloria to help her understand her job responsibilities and expectations of her from the management.

Real Life Example

Due to Jasper's ongoing guidance and help, Gloria learns the work process at Globus very quickly.

She gets ready to work on a live project in two weeks. Jasper and Gloria's manager as well as the management greatly appreciate Jasper's initiative in training Gloria.



Real Life Example



As a token of appreciation for Jasper's helpfulness and self-initiative, the management rewards Jasper with a certificate of appreciation and gift vouchers to shop at a leading retail store.

Real Life Example



Jasper is deeply touched and happy with the appreciative gesture of the management.

Due to the positive consequence that his behavior received, Jasper gets highly motivated to repeat the desirable behavior.

Real Life Example



The next time, a new employee joined his team; Jasper continued to be very supportive and helpful to the new joinee.

Hence, you can see that this is an example of 'positive reinforcement' which implies giving a positive response when an individual shows positive and required behavior.

Real Life Example



You have seen how positive reinforcement can increase the probability of outstanding or desirable behavior occurring again. Positive reinforcement stimulates reoccurrence of a desirable behavior. It must be noted that more spontaneous is the giving of reward, the greater reinforcement value it has.

Objective

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Avoidance Learning

- It has been found that 'Avoidance Learning' also acts similarly to negative reinforcement.
- However, in 'Avoidance Learning', the main purpose of performing the desired behavior is to prevent the oncoming of a harmful stimulus or to terminate such a stimulus that already exists.
- Hence, the main aim of 'Avoidance Learning' is to understand what the unpleasant stimulus is and then it can be avoided.



Avoidance Learning

- **For example:**
 - **One of the most harmful stimuli at the workplace could be criticism from one's supervisor.**
 - **So, a s per 'Avoidance Learning' a person would exhibit the desired behavior in an effort to avoid the consequence of being criticized by his supervisor.**

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Eliminating Undesirable Behaviors



The following are the methods proposed by 'Reinforcement Theory' for eliminating undesirable behaviors:

- **Positive Punishment**
- **Negative Punishment**
- **Extinction**

Let us look at each in detail.

Positive Punishment

- **Positive Punishment**

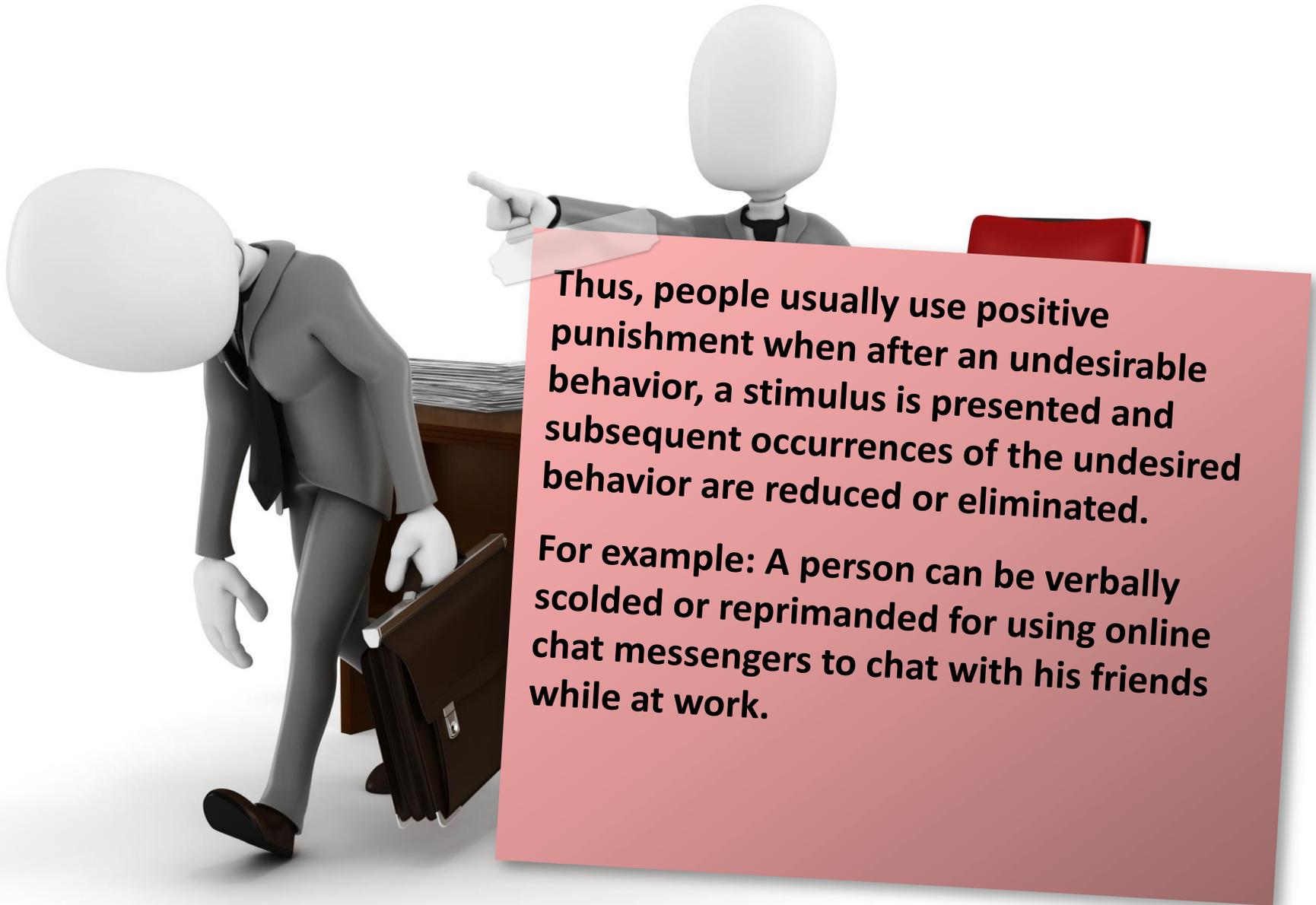


‘Positive Punishment’ implies giving the person what he does not like when he has performed an undesirable behavior.

Hence, when people generally think about ‘punishment’ in its normal terms, they mean, ‘positive punishment’.

You should understand that even though punishments such as demotions, suspensions are given to people, they cannot be counted as punishments unless they lessen or eliminate the undesired behavior.

Positive Punishment



Thus, people usually use positive punishment when after an undesirable behavior, a stimulus is presented and subsequent occurrences of the undesired behavior are reduced or eliminated.

For example: A person can be verbally scolded or reprimanded for using online chat messengers to chat with his friends while at work.

Limitations of Positive Punishment

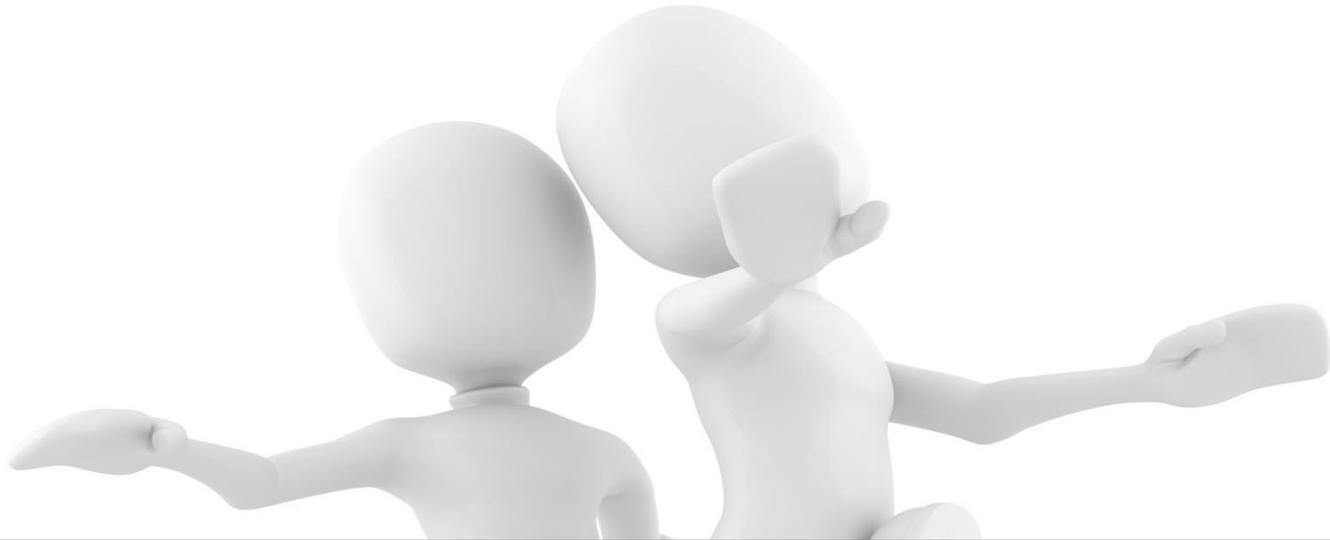


Positive punishment is quite effective in eliminating undesired behaviors but it does have certain limitations. The following are some of the limitations of positive punishment:

- **Positive punishment is more effective when the stimulus is added immediately following the undesired behavior rather than applying delayed stimulus.**
- **Also, rather than occasional application of a stimulus, consistent application of a stimulus following an undesired behavior is more effective to eliminate undesired behavior.**
- **The greatest limitation is that it fails to teach desirable behaviors.**
- **Using positive punishment may produce undesirable emotional reactions in people such as passivity, fear, anxiety, or hostility.**

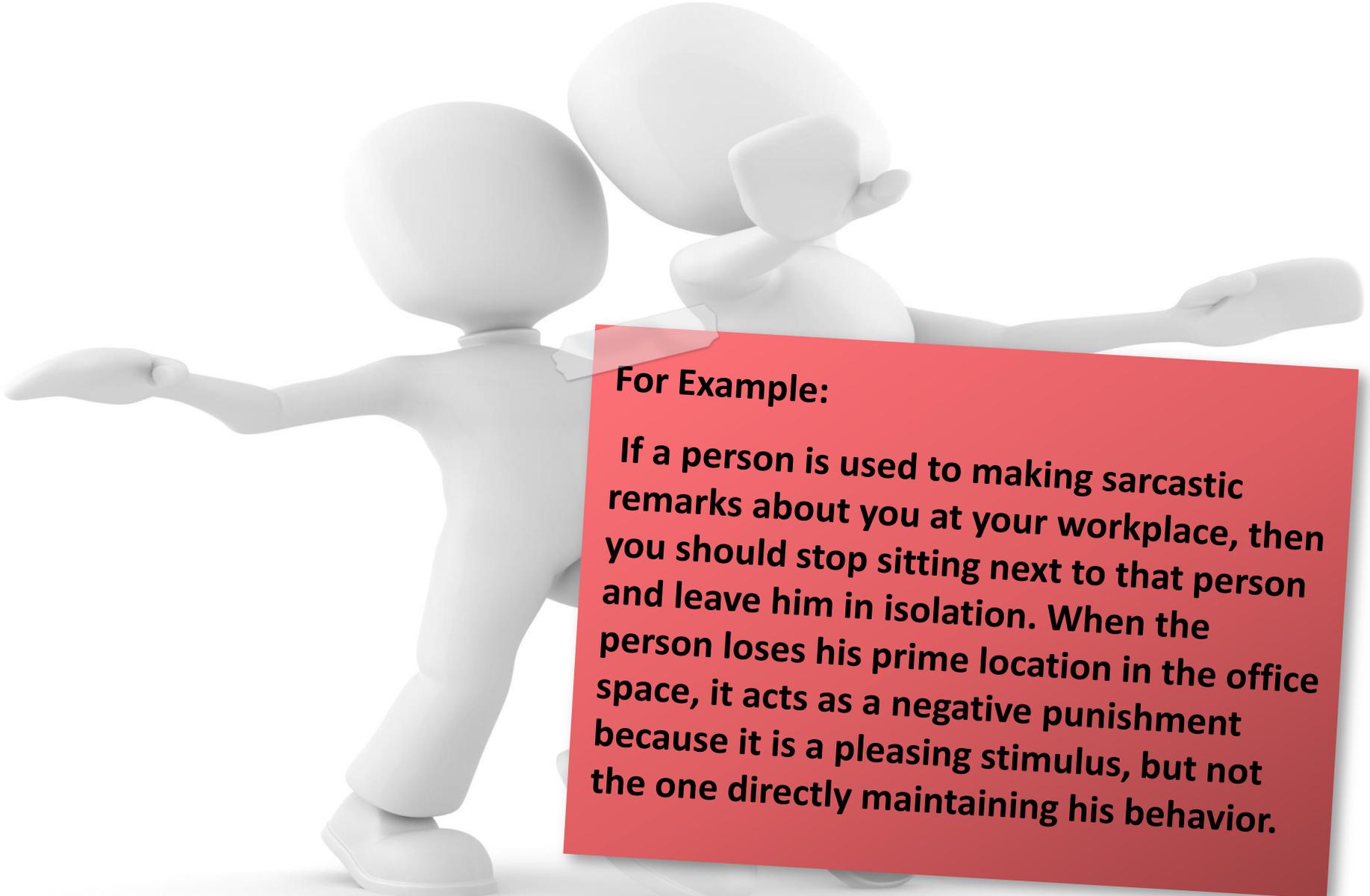
Negative Punishment

- **Negative Punishment**



‘Negative Punishment’ implies removing of a pleasing stimulus other than the one maintaining the behavior in order to decrease the frequency of the behavior. It has been found that ‘negative punishment’ almost immediately decreases the undesired behavior.

Negative Punishment

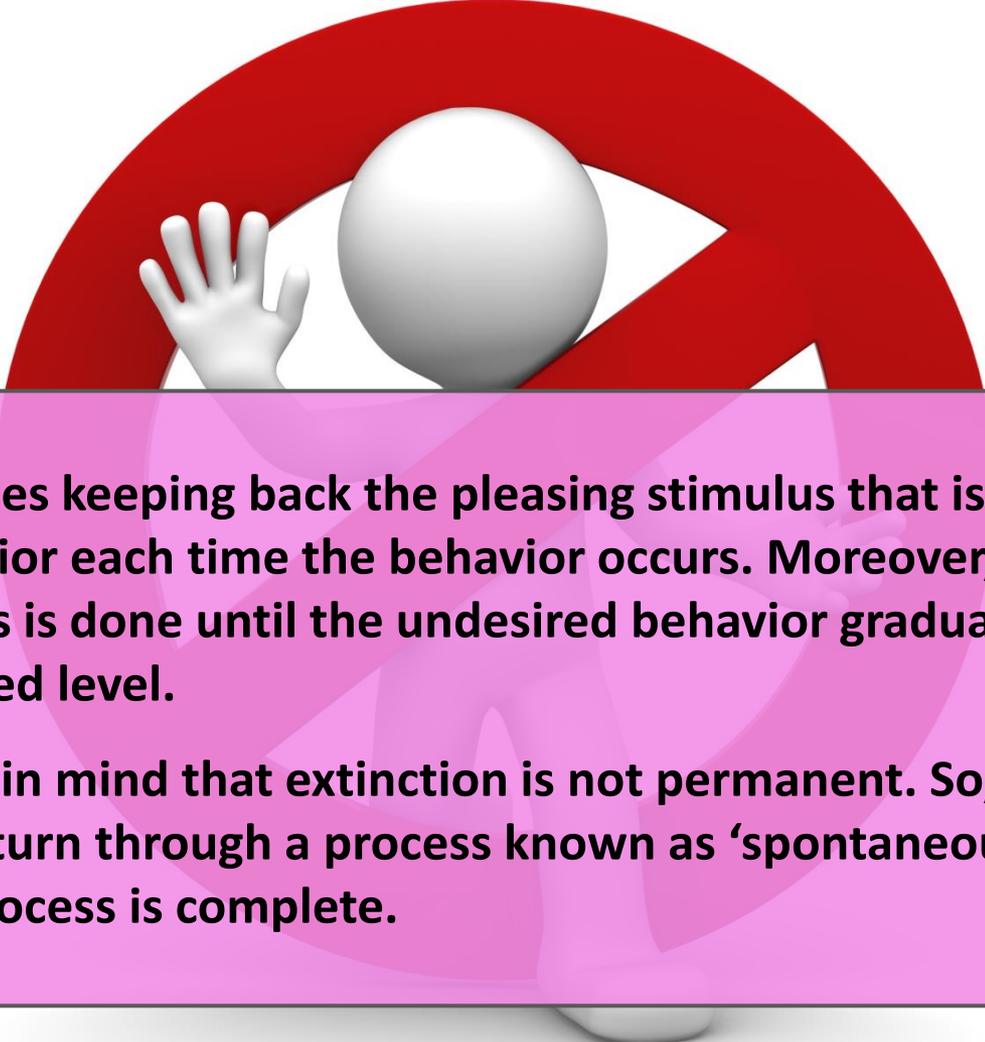


For Example:

If a person is used to making sarcastic remarks about you at your workplace, then you should stop sitting next to that person and leave him in isolation. When the person loses his prime location in the office space, it acts as a negative punishment because it is a pleasing stimulus, but not the one directly maintaining his behavior.

Extinction

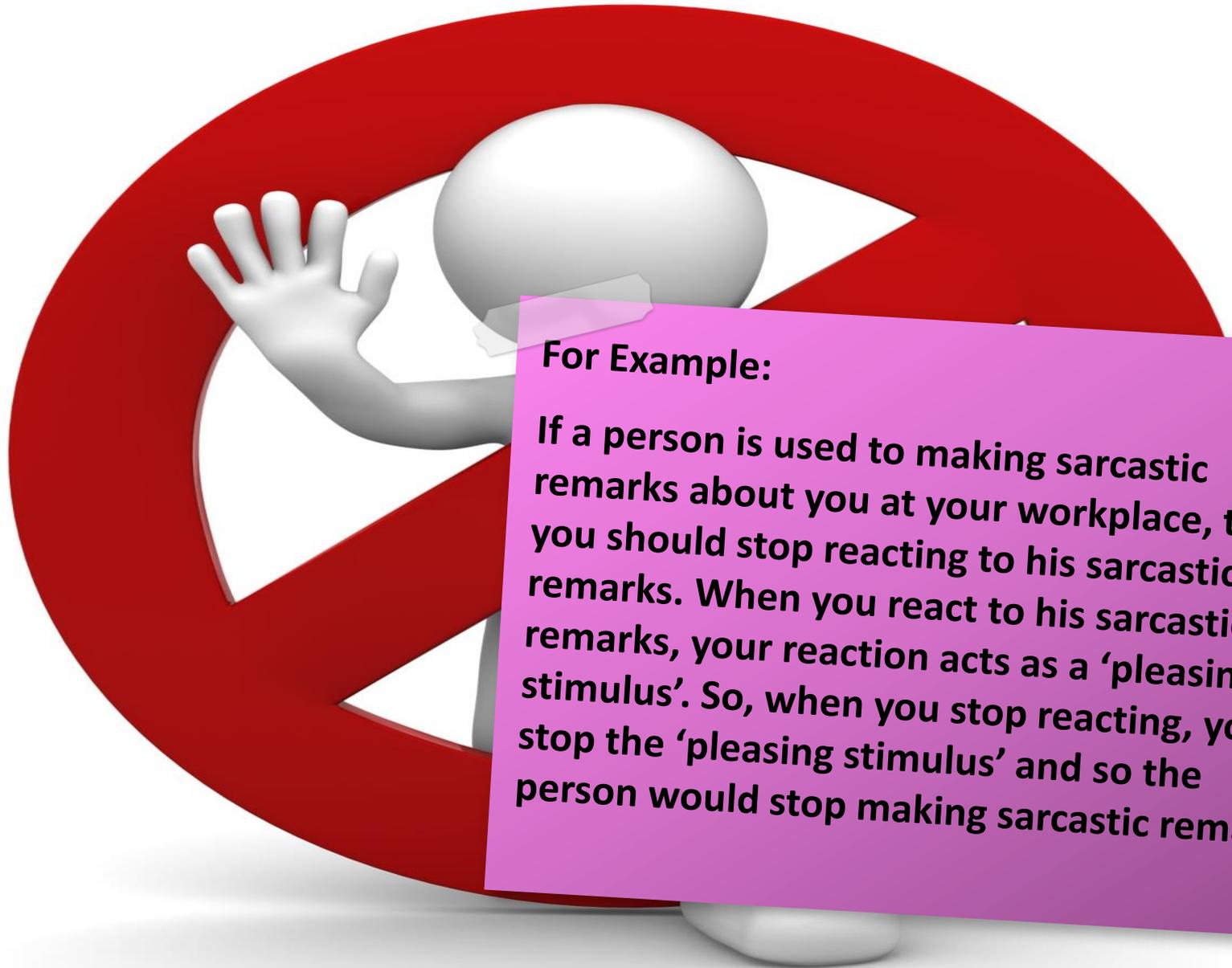
- **Extinction**



'Extinction' implies keeping back the pleasing stimulus that is maintaining the undesired behavior each time the behavior occurs. Moreover, withholding of the pleasing stimulus is done until the undesired behavior gradually decreases to zero or the desired level.

You should keep in mind that extinction is not permanent. So, the undesired behavior may return through a process known as 'spontaneous recovery' after the extinction process is complete.

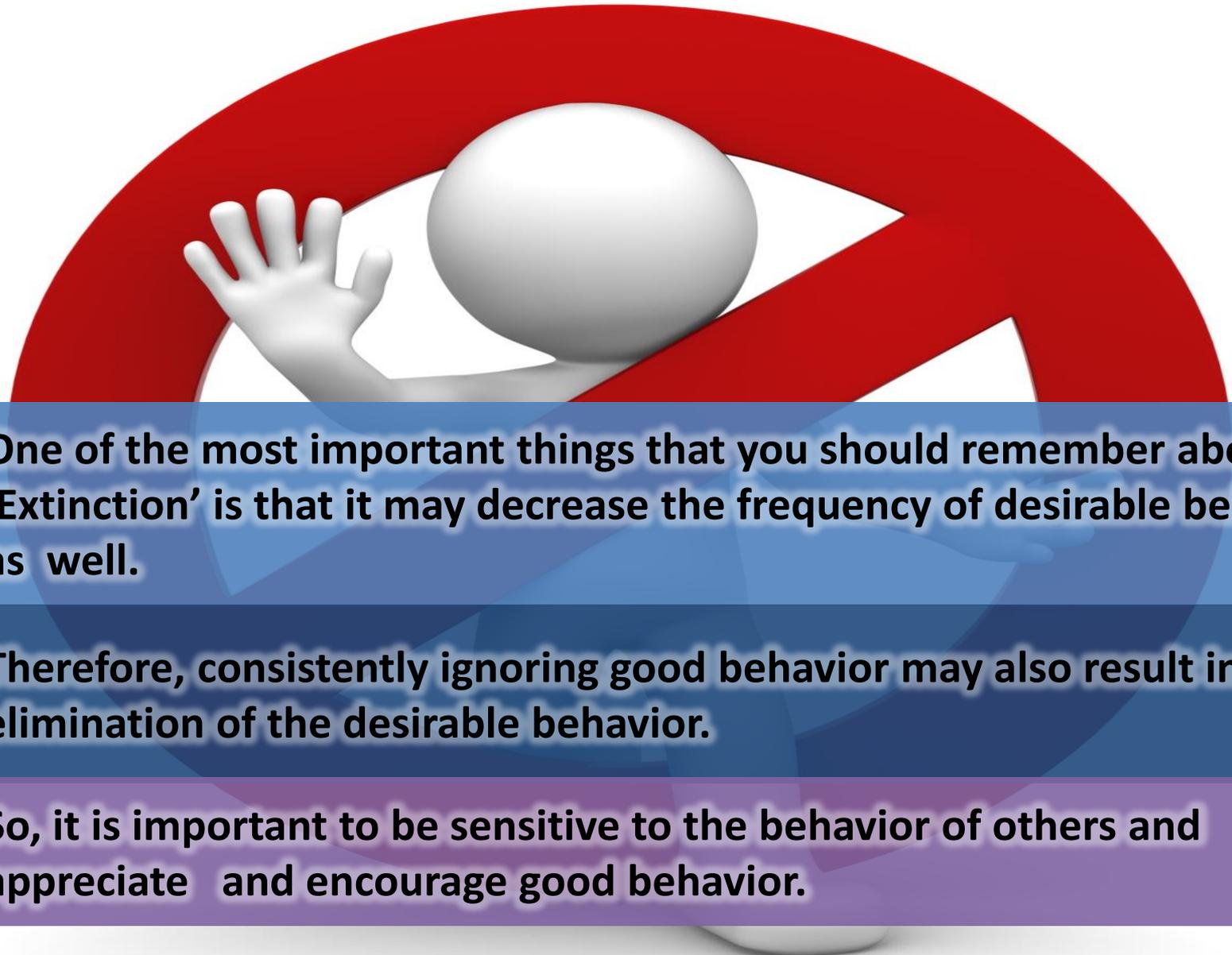
Extinction



For Example:

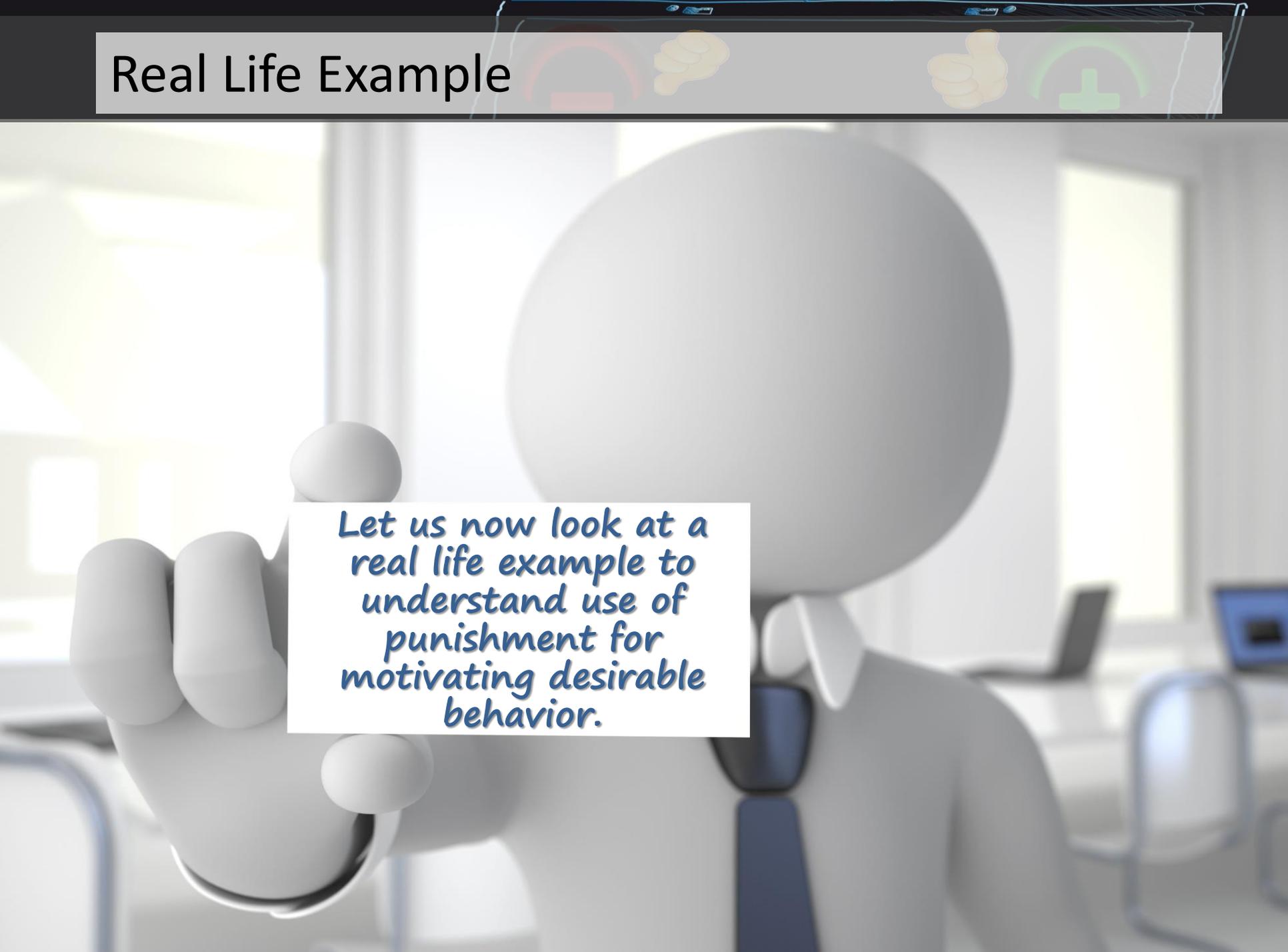
If a person is used to making sarcastic remarks about you at your workplace, then you should stop reacting to his sarcastic remarks. When you react to his sarcastic remarks, your reaction acts as a 'pleasing stimulus'. So, when you stop reacting, you stop the 'pleasing stimulus' and so the person would stop making sarcastic remarks.

Extinction



- One of the most important things that you should remember about 'Extinction' is that it may decrease the frequency of desirable behavior as well.
- Therefore, consistently ignoring good behavior may also result in the elimination of the desirable behavior.
- So, it is important to be sensitive to the behavior of others and appreciate and encourage good behavior.

Real Life Example

A 3D rendered grey figure in a suit and tie is holding a white sign. The figure is positioned in the center of the frame, with its right hand holding the sign. The background is a blurred office environment with windows and desks. At the top of the image, there is a dark grey banner with the text 'Real Life Example' and several small icons: a red arch, a yellow hand, a yellow hand with a pointing finger, and a green arch.

Let us now look at a real life example to understand use of punishment for motivating desirable behavior.

Real Life Example



Ming Chang works as a Technical Writer at Helion Inc. Ming has been working at Helion for the past three years. Ming has a very bad habit of procrastinating at her workplace. She tends to postpone her tasks and puts them off till the end to complete them. As a result, most of the times, she is pressed for time and also ends up delivering work that is not up to the mark in terms of quality.

Real Life Example

Ming's manager Kevin tries to warn her that her habit of procrastinating is affecting the quality of her work and is also creating a poor impression of her in the eyes of the management.

Ming is unaffected by Kevin's warnings. Ming is supposed to complete creating a user manual for a mobile application that Helion has created for one of its reputed clients.



Real Life Example

A large, 3D, red letter 'W' with a white interior, rendered in a bold, blocky font. It is positioned on the left side of the tablet screen, partially overlapping a green clock face that is also visible on the screen. The clock face shows the time as approximately 10:10.

The application is ready for release and to be handed over to the client. However, Ming had underestimated the number of hours that she needed to work to complete the user manual. Due to procrastinating, Ming puts off creating the user manual till she is left with only one week to complete the task.

Real Life Example

Despite putting in long hours, Ming is unable to complete the user manual as per the deadline. Due to the lack of user manual, Helion is not able to sign off the project and hand over the application to the client on time. This leads to an embarrassing situation for Kevin as well as the Helion.



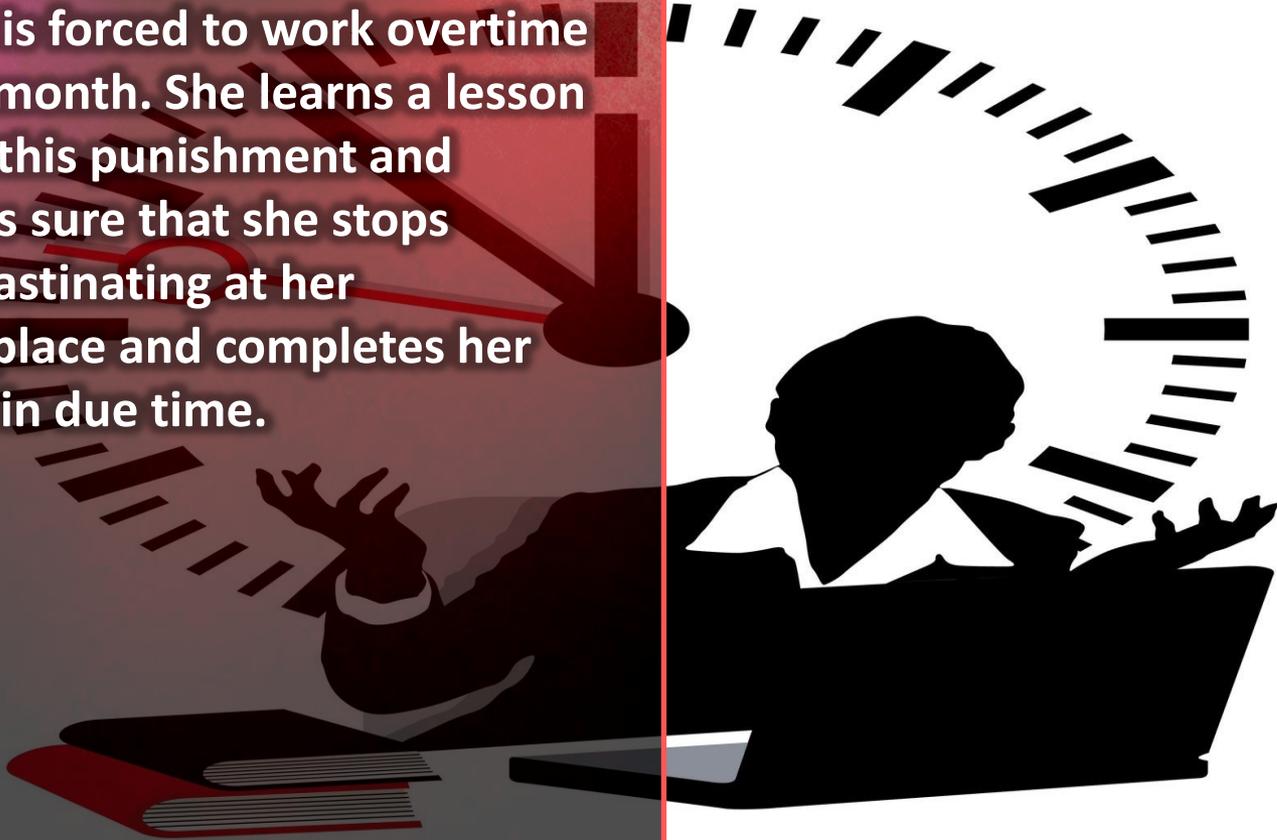
Real Life Example



Kevin pleads with the client and gets an extension of the deadline. However, he decides that Ming should be punished for her undesirable and negative habit of procrastinating. Kevin discusses with the management and decides that Ming would be required to put in three hours of extra work per day for a month without any overtime wages.

Real Life Example

Ming is forced to work overtime for a month. She learns a lesson from this punishment and makes sure that she stops procrastinating at her workplace and completes her tasks in due time.



Real Life Example



Hence, you can see that this is an example of 'punishment' which implies removing positive consequences so as to lower the probability of repeating undesirable behavior in future. In other words, punishment means applying undesirable consequence for showing undesirable behavior. Punishment can be equalized by positive reinforcement from alternative source.

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Risks of Inappropriate Punishment



It is very important to use punishment appropriately as there are certain risks involved due to meting out punishments inappropriately. It is crucial that you understand the power of punishments and their impact on individuals and also the risks involved, such as follows:

1

2

3

4

5

Risks of Inappropriate Punishment



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Booth-Butterfield Guidelines for Effective Punishments

It has been found that the punishment aspect of 'Reinforcement Theory' can be difficult to apply well in practical real life situations. Booth-Butterfield in 1996 proposed the following guidelines for punishment to be effective:

The punishment should be immediate.

The punishment should be intense.

The punishment should be unavoidable.

The punishment should be consistent.



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Tips for Effective Workplace Punishment

The following are a few tips for ensuring effective use of workplace punishment:

1

Ensure consistency: You must ensure that you met out punishments consistently for each undesired behavior and also consistently between individuals. When punishments are not kept consistent, people may get biased against the person giving the punishment, rules will lose impact, there may be a decline in morale.

2

Be quick: The more quickly you take disciplinary action to the actual offense, the more the employee tends to associate the punishment with the offense or unwanted behavior and not the person giving the punishment.

Tips for Effective Workplace Punishment

The following are a few tips for ensuring effective use of workplace punishment:

3

Give suggestions for alternative behaviors: You should clearly explain the reasons for punishment and offer the employee alternative good behaviors. When you punish a person, he can understand only what is the undesirable behavior and what he should 'not do'. However, he does not get any idea about what he 'should do'. So, give him clear answers about what he 'should do'.

4

Use punishments and rewards wisely: You should always use punishments and rewards wisely such as desirable behaviors should be rewarded and undesirable behaviors should be punished.

Tips for Effective Workplace Punishment

The following are a few tips for ensuring effective use of workplace punishment:

5

Use more of positive reinforcement: Punishments have a more bad emotional influence on people than good interactions. Therefore, you should use punishments sparingly. It is important that you keep a balance between using punishments and positive reinforcements. A good ratio is five enjoyable interactions to one disagreeable interaction.

6

Praise openly, reprimand privately: You should always keep in mind never to punish a person in open publicly as it leads to more embarrassment and causes more negative effects. Also, you should make it a point to praise openly in front of others to create a more positive and constructive impact.

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Relevance of Reinforcement Theory at Workplace

Reinforcement Theory can be used for motivating people which can prove to be beneficial at the workplace in several ways such as:

It helps to deal with people so that they feel important and appreciated.

It helps to handle people without making them feel manipulated.

It helps you to make someone want to do what you want them to.

It helps in arousing a want to follow you and your instructions in others.

It will help you to learn how to make people like you.

It can help you to win people over to your way of thinking.

It helps to change people without causing offense or arousing resentment.

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Manager's Role in Reinforcements



Did you know?

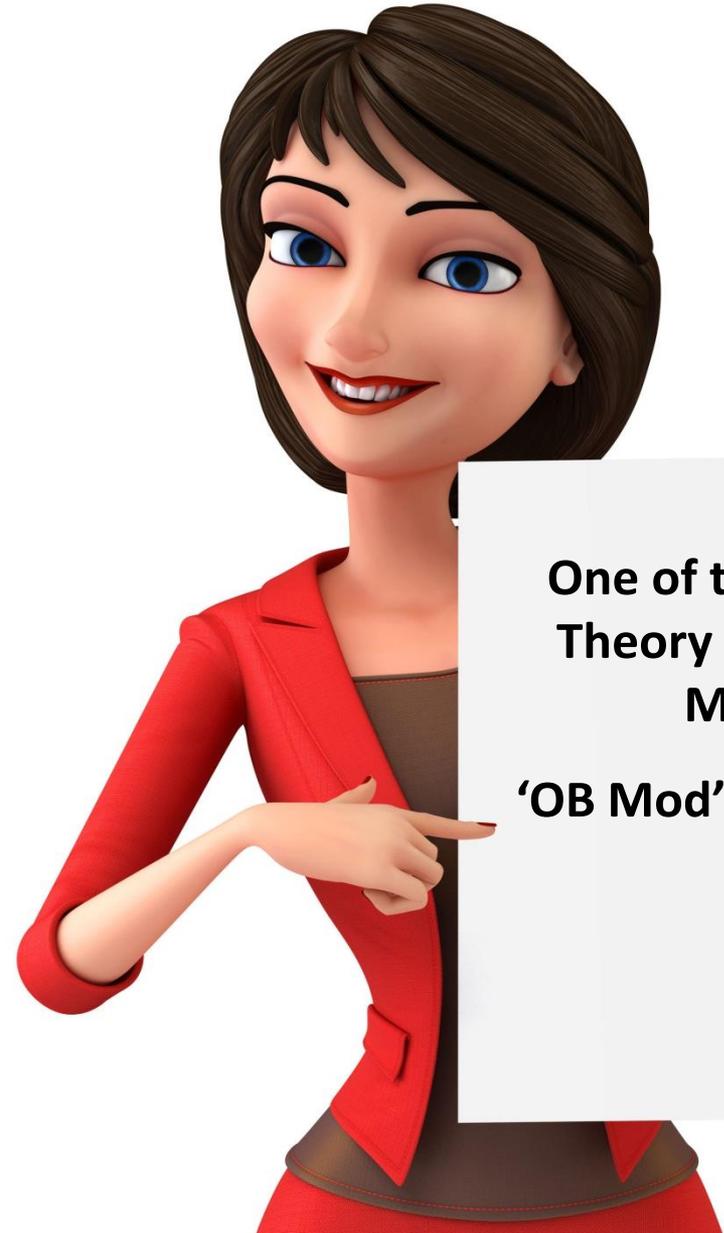
Roll your mouse over the icon, to learn more.

To motivate people, it is important that you interact with them in such a way that you demonstrate your care. Your co-workers feel cherished when you are dealing with them as if you really do care about and appreciate them - when you do. You can show appreciation every day when dealing with people. You can tell your colleagues, co-workers and employees how much you value them and their contribution any day of the year. You can build your motivation and reinforcement skills in leaps and bounds by showing your appreciation of the people around you. In fact, small surprises and tokens of your appreciation spread throughout the year help the people in your work life feel valued all year long.

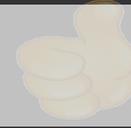
Did You Know?

One of the most well-known tools for 'Reinforcement Theory at Workplace' is the 'Organizational Behavior Modification/Management' or 'OB Mod'.

'OB Mod' systematically applies reinforcement theory in workplace applications.



Ways of Reinforcing Behavior



The various ways to motivate people by reinforcing behavior are as follows:

Support Ideas with Data

Say it Straight

Develop an Informal Channel

Build a Consensus

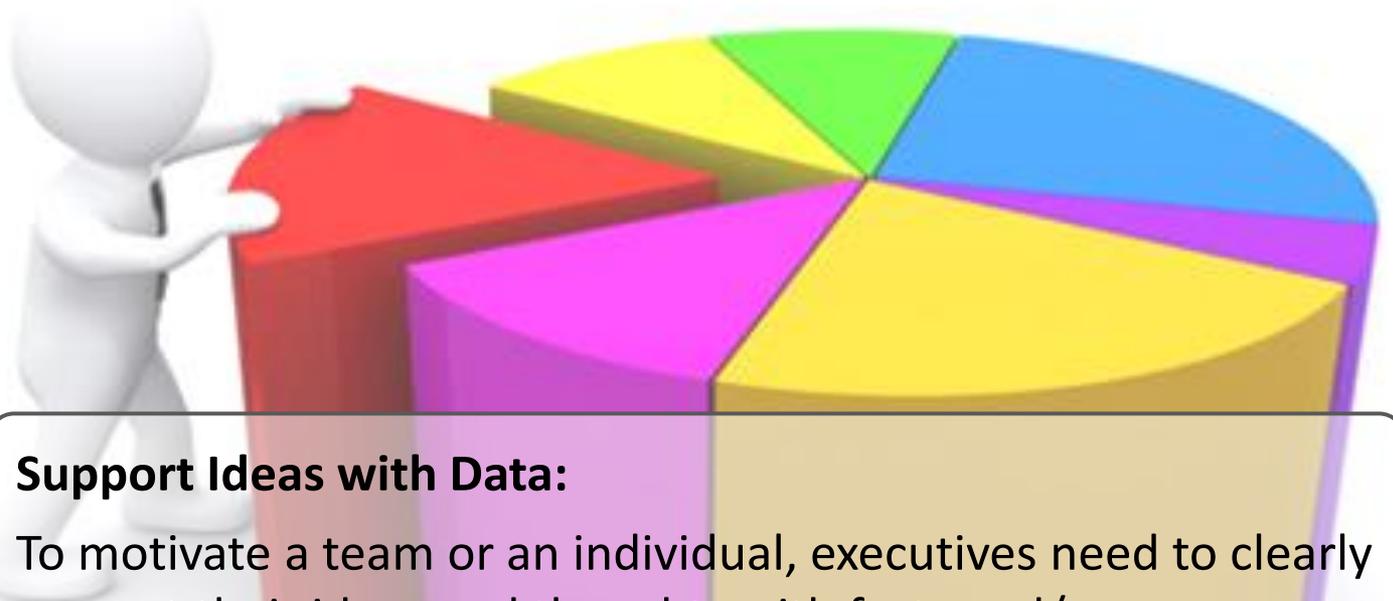
Be Committed

Let us look at each in detail.

Support Ideas with Data



Support Ideas with Data



Support Ideas with Data:

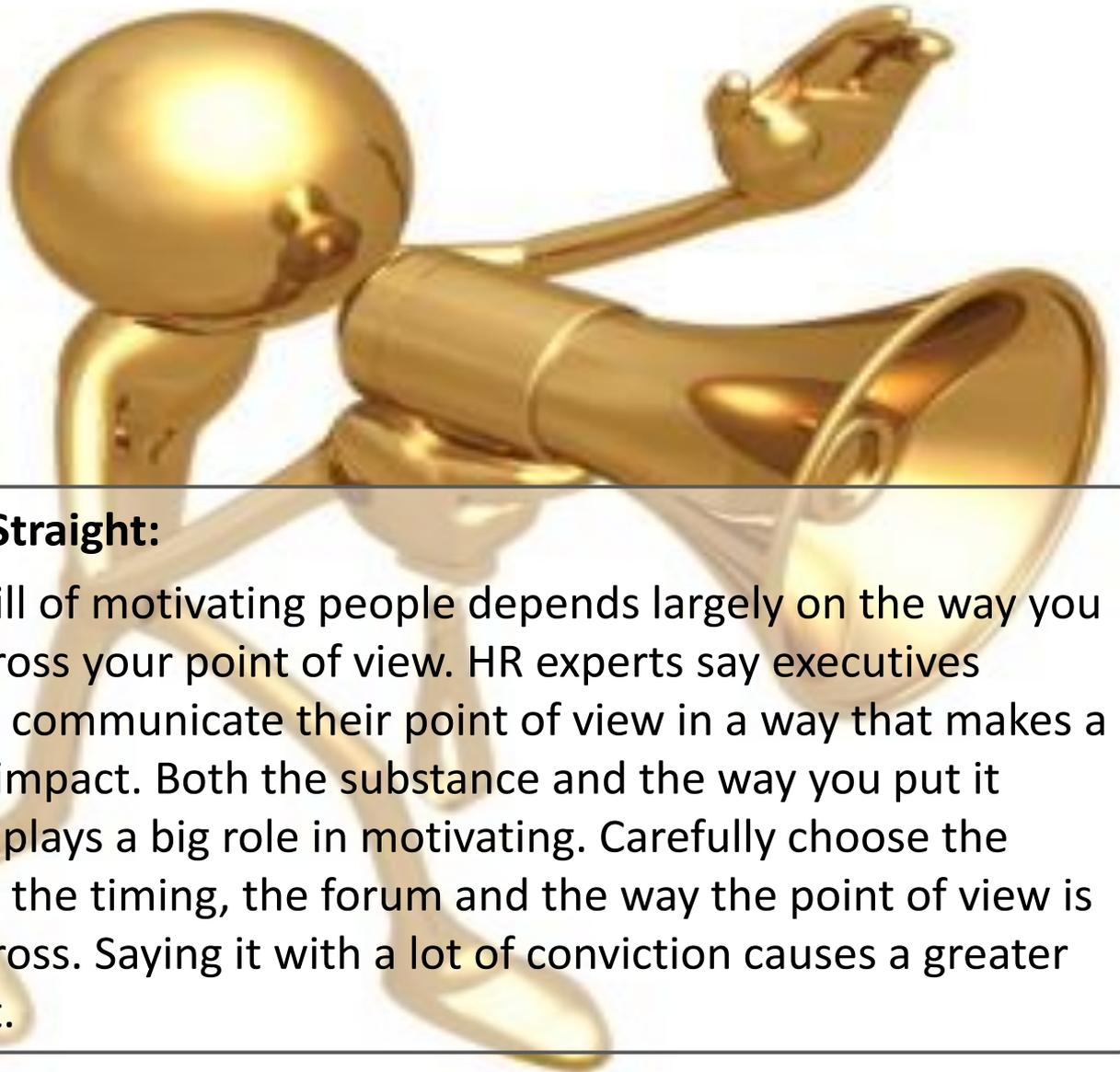
To motivate a team or an individual, executives need to clearly present their ideas and thoughts with facts and/or information to support it. Many people respond positively when a view is supported with data or something concrete. Some background research pays. If you get some information that will add credibility to your argument, your chance of motivating and reinforcing behavior gets very high.

Say it Straight

Say it Straight

Say it Straight:

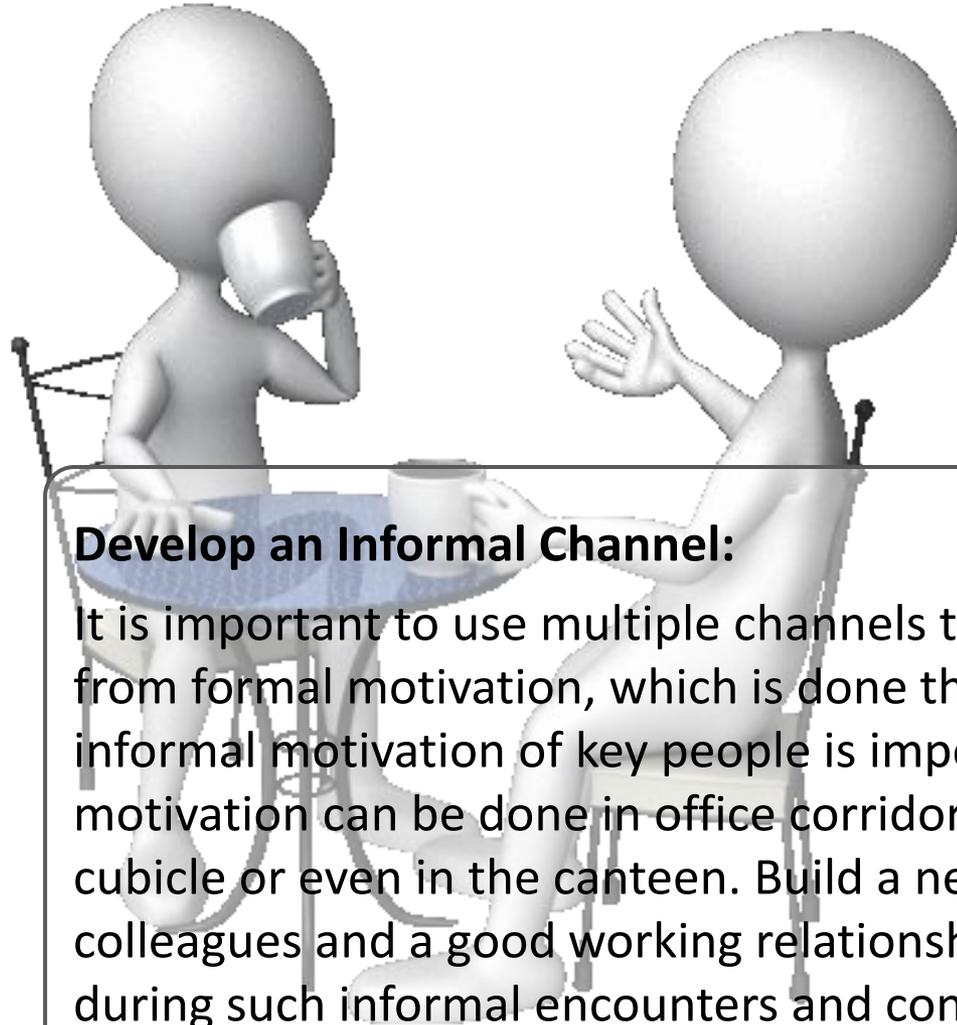
The skill of motivating people depends largely on the way you put across your point of view. HR experts say executives should communicate their point of view in a way that makes a direct impact. Both the substance and the way you put it across plays a big role in motivating. Carefully choose the words, the timing, the forum and the way the point of view is put across. Saying it with a lot of conviction causes a greater impact.



Develop an Informal Channel



Develop an Informal Channel



Develop an Informal Channel:

It is important to use multiple channels to motivate. Apart from formal motivation, which is done through meetings, informal motivation of key people is important. Such informal motivation can be done in office corridors, by walking into the cubicle or even in the canteen. Build a network with colleagues and a good working relationship with key officials during such informal encounters and convey your point of view as if you were thinking about it.

Build a Consensus

Build a Consensus

Build a Consensus:

A good leader, it is said, is one who listens more and talks less, since he then motivates the most. Such an approach helps to gain the confidence of team mates. Listen and understand their point of view. At a senior level, directing someone will have little motivation results. The best motivating style is probing, consulting and questioning, as it helps to gain consensus.

Be Committed

Be Committed



Roll your mouse over the icon, to learn more.

Be Committed:
The biggest impact will depend on how a professional lives up to his commitment and whether or not he is a man of action. But don't commit to something that may be difficult to achieve. If you cannot follow what you preach, then the next time, your colleagues or subordinates will not listen to you and won't take you at face value.

Tip!

Skinner developed a method of 'Shaping' or 'method of successive approximations'. 'Shaping' is used to provide guidance on acquiring more complex types of behaviors. It is used with successive approximations to elicit a behavior that has never been displayed or rarely occurs by building the desired behavior progressively. It also involves rewarding each improvement on the behavior until the desired behavior is reached.



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Schedules of Reinforcement



A 'Schedule of Reinforcement' determines when and how often reinforcement of a behavior is given to a person to decrease undesired behavior or increase desired behavior. One of the most important aspects of 'reinforcement' is the 'Schedules of Reinforcement'. 'Schedules of Reinforcement' play a crucial role in the learning process of operant conditioning. This is due to the fact that the speed and strength of the response can be greatly impacted by when and how often a behavior is reinforced.

JULY
2014

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28	29	30	31		

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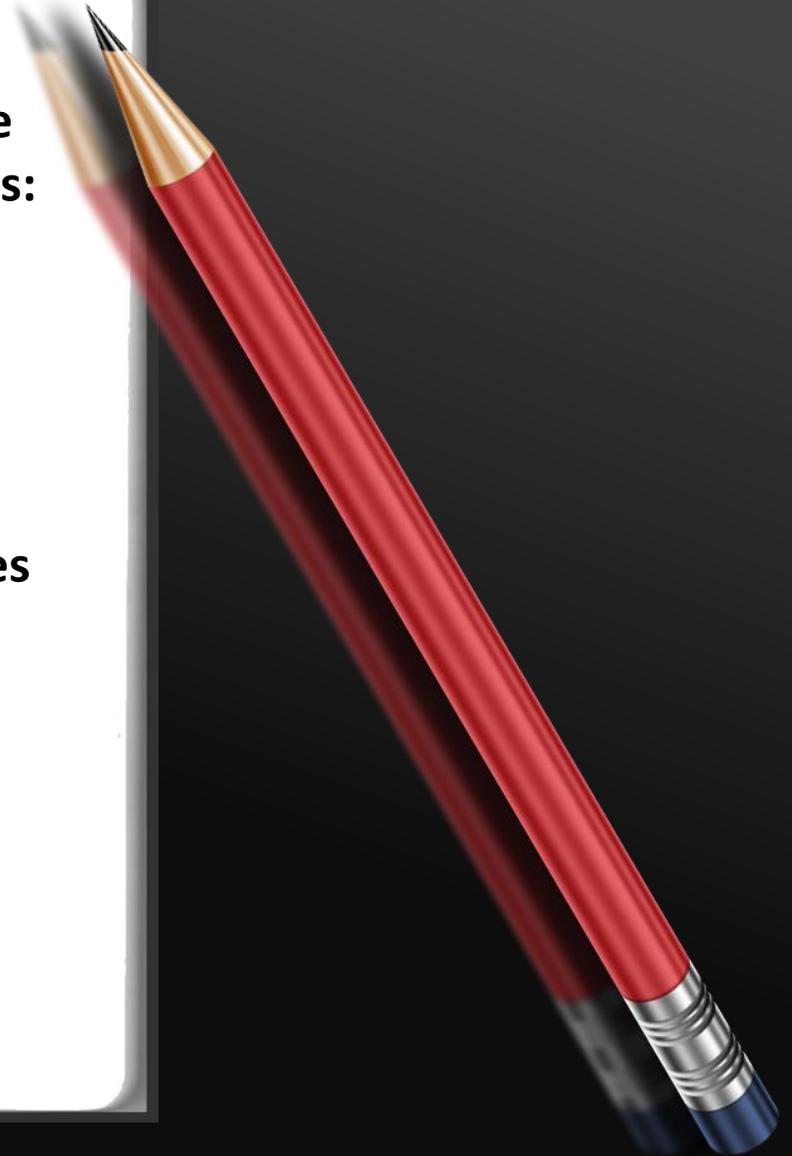
Types of Reinforcement Schedules



There are two main types of reinforcement schedules which are further categorized, such as follows:

- **Continuous Reinforcement**
- **Intermittent Reinforcement**
 - **Fixed Interval Schedules**
 - **Variable Interval Schedules**
 - **Fixed Ratio Schedules**
 - **Variable Ratio Schedules**

Let us look at each in detail.



Continuous Reinforcement

U 'Continuous Reinforcement' implies that a desired behavior is reinforced each and every time it is displayed. As per Van Wagner, 'Continuous Reinforcement' should be used during the initial stages of learning. This helps to create a strong association between the behavior and the response. It has been found that when you use 'Continuous Reinforcement', it will not generate enduring changes in behavior. Therefore, when the rewards are withdrawn, the desired behavior will become extinct.



Continuous Reinforcement



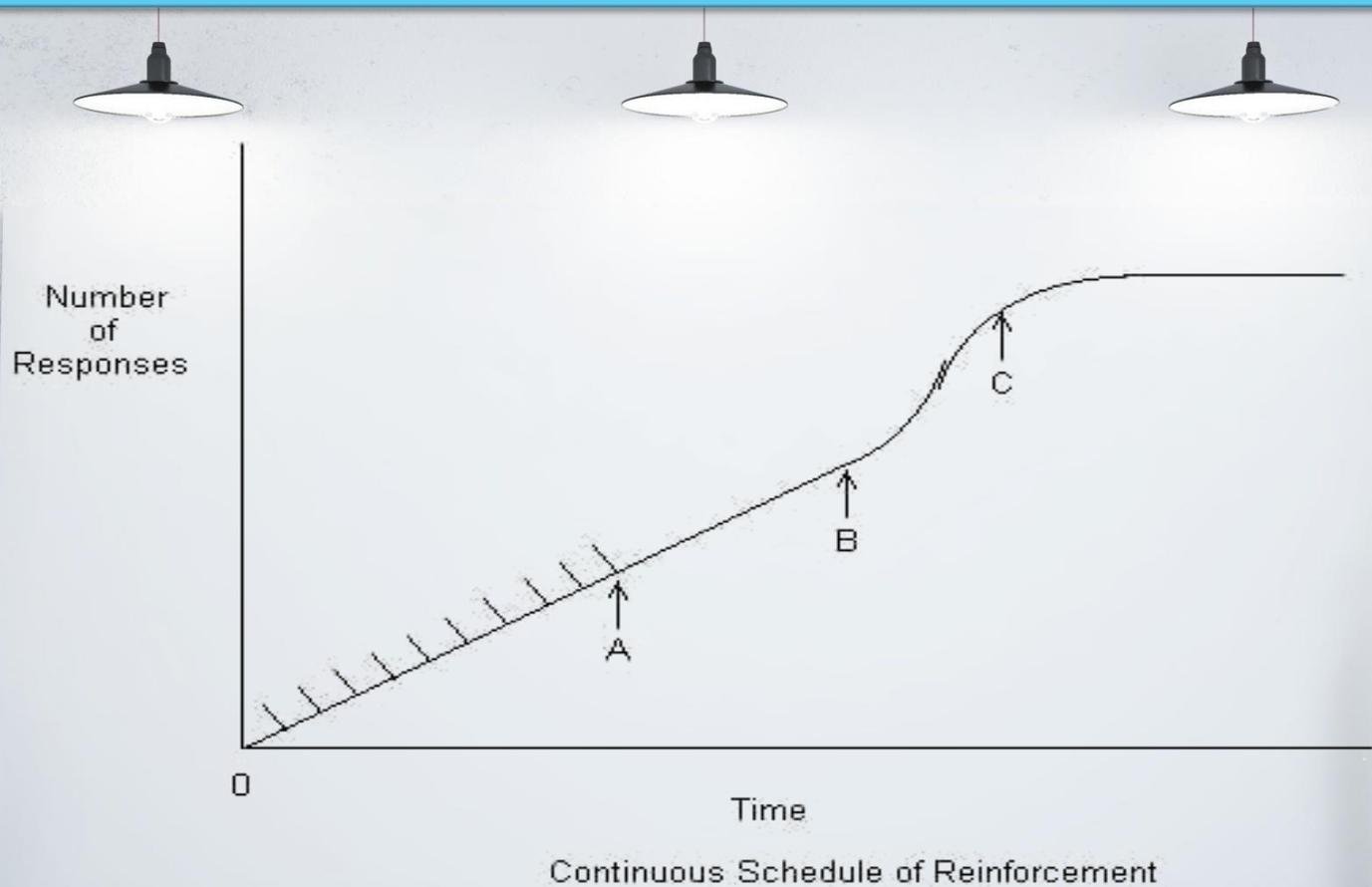
Example:

One example of 'Continuous Reinforcement' is the use of an ATM machine. You would dip your card and try to withdraw money from the ATM machine. However, if the ATM machine does not dispense your cash, then you would try a few more times. The likelihood that you will continuously keep dipping your debit card when not receiving any reward, here cash, is extremely low so this behavior is often stopped very quickly.

Continuous Reinforcement



The given graph shows the continuous schedule of reinforcement:



Intermittent Reinforcement



U 'Intermittent Reinforcement' implies that a desired behavior is reinforced only occasionally when it is displayed.

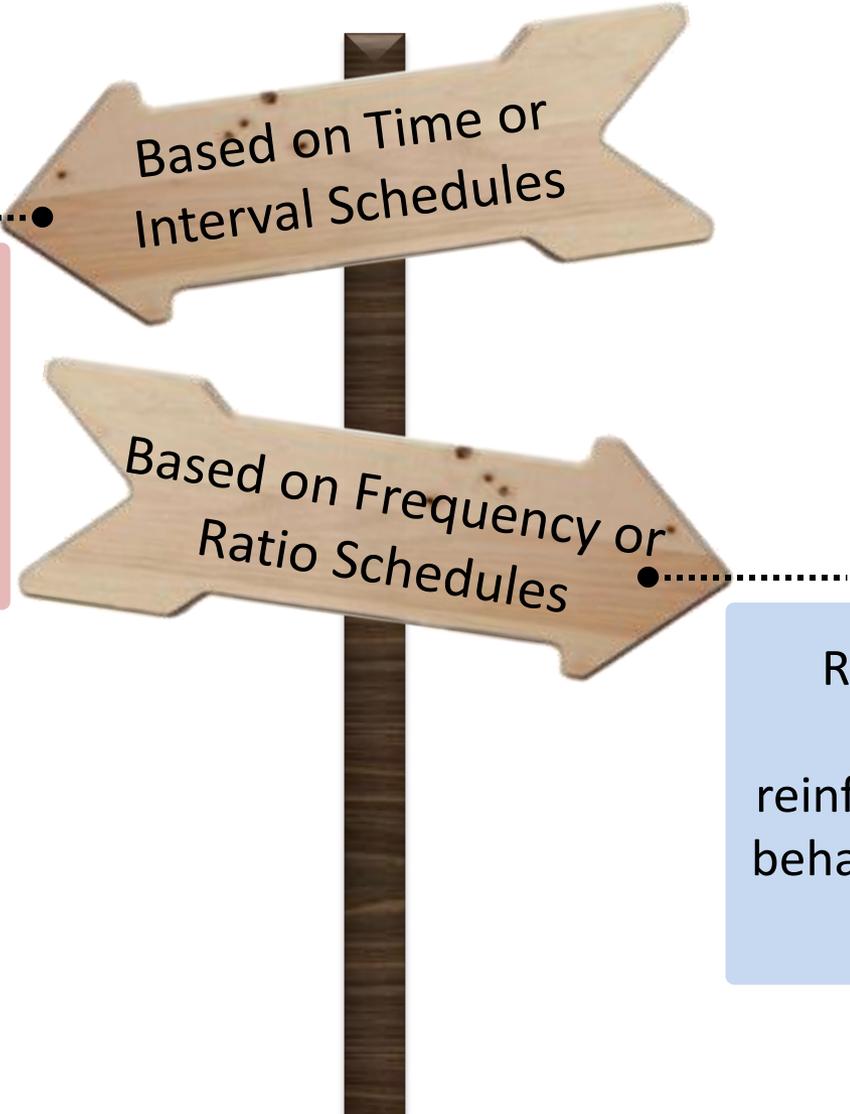
When you use 'Intermittent Reinforcement' schedule, you will find that it takes longer to attain the desired behavior.

However, once the desired behavior is obtained, it is more enduring and defies getting extinct.



Intermittent Reinforcement

You can classify 'Intermittent Reinforcement Schedules' based on the following two:



Based on Time or
Interval Schedules

Interval Reinforcement Schedules is the reinforcement of a desired behavior after a period of time

Based on Frequency or
Ratio Schedules

Ratio Reinforcement Schedules is the reinforcement of a desired behavior after a number of occurrences

Intermittent Reinforcement



Therefore, there are four types of intermittent reinforcement schedules, such as follows:

Based on Time or Interval Schedules



Fixed Interval Schedules



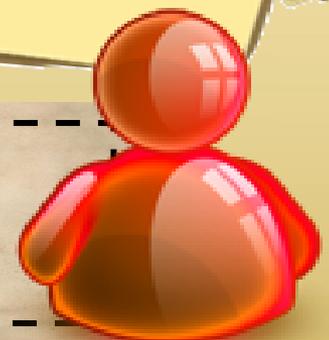
Variable Interval Schedules

Based on Frequency or Ratio Schedules

Variable Ratio Schedules



Fixed Ratio Schedules



Fixed Interval Schedules



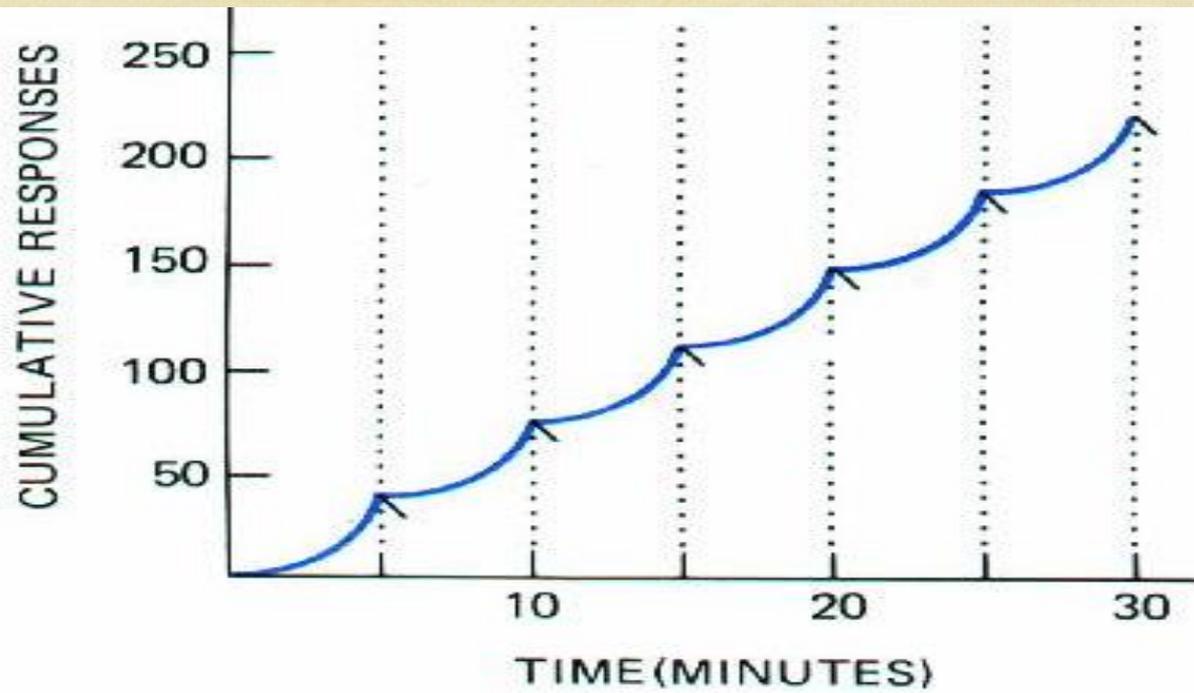
Based on Time or Interval Schedules



‘Fixed Interval Schedules’ means a reinforcement of appropriate behavior that is delivered after a specified interval of time has elapsed. An example of ‘Fixed Interval Schedules’ is given by Heffner as an employee performance review for a raise every year and not in between. The desired behaviour is displayed only directly before the interval time has elapsed. This is to make oneself to look good when the performance review comes around. However, immediately after the reinforcement occurs, there is a dramatic drop-off of behavior. The fixed interval schedule is a form of continuous schedule and is best suited for punishment or learning a new behavior.

Fixed Interval Schedules

However, as shown in the given image, this type of reinforcement schedule tends to produce a scalloping effect between intervals. This is because the reinforcement is delivered only after a specified amount of time has passed.



Variable Interval Schedules

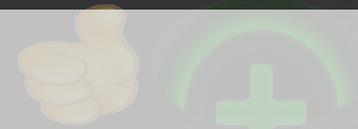


Based on Time or Interval Schedules

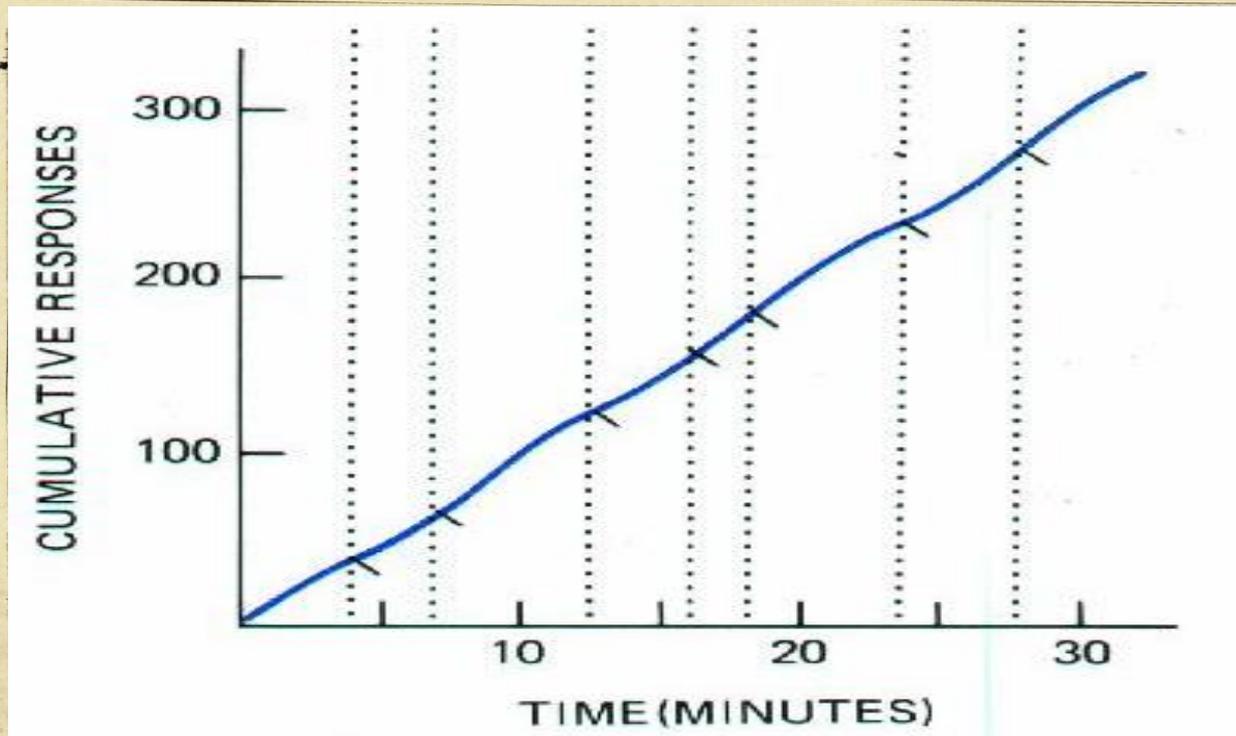


‘Variable Interval Schedules’ means a reinforcement of appropriate behavior that is delivered after an average interval of time has elapsed. Variable interval schedule tends to consistently produce more appropriate behaviours. A new interval of time, either shorter or longer, is specified once the behavior has been reinforced. This new interval of time is specified with the sum total of interval times equalling the average. An example of this is the corporate random testing of work quality. One of the greatest advantages of this type of schedule is that individuals do not know exactly when it is coming.

Variable Interval Schedules



As shown in the given image, the scalloping effect between intervals is reduced due to the variable nature of this schedule. This schedule of reinforcement is best suited when fading out a fixed interval schedule or reinforcing already established behaviors.



Fixed Ratio Schedules

Based on Frequency or Ratio Schedules

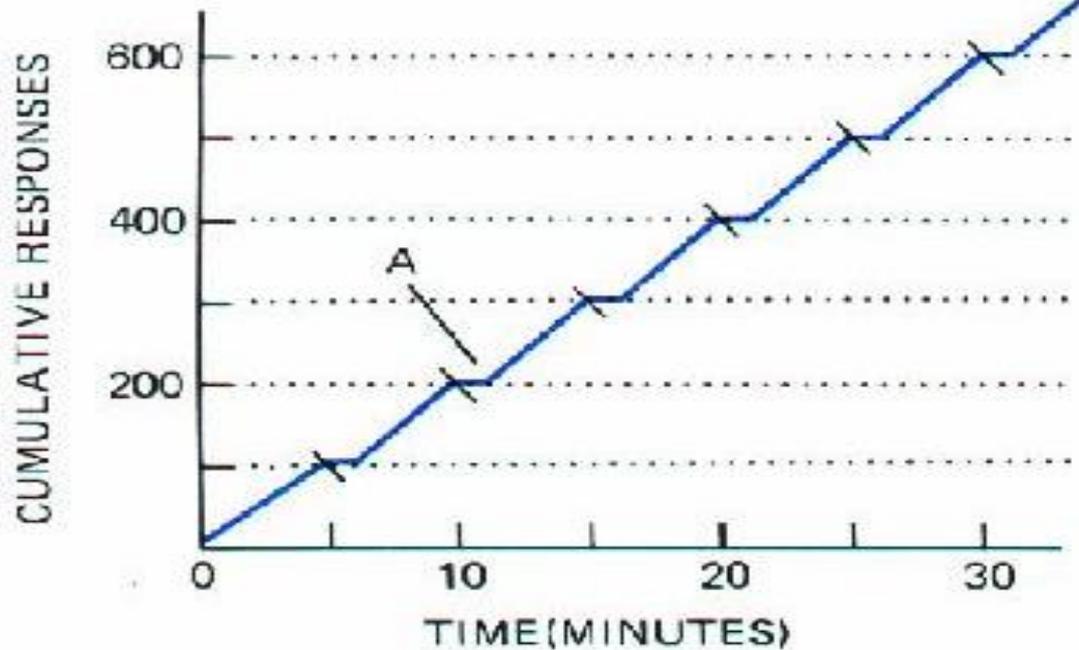
‘Fixed Ratio Schedules’ means a reinforcement of a desired behavior occurs only after a specified number of actions have been performed.

An example of this type of schedule is a factory where employees are paid on piecework or a fixed “piece rate” for every piece produced or performance-related pay.

This type of schedule produces a high, steady rate of response due to the fixed ratio schedule which proves to be highly methodical.

Fixed Ratio Schedules

The fixed ratio schedule is also a form of continuous schedule and is best suited for punishment or learning a new behavior.



Variable Ratio Schedules



Based on Frequency or Ratio Schedules

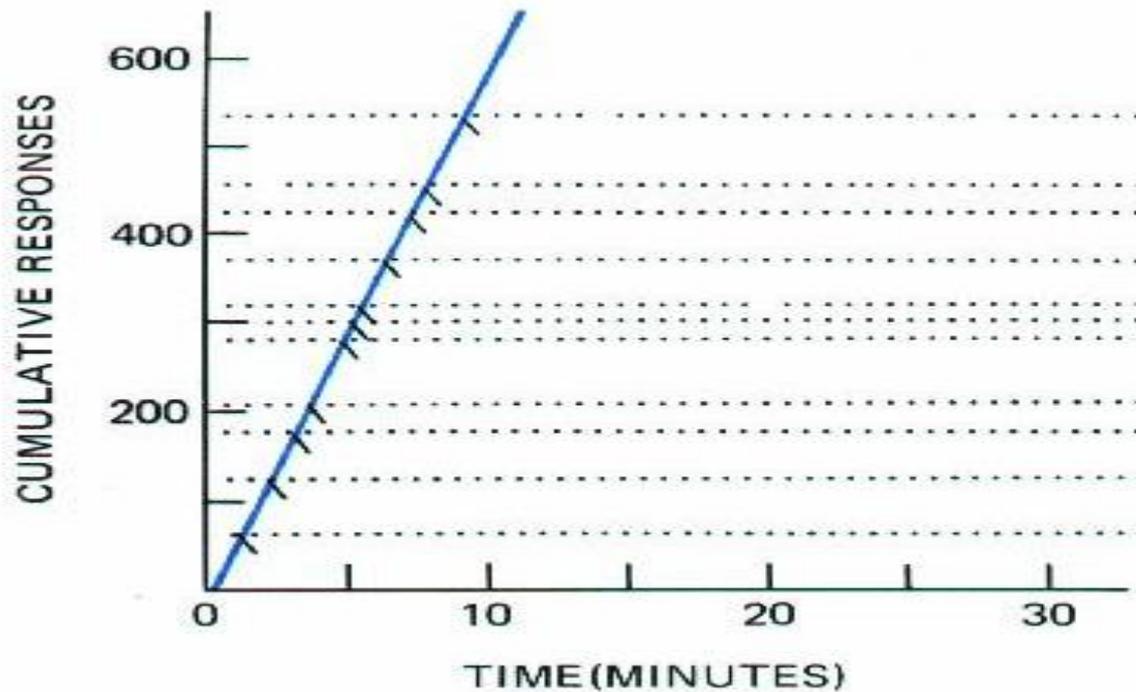
‘Variable Ratio Schedules’ means a reinforcement of a desired behavior occurs after a variable number of actions have been performed.

An example of this type of schedule are employees who contribute to a lottery pot, where as certain number of tickets will win a certain amount of money, which is put back into the pot for the next week.

In such a schedule, the number of behaviors required to obtain the reward changes.

Variable Ratio Schedules

It has been found that the variable rate schedules tend to be more effective than fixed ratio schedules. This is because they generate a higher rate of response and resist extinction.



Comparison of Reinforcement Schedules

The given table shows a comparison between reinforcement schedules.

Roll your mouse over the icon, to learn more.



Reinforcement Schedule	Response Rate	Pattern of Responses	Resistance to
Fixed-interval Schedule	Lowest response rate	Long pause after reinforcement, followed by gradual acceleration	The longer the interval, the more resistance to extinction
Variable-interval Schedule	Moderate	Stable, uniform response	More resistance to extinction than fixed-interval schedule with same average Interval
Fixed-ratio Schedule	Very high	Steady response with low ratio. Brief pause after each reinforcement with very high ratio	The higher the ratio, the more resistance to extinction
Variable-ratio Schedule	Highest response rate	Constant response pattern, no pauses	Most resistance to extinction

Tip!

You can use the following steps of the Behavior Modification Model for Reinforcement Theory:

- Specifying the desired behavior as objectively as possible
- Measuring the current incidence of desired behavior
- Providing behavioral consequences that reinforce desired behavior.
- Determining the effectiveness of the program by systematically assessing behavioral change.

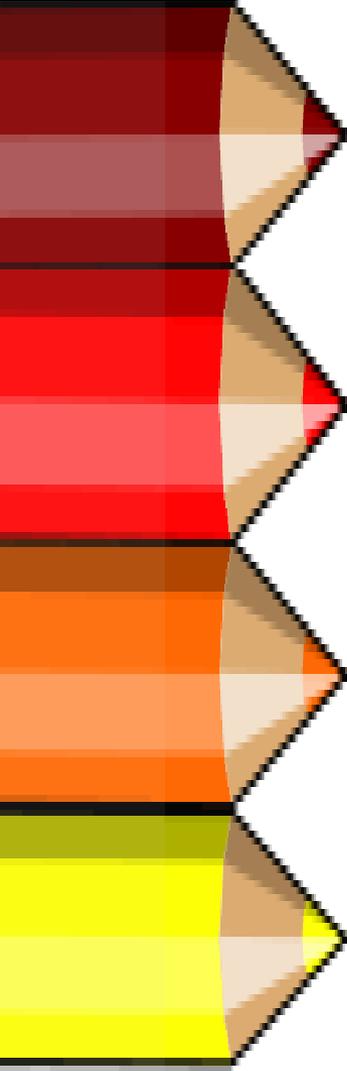


Objective

- Explain What is the Reinforcement Theory of Motivation
- Explain What is meant by the 'Law of Effect'
- Explain What is meant by the 'Quantitative Law of Effect'
- Explain the Types of Reinforcement
- Describe the Methods to Increase Desirable Behaviors
- Explain What is meant by Avoidance Learning
- Describe the Methods to Eliminate Undesirable Behaviors
- Explain the Risks of Inappropriate Punishment
- List the Booth-Butterfield Guidelines for Effective Punishments
- List the Tips for Effective Workplace Punishment
- Explain the Relevance of Reinforcement Theory at Workplace
- Describe the Manager's Role in Reinforcements
- Explain What are Schedules of Reinforcement
- Explain the Types of Reinforcement Schedules
- List the Advantages and Limitations of Reinforcement Theory

Advantages of Reinforcement Theory

The following are some of the advantages of 'Reinforcement Theory:

- 
- It provides clues to motivation methods within the workplace by looking at the environment to explain and control people's behavior and to motivate a group of workers through external factors such as pay raise, promotion, etc.
 - It keeps employees engaged as a schedule of reinforcement; such as a variable interval schedule will keep employees alert because they do not know exactly when a test or performance review is coming.
 - It can be easily applied in organization as 'Reinforcement Theory' deals with learned behaviors and so workers deal with certain stimuli, responses, and their consequences and hence their behavior can be manipulated.
 - It has a good background of impressive research support that has shown impressive results due to its focus on observable behaviors. Also, the research has been able to empirically prove that the 'Reinforcement Theory' works.

Limitations of Reinforcement Theory

The following are some of the limitations of 'Reinforcement Theory:

1

- It does not take into consideration internal motivation and only considers behavior and consequences without considering processes of internal motivation or individual differences.

2

- It fails to identify rewards/punishments to match the person's traits. It fails to take into account the fact that each human being is different and unique. So, a reward that may work for one person may not act as a reward for another person.

3

- Its effectiveness often expires and becomes less meaningful over time; even when an acceptable reward or punishment is met.

Limitations of Reinforcement Theory

The following are some of the limitations of 'Reinforcement Theory:

4

- It works on the principle of freewill of the person in authority trying to change the behavior as per his own thinking. So, the control and manipulation of rewards in order to change behavior is considered unethical by some people.

5

- It tends to be complicated to apply in real life as there are certain risks involved in not applying punishments in the right manner.

6

- It is very difficult to apply the theory to complicated forms of behavior and is not equally reliable in all situations. Hence, it is best suited only to reinforce behavior that applies to a simple task because positive and negative behaviors are easier to keep track of and modify.

MCQ



Q. Which of the following implies 'giving a positive response when an individual shows positive and required behavior'?

- Positive Reinforcement
- Negative Reinforcement
- Punishment
- Extinction

Click on the radio button to select the correct answer!



MCQ

Good! That's Right!



Correct Answer:
'Positive Reinforcement' implies giving a positive response when an individual shows positive and required behavior.

Extinction

Click here to continue!

MCQ

That's Not Quite Right!



'Positive Reinforcement' implies giving a positive response when an individual shows positive and required behavior.

Extinction

Click here to continue!

MCQ



Q. Which of the following implies 'keeping back the pleasing stimulus that is maintaining the undesired behavior each time the behavior occurs'?

- Positive Punishment
- Negative Reinforcement
- Negative Punishment
- Extinction

Click on the radio button to select the correct answer!



MCQ

Good! That's Right!



Correct Answer:

'Extinction' implies keeping back the pleasing stimulus that is maintaining the undesired behavior each time the behavior occurs.

Negative Punishment
Extinction

Click here to
continue!

MCQ

That's Not Quite Right!



'Extinction' implies keeping back the pleasing stimulus that is maintaining the undesired behavior each time the behavior occurs.

Click here to continue!

Extinction

Practice

Let us now practice all that you have learned about Reinforcement Theory of Motivation.

Practice



Observe and find any one person at your workplace. Carefully observe this person for a week and try to find this person's any one undesired behavior that you would like to eliminate/change. Note down the following observations:

- **How can you use positive punishment to change the person's behavior?**
- **How can you use negative punishment to change the person's behavior?**
- **How can you use extinction to change the person's behavior?**

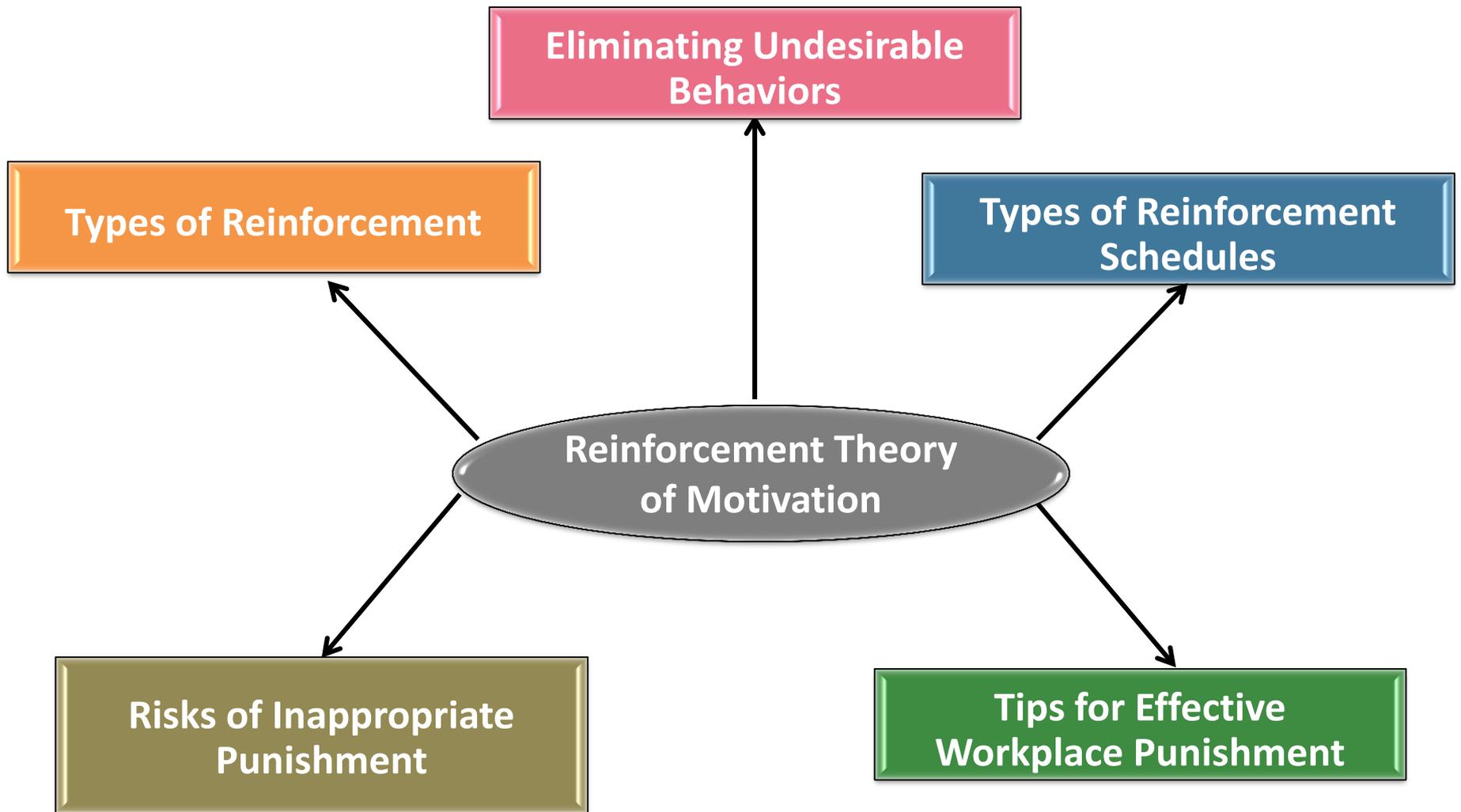


Case Study

Patrick Lexington is a Project Manager at Globus Inc. He has been appreciated by the management for managing his team well and boosting their productivity to new heights.

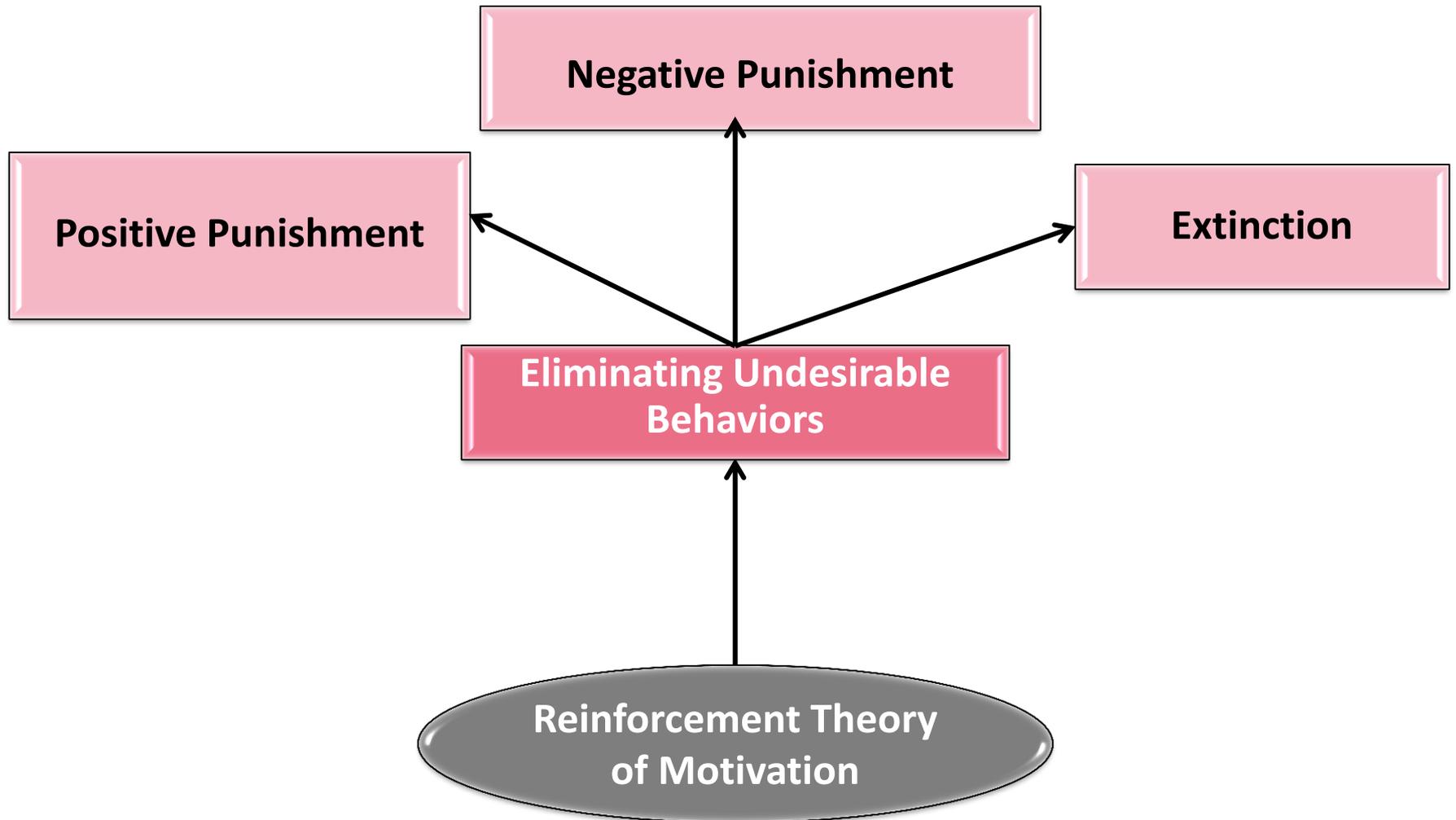
- 1. How can Patrick use positive reinforcement to increase his team's desirable behavior?**
- 2. How can Patrick use negative reinforcement to increase his team's desirable behavior?**

Summary

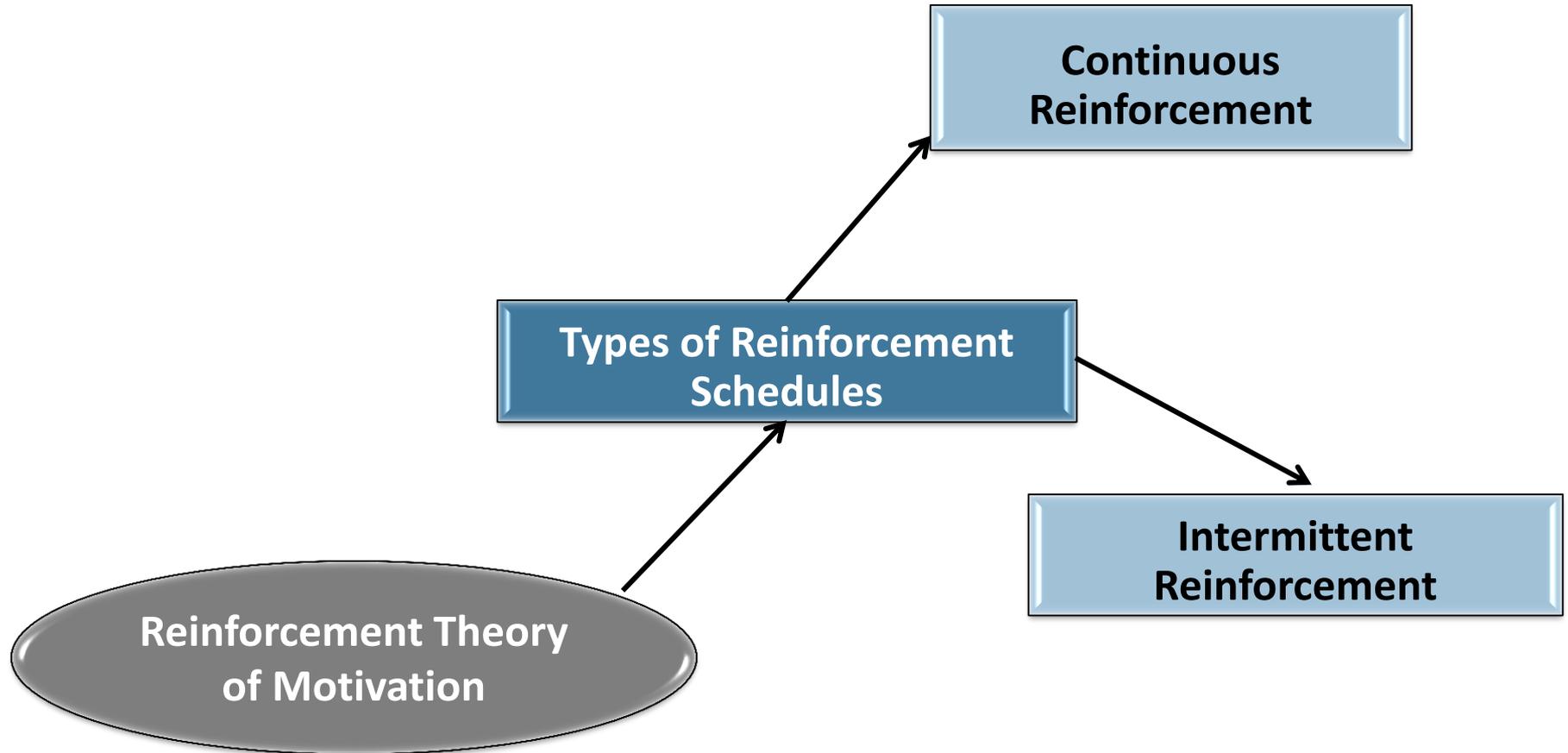


Let's look at each in detail.

Summary



Summary



Summary

Reinforcement Theory
of Motivation

Tips for Effective
Workplace Punishment

Be quick

Use punishments
and rewards wisely

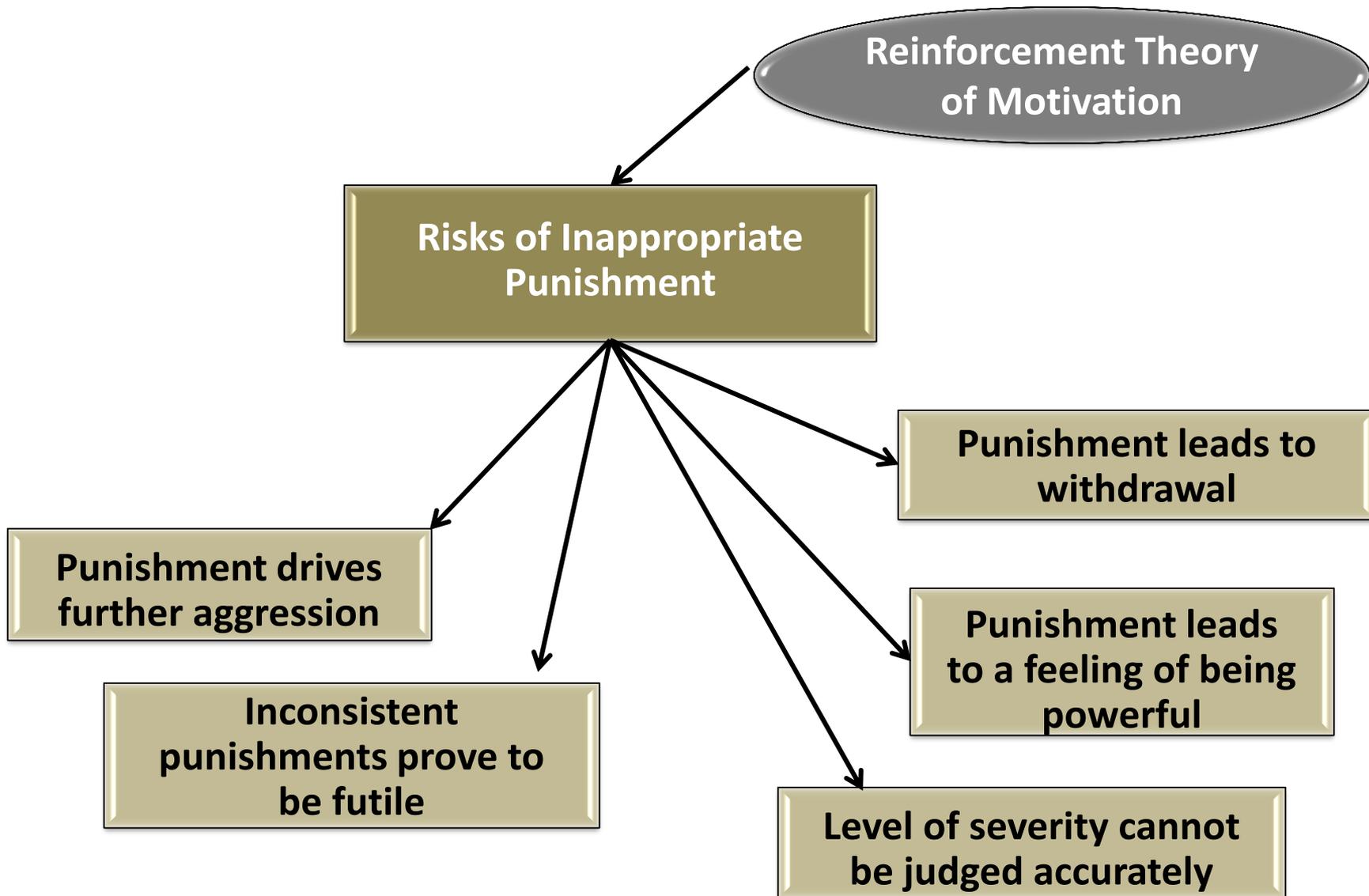
Ensure consistency

Praise openly,
reprimand privately

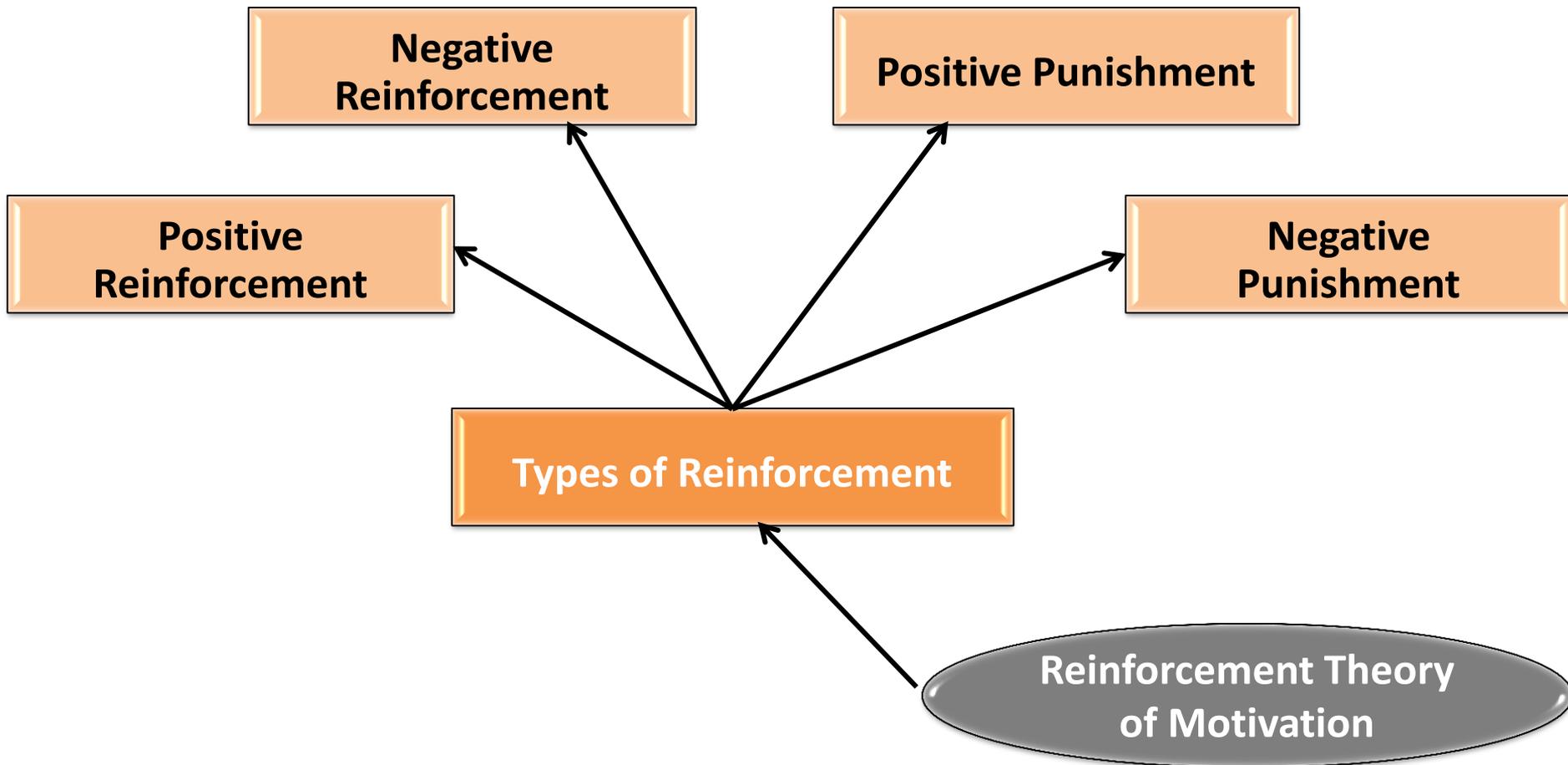
Give suggestions for
alternative behaviors

Use more of positive
reinforcement

Summary

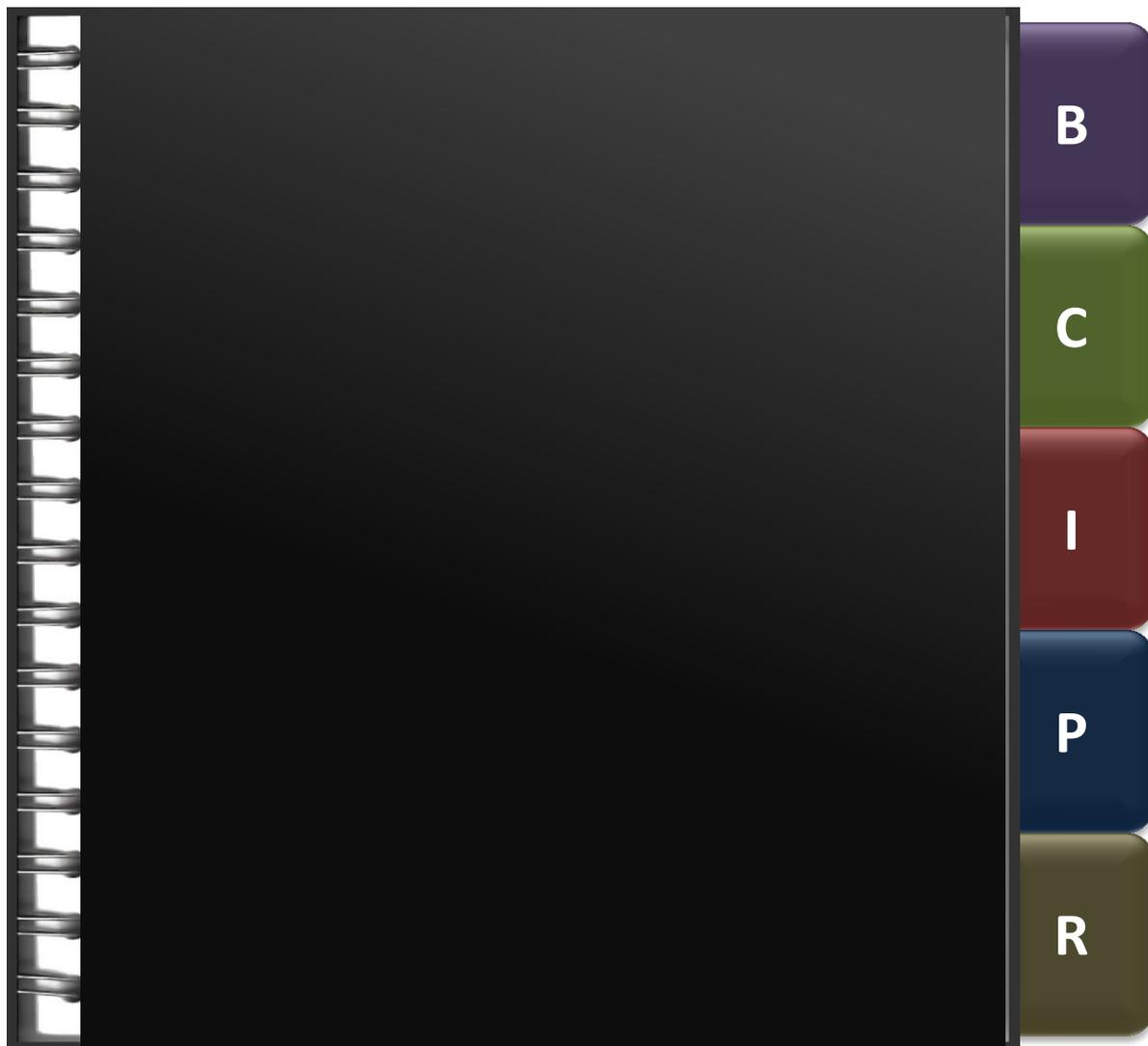


Summary



Glossary

Click each alphabet to learn more.



Glossary

Click each alphabet to learn more.

- **Biased** - Biased means favoring one person or side over another
- **Behavior** - Behavior is the aggregate of the responses, reactions or movements made by an organism in any situation

B

C

I

P

R

Glossary

Click each alphabet to learn more.

- **Consistency** - Consistency means a harmonious uniformity or agreement among things or parts
- **Constructive** - Constructive means intending to improve or promote development

B

C

I

P

R

Glossary

Click each alphabet to learn more.

- **Interval** - Interval means a definite length of time marked off by two instants
- **Interactions** - Interactions means a mutual or reciprocal action; or interacting

B

C

I

P

R

Glossary

Click each alphabet to learn more.

- **Punishment** - Punishment is something that someone is made to do to compensate for a wrongdoing
- **Praise** - Praise is an expression of approval and commendation

B

C

I

P

R

Glossary

Click each alphabet to learn more.

- **Reinforcement** - Reinforcement is a stimulus that strengthens or weakens the behavior that produced it
- **Reprimand** - Reprimand is an act or expression of criticism and censure

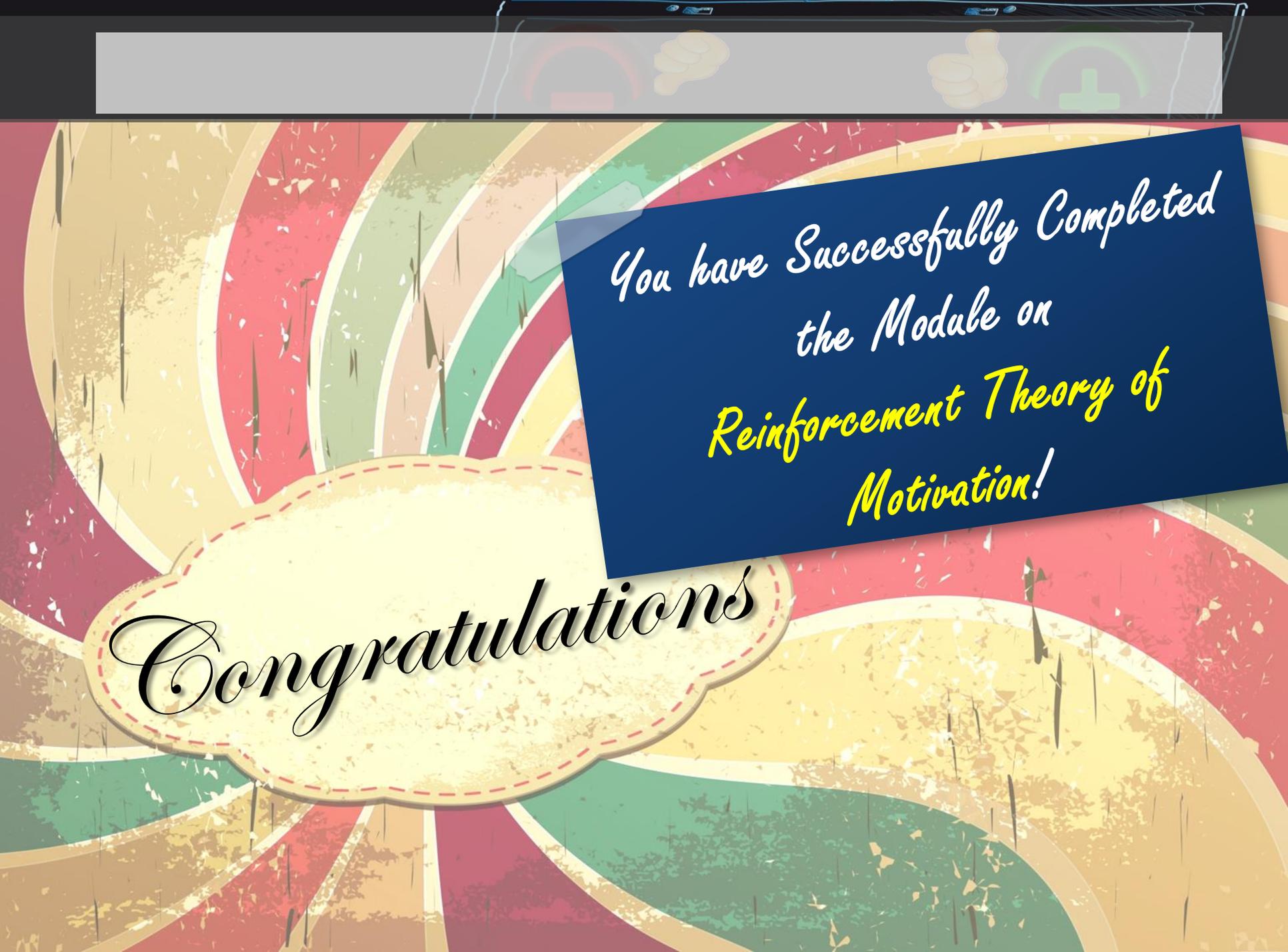
B

C

I

P

R



*You have Successfully Completed
the Module on
Reinforcement Theory of
Motivation!*

Congratulations