

# Learning and HRD



## Part I

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# Learning Objectives

- Define learning and list at least **three learning principles**
- Identify and discuss several **personal characteristics, such as ability, and personality**, that affect trainee learning
- Identify and discuss the factors that affect the **transfer of training**, and how these can be used to maximize learning



## Learning Objectives (Cont'd)

- Discuss how various **individual differences** affect the learning process
- Discuss the **value of adult learning theory** to HRD interventions





# Learning and Instruction

- Learning
  - A relatively permanent change in behavior, cognition, or affect that occurs as a result of one's interaction with the environment
  - Coming out of this definition are three concepts we should focus our attention:

1. Change

2. Long-lasting

3. Behavior – Cognition - Affect



# Focus of Learning

## 1. Change

- Acquiring something new
- Modifying something that already exists

## 2. Long-lasting

## 3. Behavior – Cognition - Affect

- Any combination of the three

Results from interaction with the environment



# Search for Basic Learning Principles

- Association
  - Process by which two cognitions become paired so that thinking of one causes thinking of the other.

“All learning theorist from Thorndike, to the present have taken the view that learning is an associative process involving the gradual strengthening of associative connections or bonds.”  
- Ellis, H.C. (1972) Learning & Cognition. (p. 111)



# Principles Influencing Association Learning

## 1. Contiguity

Objects that are learned together tend to be associated with each other.  
- Pairing: Picture of a cat and German word Katze

## 2. Law of Effect

A behavior followed by pleasurable consequence is likely to be repeated.

## 3. Practice

Repetition strengthens the association.



# Limits of Learning Principles



- Argued that training could be improved by:
  - **Task Analysis**
    - Subdividing each task into component tasks
  - **Component Task Achievement**
    - Mastering each component task to learn entire task
  - **Task Sequencing**
    - Learning components should be in appropriate sequence



## Trainee Characteristics

- Trainability
- Motivation
- Ability
- Perception of the work environment
- Personality and attitudes

## Training Outcomes



# Trainee Characteristics

## Trainability

- *f (motivation x ability x perceptions of work environment)*

Lack of support in the environment for learning

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Less likelihood that the trainee will use the  
knowledge or skill



# Pre-training Motivation

- Factors
  - **Involvement** in decision to train
  - Perception that training will result in **benefits**
  - Perceptions of **support for training**
  - Lack of **obstacles** in applying training on the job

Noe, R.A., & Schmitt (1986). The Influence of Trainee Attitudes on Training Effectiveness. Personnel Psychology. (39) 497-498

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