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# CLASSICAL CONDITIONING OR LEARNING THROUGH ASSOCIATION

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# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CLASSICAL CONDITIONING

The success of the theory depends upon the following principles:

## **1. Time Principle:**

It means that there should not be a wide gap of time between the cue stimulus and the satisfying stimulus. The longer the interval between the two, the less effective the association. Normally the CS (bell) is presented before the UCS (food) is presented. Before the CS, some learning may take place, but it is not as effective as when the CS is presented before the UCS. It is so that reward and punishment whenever to be given, should be immediate.

## **2. Principle of Intensity:**

It means that the satisfying stimulus should be of great intensity; otherwise it cannot produce the desirable organic behaviour.



### **3.Principle of Consistency:**

It means that the same process should be repeated in the same way without any change for several days.

### **4.The Situational Principle:**

It means that the situation or the surrounding in which learning is to take place should be such as there may not be in it chances of distraction.



## **5. Principle of Repetition:**

It means that repetition is necessary for reinforcement and fixation of learned response.

## **6. Principle of Inhibition:**

Inhibition should not be allowed i.e., there should not be allowed any factor or situation that inhibits learning.

# ACQUISITION

- Acquisition is the initial stage of learning, when a response is first established and gradually strengthened.
- During the acquisition phase of classical conditioning, a neutral stimulus is repeatedly paired with an unconditioned stimulus.
- An unconditioned stimulus is something that naturally and automatically triggers a response without any learning. After an association is made, the subject will begin to emit a behavior in response to the previously neutral stimulus, which is now known as a conditioned stimulus. It is at this point that we can say that the response has been acquired.

# EXTINCTION

- **Extinction** is when the occurrences of a conditioned response decrease or disappear. In classical conditioning, this happens when a conditioned stimulus is no longer paired with an unconditioned stimulus.
- Eg, if the smell of food (the unconditioned stimulus) had been paired with the sound of a whistle (the conditioned stimulus), the sound of the whistle would eventually come to evoke the conditioned response of hunger.
- However, if the smell of food were no longer paired with the whistle, eventually the conditioned response (hunger) would disappear.

# SPONTANEOUS RECOVERY, STIMULUS GENERALIZATION, STIMULUS DISCRIMINATION

- **Spontaneous Recovery** - Sometimes a learned response can suddenly reemerge, even after a period of extinction. This is called spontaneous recovery.
- **Stimulus Generalization** –is the tendency for a conditioned stimulus to evoke similar responses after the response has been conditioned.
- **Stimulus Discrimination** – is the ability to differentiate between a conditioned stimulus and other stimuli not paired with an unconditioned stimulus.