

# **ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR THEORY**

**COMM 222**

**Student Handout**

**Lecture 2**

# PERSONALITY

**Personality** refers to a relatively stable set of psychological characteristics that influences the way individuals interact with their environment

Dimensions and traits are determined by genetic predisposition and one's long-term learning history

People have a variety of personality characteristics



# PERSONALITY AND OB

## Person – Disposition Approaches

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- 1. Dispositional Approach:** Individuals possess stable traits or characteristics that influence their attitudes and behaviours. Predisposed to behave in certain ways
- 2. Situational Approach:** Characteristics of the organizational setting such as rewards and punishment influence people's feelings, attitudes and behaviour. Situational factors such as the characteristics of work tasks predict job satisfaction
- 3. Interactionist Approach:** Most widely accepted approach to OB. A function of both individual disposition and the organizational situation (**Behaviour is a function of inherent personality traits (Disposition) and environmental factors (Situation)**)

# PERSONALITY AND OB

## Trait Activation Theory

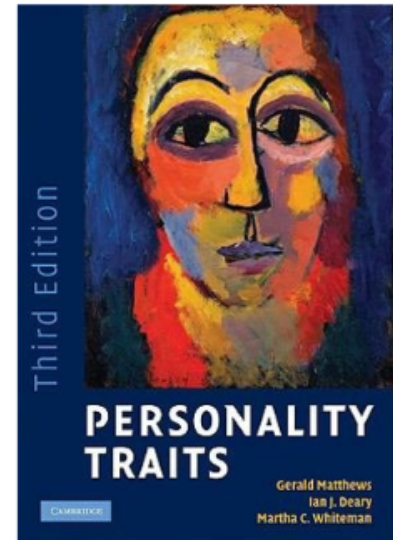
### Chapter 2

### Personality and Learning

**Trait Activation Theory (TAT)** asserts that traits lead to certain behaviours only when the situation makes the need for the trait salient

**TAT** focuses on the person-situation interaction to explain the behaviour on the basis of responses to trait-relevant cues found in situation

Traits are the pattern of collective character, behavioral, temperamental, emotional, and mental traits of a person. Distinctive qualities of a person



# PERSONALITY AND OB

## Implications of the Interactionist Approach

Personality characteristics are useful in certain organizational situations

No one best personality

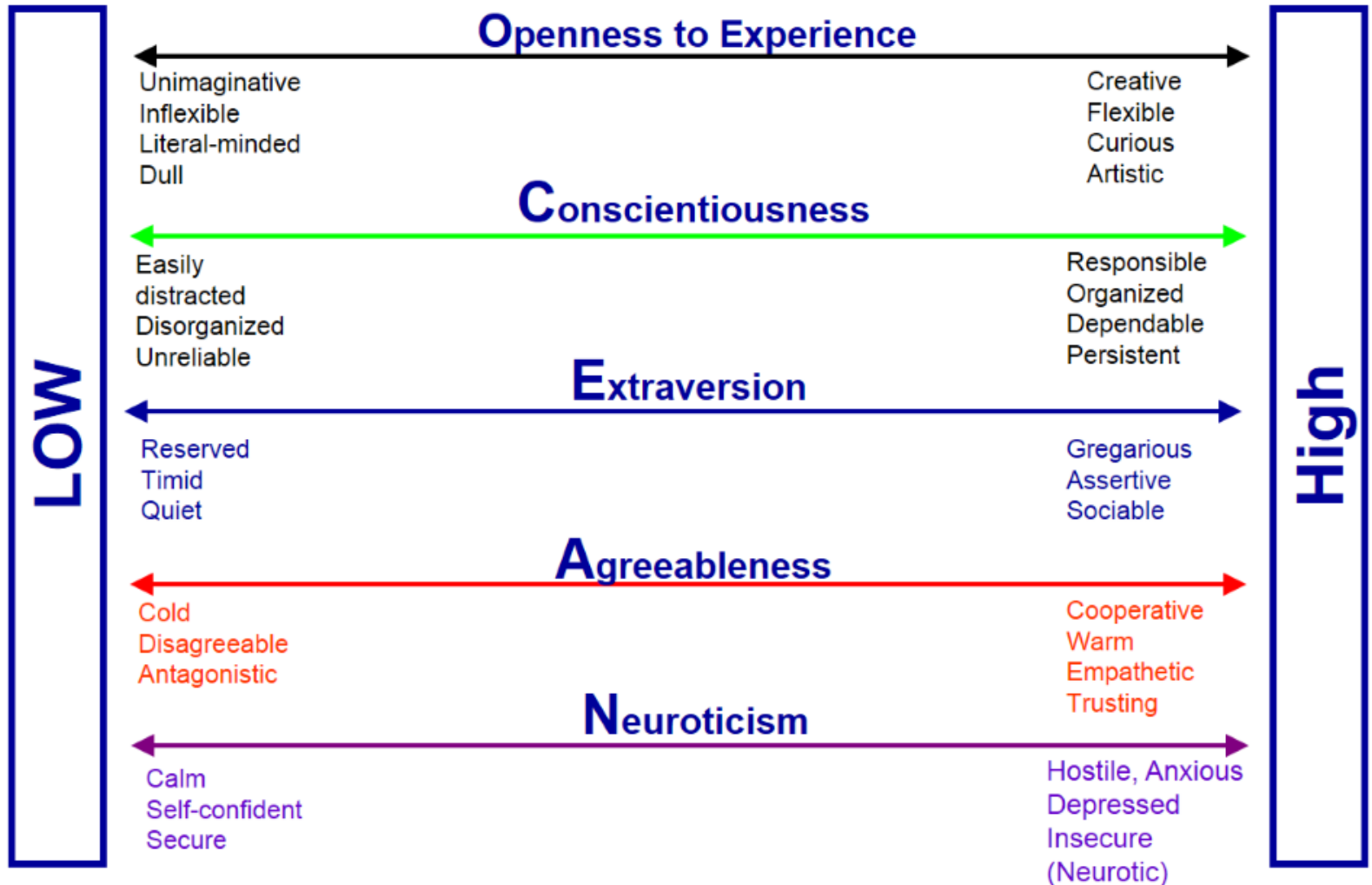
Managers need to appreciate the advantages of employee diversity

**The importance of fit:**  
Putting the right person in the right job, group, or organization



# THE FIVE FACTOR “BIG FIVE” PERSONALITY MODEL

5 basic, but general dimensions that describe personality



# PERSONALITY

## OTHER APPROACHES

### Chapter 2

#### Personality and Learning

### LOCUS OF CONTROL

Refers to the set of beliefs about whether one's behaviour is controlled externally or internally

High External Control vs. High Internal Control

### SELF-MONITORING

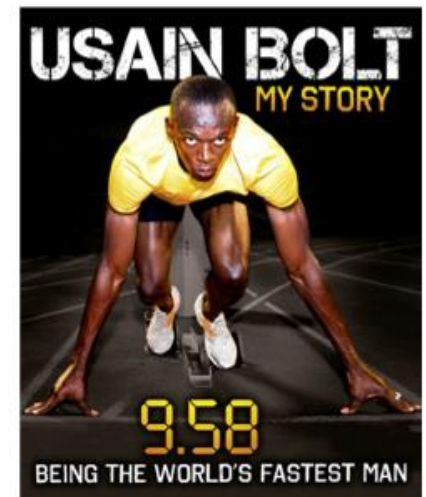
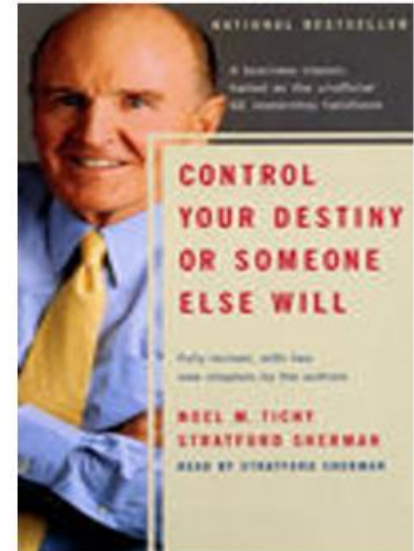
The extent to which people observe and regulate how they appear and behave in social settings and relationships

High self-monitors gravitate to positions that require a lot of verbal interaction (law, PR, sales)

### SELF-ESTEEM

The degree to which a person has a positive self-evaluation

Behavioural plasticity theory: People with low self-esteem tend to be more susceptible to external & social influences than those who have high self-esteem

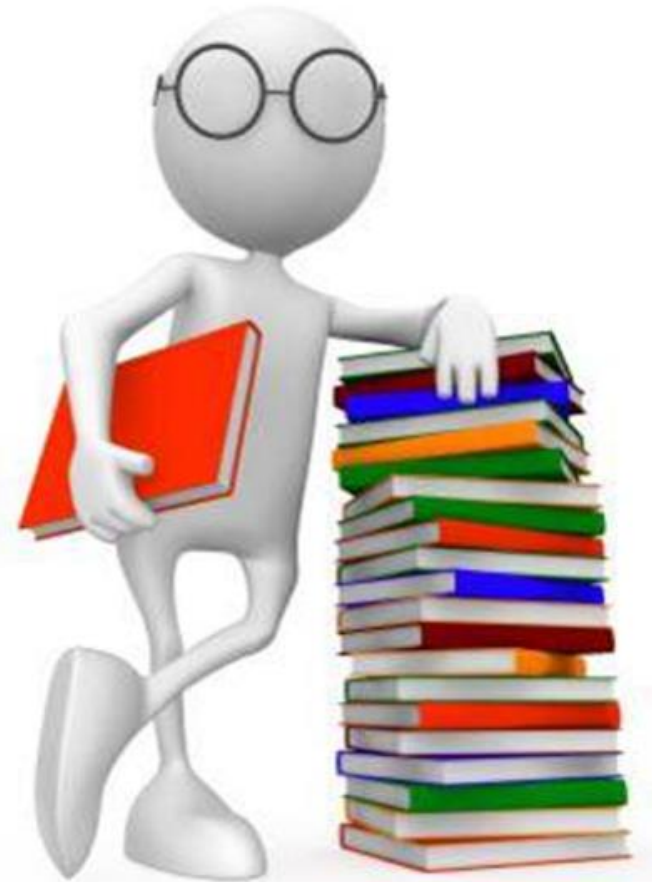


# LEARNING

Learning occurs when practice or experience leads to a relatively permanent change in behavioural potential

The practice or experience that prompts learning stems from an environment that provides feedback concerning the consequences of behaviour

In organizations, employees learn four general types of content: practical, intrapersonal, interpersonal skills, and cultural awareness

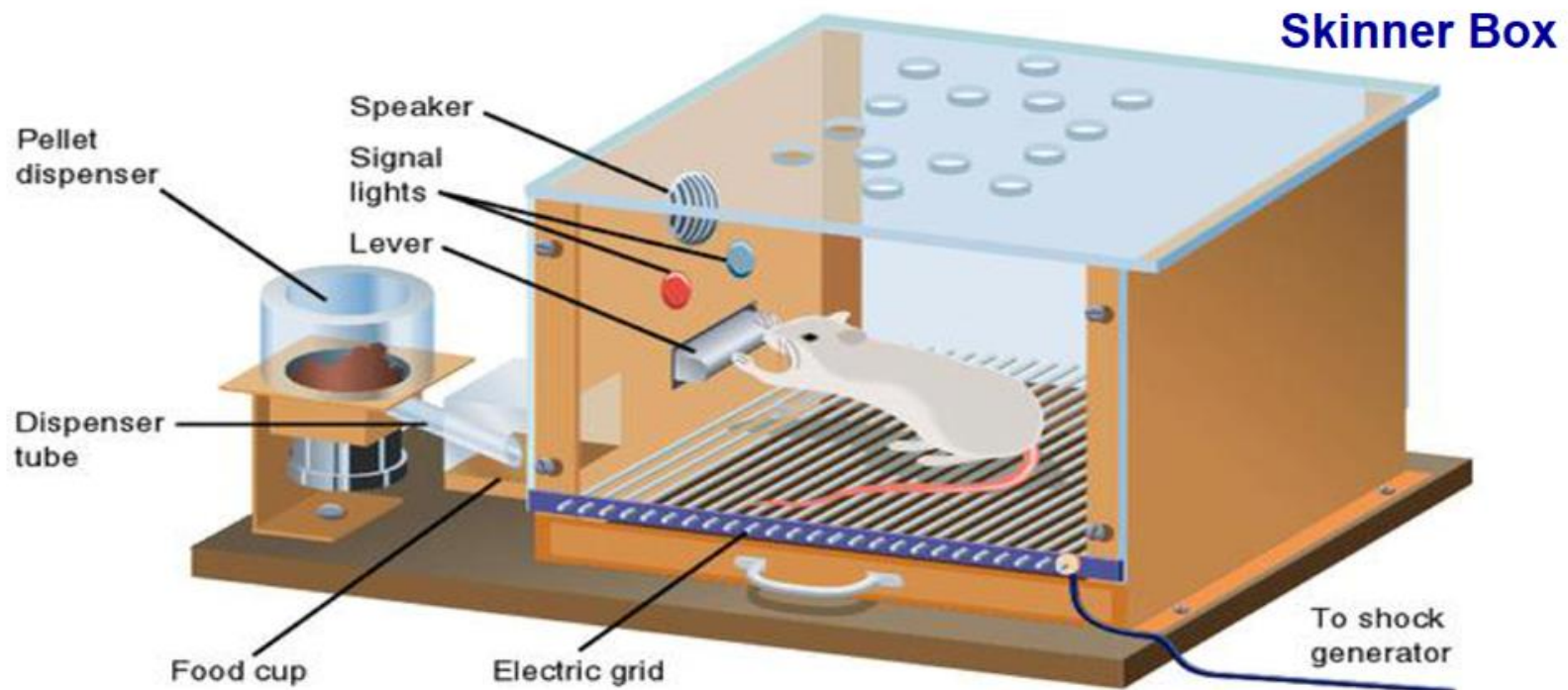


# LEARNING

## 2 Types of Learning Studied in OB

**OPERANT LEARNING:** Controlled by the consequences which follow a certain behaviour

**SOCIAL LEARNING:** Occurs through observation and imitation of other people's behaviour



# LEARNING THROUGH REINFORCEMENT OPERANT CONDITIONING

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## Chapter 2

### Personality and Learning

Ways of Increasing the probability of behaviour occurring:

**POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT:** Application or addition of a pleasant stimulus to maintain or increase the probability of the behaviour

**Example:** Receiving praise for a job well done

**NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT:** Removal of aversive stimulus to maintain or increase the probability of the behaviour

**Example:** Boss stops nagging when you do something his/her preferred way

# PROBLEMS INVOLVING REINFORCING BEHAVIOUR

What are some problems  
in implementing a  
Reinforcement strategy?

Rewards not always  
contingent upon specific  
behaviour

Organizations tend to neglect  
individual preferences for  
reinforcers

Some of the most important  
sources of reinforcers are  
neglected (eg. Intrinsic  
satisfaction of certain tasks)



# REINFORCEMENT STRATEGIES AND THEIR EFFECTS

## Immediate/Continuous Reinforcement

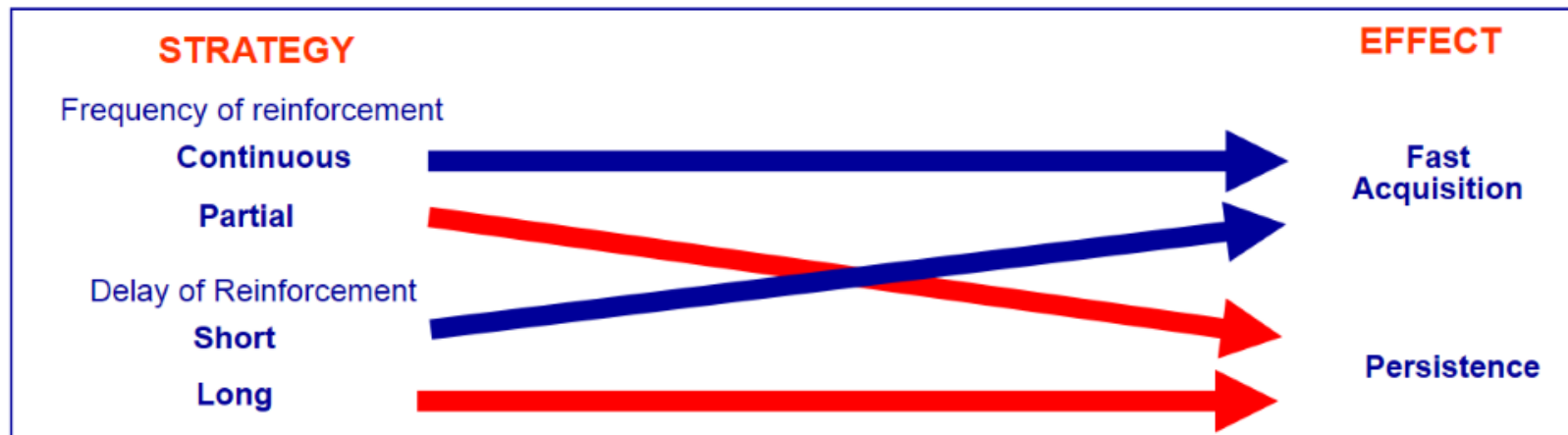
Behaviour is rewarded immediately following each occurrence

## Delayed Reinforcement

Behaviour rewarded after some period of time has elapsed

## Partial Reinforcement

A reward is provided only a portion of time behaviour occurs



# REDUCING PROBABILITY OF BEHAVIOUR CONTINUING

## Chapter 2

### Personality and Learning

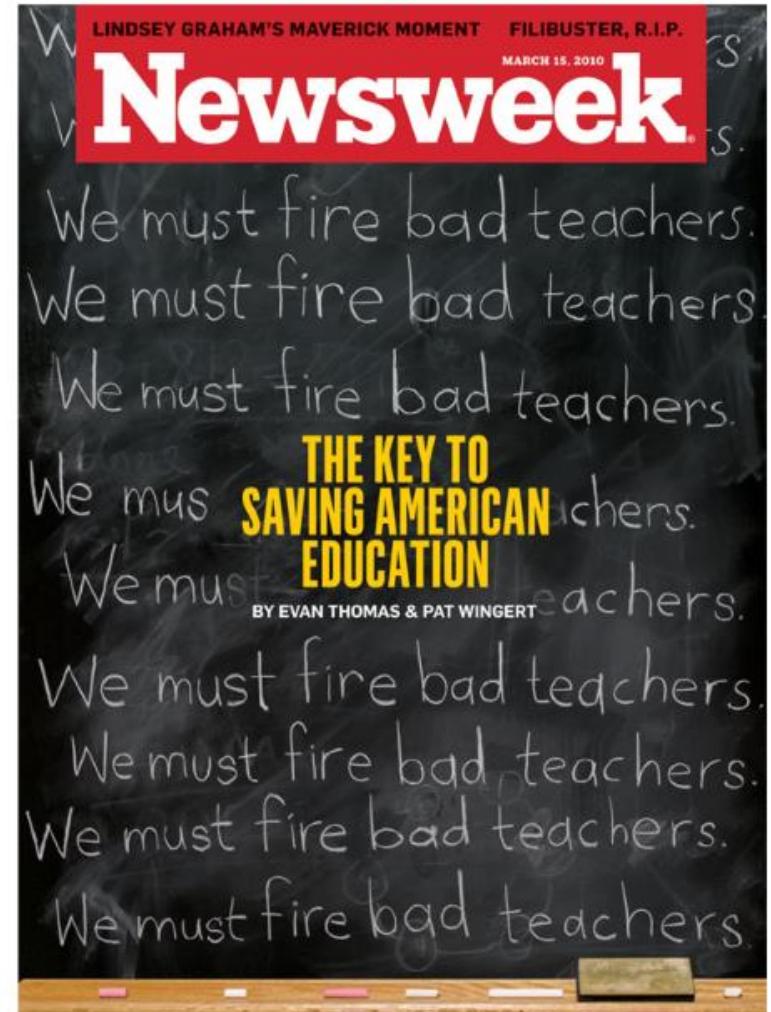
#### EXTINCTION:

Doing away with the reinforcer that is maintaining some unwanted behaviour

Works best when coupled with reinforcement for some desired substitute behaviour

#### PUNISHMENT:

Application or addition of a negative stimulus to decrease or stop the probability of the behaviour



# EFFECTIVE PUNISHMENT

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For punishment to be effective:

Ensure chosen punishment is truly aversive

Punish immediately and intensely

Do not reward unwanted behaviours before or after punishment

Do not inadvertently punish desirable behaviour

**TIP:**

Provide an acceptable alternative

Downplay the emotional element involved

# SOCIAL LEARNING

## SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY (SCT)

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SCT emphasizes the role of cognitive processes in regulating people's behaviour

People learn by observing the behaviour of others and can regulate their own behaviour by thinking about the consequences of their actions, setting performance goals, monitoring performance, and rewarding themselves for goal accomplishment

SCT compliments operant learning theory in explaining how people learn and organizational behaviour

# SOCIAL LEARNING (Cont.)

## SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY (SCT)

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Social Learning theory involves three components:

1. Observational Learning (Modeling): the process of imitating the behaviour of others
2. Self-Efficacy: the beliefs people have about their ability to successfully perform a specific task
3. Self-Regulation: the process in which people use learning principles, self goal establishment and self monitoring to achieve desired behaviours