

EXPLAIN THE HUMANS

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT



OPERANT CONDITIONING

IMAGINE YOU ARE A LAB RAT TRAPPED IN A ROOM. THERE IS A BIG RED BUTTON AND YOU ARE CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT IT DOES. YOU PRESS IT AND SOME FOOD APPEARS. YOU ARE SURPRISED BECAUSE THAT ISN'T HOW YOU NORMALLY GET YOUR FOOD BUT ALSO HAPPY TO SEE THE SUPPLIES, THE CHANCES OF STARVING TO DEATH JUST DROPPED A BIT!

LATER THAT DAY YOU FEEL HUNGRY AND DECIDE TO PRESS THE BUTTON FOR FOOD AGAIN. YAY, FOOD ARRIVES - POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT HAS TAUGHT YOU THAT SOMETHING YOU DID IN YOUR ENVIRONMENT HAS RESULTED IN SOME CONSEQUENCE.

THIS IS OPERANT CONDITIONING OR 'POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT'.

**HUMANS AREN'T LAB RATS IN BOXES WITH A RED
BUTTON. THEY ARE COMPLEX CREATURES -
UNDERSTANDING HOW POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT
BREAKS DOWN COULD BE USEFUL.**

THINK ABOUT THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

*WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE CONSEQUENCE OF PRESSING
THE RED BUTTON WASN'T FOOD BUT AN ELECTRIC SHOCK?*

*WOULD RATS BE DETERRED FROM PRESSING THE BUTTON IF
THEY DIDN'T SEE A DIRECT CORRELATION BETWEEN 'BUTTON
PRESS' AND 'FOOD DELIVERED'?*

**A SIMPLE LAB EXPERIMENT IS VERY DIFFERENT TO THE
WORLD WE LIVE IN. ALTHOUGH POSITIVE
REINFORCEMENT HAS TAUGHT US TO SMILE WHEN WE
ASK FOR SOMETHING, WE CAN ALSO BE REWARDED FOR
SOME 'BAD' BEHAVIOURS - LIKE BEING MANIPULATIVE.**



JENNY RADCLIFFE SAYS

**“IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND
THAT WE LEARN THROUGH
OBSERVATION AS WELL AS THIS
TYPE OF INSTRUMENTAL
CONDITIONING.”**

SO WHILST, REWARDS OR PUNISHMENTS TO SIMPLE ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OR ACTS (PUSHING THE BUTTON) WILL REINFORCE THAT BEHAVIOUR, IN AN ORGANISATION IT'S EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO BE SEEN TO HAVE DONE THIS. IN OTHER WORDS, THE VOUCHER OR THE REPRIMAND FOR REPORTING OR FALLING FOR THE PHISHING EMAIL IS ONE THING, BUT THE COMMUNICATION OF WHAT HAPPENED IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT.

HUMANS BEING COMPLEX CREATURES, THIS GIVES US ALL SORTS OF POTENTIAL OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER, FOR EXAMPLE, REACTANCE.

**REWARD EMPLOYEES WHEN THEY DO
SOMETHING SECURITY FOCUSSED.**

**LET THE REWARD BE SEEN. BUILD YOUR ETHOS
AND MAKE IT CLEAR THIS IS GOOD HERE.**

**KEEP MINDFUL OF BAD BEHAVIOURS, ENSURE
THERE IS NO CONFUSION WHY YOU ARE
REWARDING SOMEONE.**

**ENSURE YOUR PROCESSES HAVE NO HIDDEN
SHOCKS LIKE COMPLEX FORMS PEOPLE HAVE TO
FILL IN TO REPORT PHISHING.**



**PLEASE
SHARE**