

# CHAPTER 6: ATTITUDES

## 1. ATTITUDE OBJECTS

A. **Attitude:** a positive, negative, or mixed reaction to a person, object, or concept

- i. Positive reaction, indifference, negative reaction, ambivalence (strong but mixed)

B. The ABCs of Attitudes

- i. Affection component: feelings, emotions, or motivation towards an attitude object
- ii. Cognitive component: thoughts beliefs, and knowledge about attitude object
- iii. Behavioral component; action tendencies with respect to attitude object

C. Reactions to attitude objects → essentially any idea/concept/category

- i. People
  1. *"I hate Adam"*
  2. *"I love Channing Tatum"*
- ii. Social Groups
  1. *"I hate dentists"*
  2. *"I'm a lifelong Yankees fan"*
- iii. Political ideas
  1. *"School vouchers are a bad idea for education"*
  2. *"The economic bailout for Wall Street was a necessary evil"*
- iv. Example of what an attitude object is: the thing about which you are reacting/holding an attitude

## 2. ATTITUDE FORMATION

A. Attitude formation is based on any exposure that you have had to an attitude object

- i. Based on direct experiences
  1. *Personal use of product*
  2. *Watching a team*
  3. *Tasting a food item*
- ii. Based on indirect experiences
  1. *Advertising about a product*
  2. *Testimonials from friends who use product*

### 3. *Beliefs about people who use or endorse project*

#### B. Process

- i. Cognitive/Mental Representation: information becomes associated with an attitude problem
  1. *Ex: features, value, price, popularity*
- ii. Evaluation: attitude towards information are formed/accessed
  1. *Ex: great features, low prices, good value, not popular*
- iii. Linkage: a link is formed between the attitude and the attitude object and is reflected in the representation
  1. *I like/dislike this product (a little/a lot)*
  2. *I'm indifferent to this product*
- iv. Continuous assessment: potential for change over time, but some attitudes become well-formed and more resistant to new information
  1. *Ex: price increase, feature downgrade, popularity changes (E.g. Bill Cosby)*

### 3. ATTITUDE MEASUREMENT

#### A. Primarily use self-report (overt measure)

- i. Ask people what their attitudes are (attitude scale, surveys, questionnaires)
- ii. We can measure either attitudes or intended behaviors

#### B. Problems

- i. Context (question order, wording, environment)
- ii. Socially desirable responding

#### C. Methods offering solutions for above problems

- i. Bogus pipeline
- ii. Covert measures: observe responses to attitude objects without their knowledge or ability to control (body language, facial expressions behavior, tone of voice)
  1. *Examples*
    - a. *Nonverbal behavioral coding (interview study from chapter 5 lecture)*
    - b. *Implicit Association Test (AIT)*
    - c. *Facial Electromyograph (EMG)*

### 4. ATTITUDE CHANGE

#### A. If you want to change an attitude, you should try to change either the affective cognitive, or behavioral component

#### B. **Elaboration Likelihood Model** by Petty & Cacioppo (1986)

- i. The central route to persuasion
  - 1. *Reflective, requires more mental effort, relies on thinking about and reflecting on a message (high elaboration)*
  - 2. *Requires high motivation and ability to process a message*
  - 3. *Responsive to substantive information*
  - 4. *Routes to persuasion to central route*
    - a. *Communicator should not matter*
    - b. *Message should be strong, of high quality, and have rational arguments*
    - c. *Audience should be involved, motivated to process, and able to focus*
- ii. Peripheral route to persuasion
  - 1. *Reflexive, requires less mental effort, relies on mental shortcuts (low elaboration)*
  - 2. *Requires low motivation and ability to process a message*
  - 3. *Responsive to superficial information*
  - 4. *Routes to persuasion for peripheral route*
    - a. *Communicator should be credible, attractive, and likeable*
    - b. *Message should be lengthy (seen as being more credible) with a high quantity of arguments, and evoke emotional responses (content of message not as important)*
    - c. *Audience should not be involved or motivated, and should be distracted*
- iii. Not necessarily one or the other
  - 1. *Ads often focus on combination to appeal to both central and peripheral processing routes*
    - a. *Ex: President Johnson ad with girl and nuclear explosion*
      - i. *Cute young girl communicating message*
      - ii. *Fear appeal; peripheral route*
    - b. *Ex: L. L. Cool J Old Spice commercial*
      - i. *Celebrity; positive associations with him → context of masculinity to make yourself attractive*
      - ii. *Peripheral route; surface characteristics/heuristic cues*
    - c. *“Prudential” commercial with past and future magnetic poetry*
      - i. *Central route; strong arguments were to the point*
      - ii. *Man who delivered message was essentially insignificant*

<u>Attitude Change Element</u>	<u>Conditions to Promote Central Processing</u>	<u>Conditions to Promote Peripheral Processing</u>
Communicator	Independent sources	Likeability, attractiveness, expertise
Message	Repetition, rhetorical	Lengthy message, lots of