

Comm 2367 Chapter 5 Notes

Two different styles of processing information:

- * Careful consideration of message arguments
- * Superficial examination of information and a focus on simple cues

Historical Foundations

- * Hovland- to be persuaded, individuals had to attend to, comprehend, learn, accept, and retain the message.
- * Cognitive Response Approach- Asserts that people's own mental reactions to a message play a critical role in the persuasion process.
 - * Proarguments- Thoughts that are favorable to the position advocated in the message
 - * Counterarguments- Thoughts that criticize the message
 - * Persuasion occurs if the communicator induces the audience member to generate favorable cognitive responses regarding the communicator or message.
 - * Forewarnings- Occurs when a persuader warns people that they will soon be exposed to a persuasive communication; individuals generate a large number of counterarguments, strengthening their opposition to the advocated position.
 - * Distraction- Sometimes people are distracted from paying attention to a communication with which they disagree; blocks the dominant cognitive response to a message.

Elaboration Likelihood Model

- * Dual-Process Models- Claim that there are two different mechanisms by which communications affect attitudes.
- * Main principles:
 - * Elaboration- Refers to the extent to which the individual thinks about or mentally modifies arguments contained in the communication
 - * Likelihood- Refers to the probability that an event will occur; used to point out the fact that elaboration can be either likely or unlikely.
 - * Inoculation Theory- Effort to draw a comparison between the body's

mechanisms to ward off disease and the mind's ways of defending itself against verbal onslaughts. Resistance to persuasion can be induced by exposing individuals to a small dose of arguments against a particular idea, coupled with appropriate criticism of these arguments.

- * Counterarguing the oppositional message in one's own mind should lead to strengthening of initial attitude and increased resistance to persuasion.
- * ELM Stipulates that there are two distinct ways people process communications (routes)
 - * Central Route- Characterized by considerable cognitive elaboration.
 - * Peripheral Route- People examine the message quickly or focus on simple cues to help them decide whether to accept the position advocated in the message.
 - * ELM says that people can be simple information processors or deep, detailed thinkers.
- * The key factors that determine processing strategy are:
 - * Motivation- When people are motivated to consider the message seriously, they process centrally
 - * Ability

Motivation to Process

- * Personal Involvement:
 - * Individuals are high in involvement when they perceive that an issue is personally relevant or bears directly on their own lives.
 - * Individuals are low in involvement when they believe that an issue has little or no impact on their lives.
 - * ELM- When individuals are high in involvement, they will process messages through the central route, systematically scrutinizing message arguments.
 - * ELM- When individuals are low in involvement, they will have little motivation to focus on message argument; they will process the message peripherally.
 - * People engage in issue-relevant thinking under high involvement, but under low involvement, they focus on simple cues that are peripheral to the main issues.

* Other motivational factors:

- * The need for cognition- A need to understand the world and to employ thinking to accomplish this goal. These individuals tend to prefer central to peripheral processing.

Ability to Process

- * People are less able to process a message when they are distracted, resulting in certain persuasive effects.
- * When people know a lot about an issue, they process information carefully and skillfully.
- * Knowledgeable people process information centrally.

Peripheral Processing in Real Life

- * The Oprah Book Club Effect- Oprah's credibility, warmth, and celebrity status suggest to viewers that the book she is featuring is worth a try.
- * The Electoral Road Show- When it comes time to vote, low-involved voters consider such peripheral cues as:
 - * Candidate appearance
 - * Endorsements
 - * Names
 - * Large numbers of voters put little mental energy into the vote decision.
- * Jargon- Verbiage that is complicated and not something the listener understands and may make the speaker seem much smarter and educated than they actually are.
- * Seduced by a Quick Fix- When individuals lack ability on an issue, they resort to the peripheral route, accepting a message because a credible source recommends it.

Central Processing

- * Persuasion flows through the central route when people are motivated or able to process messages.
- * Arguments do not always carry the day in persuasion; they can fall on deaf ears when they run counter to an individual's strong attitudes or values.
- * When the message focuses on a personally relevant outcome, people process