

MNM1505: Introduction to Consumer Behaviour

Lecturer:

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Learning Unit 4: Consumer perception and learning

- Consumer perception

Perception is defined as the process by which an individual observes, selects, organises and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).

- Characteristics of perception:

- Perception is selective
 - Perception is subjective
 - Perception is based on an individual's frame of reference

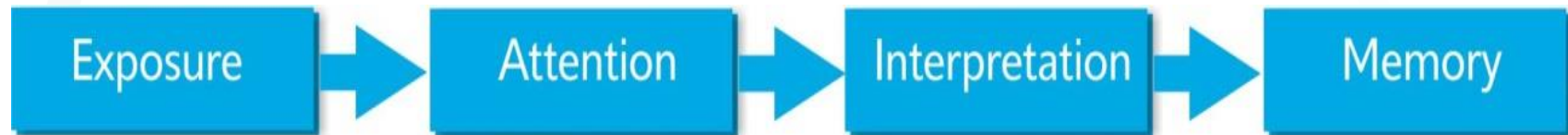
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- *Perceptual deference* - when individuals only attend to a relatively small percentage of all the exposure they receive for interpretation
- Perceptual deference mechanisms:
 - Selective exposure
 - Selective attention
 - Selective interpretation
 - Selective recall



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- Perceptual process:



- **Step 1: Exposure**

- Exposure is the degree to which people notice a range of stimuli within the range of their sensory receptors

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- Perceptual process (cont.):
 - **Step 2: Attention**
 - Attention - to the extent to which the processing activity is devoted to a particular stimulus or the amount of time and level of concentration given in processing particular stimuli
 - Attention relates to the processing activity devoted to a specific stimulus



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- Perceptual process (cont.):
 - **Step 3: Interpretation**
 - The meaning people assign to sensory stimuli
 - *Semiotics* - examines the correspondence between signs and symbol and the perceived meaning that customers assign to them
 - **Step 4: Memory**
 - *Selective retention* is the process of remembering only the information that is relevant to the decision and or conforms to existing beliefs and attitudes

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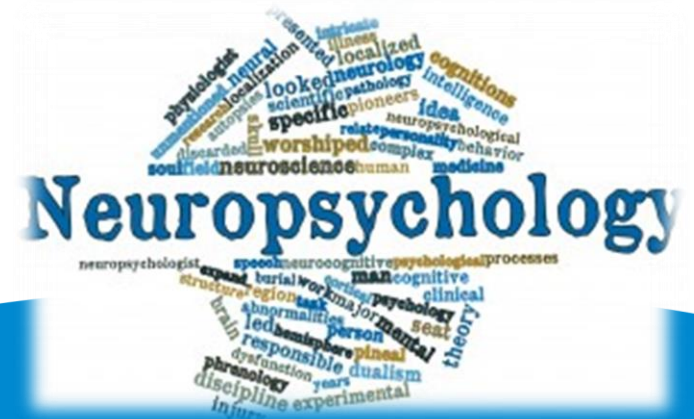
- Theories of perception
 - **Gestalt psychology**

The central principle of **Gestalt psychology** is that a person usually tries to organise stimuli in order to make them meaningful (Mpinganjira et al, 2013).

- *The principle of proximity* - if products are displayed close to each other people perceive them as part of the same group
- *The principle of similarity* - People tend to see objects that look similar as being similar and things that physically resemble each other as part of the same object
- *The principle of closure* - the mind's tendency to form complete pictures if only half a picture is visible

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- Theories of perception (cont.)
 - **Neuropsychology**
 - Studies the structure and functions of the brain as they relate to specific psychological processes and behaviours
 - Brain functions are monitored to understand how marketing messages trigger neurological reactions
 - *Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP)*



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- Theories of perception (cont.)
 - **Depth psychology**
 - Explores the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious
 - Depth perception is the visual ability to perceive the world in three dimensions (height, length and width) and the distance of an object
 - Marketers use depth psychology to understand consumers' unconscious minds to try and get a better understanding of consumer behaviour

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- Theories of perception (cont.)
 - **Involvement theory**

Involvement is defined as an intensity of interest and is a form of arousal related to a motivational stage (Ling et al., 2015).

- A reflection of strong motivation in the form of high perceived personal relevance of a product or service
- High involvement or low involvement
- Measures of involvement are situation, enduring and response involvement

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- Getting the attention of the consumer
 - Techniques and new media that can be used by marketers to gain consumers' attention:
 - Novelty
 - Contrast
 - Movement
 - Electronic media
 - Story telling
 - Buzz marketing

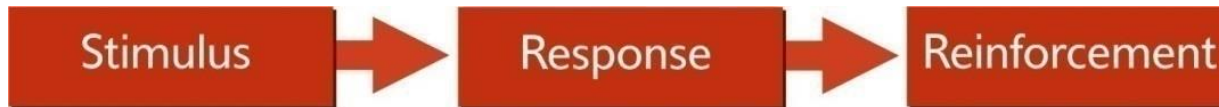


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- **Learning and memory**
 - Learning is the act of acquiring new or modifying and reinforcing existing knowledge behaviours, skill, values or preferences and may involve synthesising different types of information
 - Learning is the process by which individuals acquire the buying and consumption knowledge and experience they apply to future related behaviour
 - Memory is the process in which information is encoded, stored and retrieved

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- Elements of learning:



- **Stimulus**

- Something that stimulates the learner's interest

- **Response**

- Any action, reaction or state of mind resulting from a particular stimulus or cue

- **Reinforcement/Reward**

- The satisfaction resulting from successful behaviour that triggers human memory of how the satisfaction was obtained

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- Learning theories
 - **Classical conditioning**
 - A behaviourist approach to learning.
 - The focus of learning is on repetition or continuity
 - Suggests that when two stimuli are closely linked it produces a specific learned result
 - Pavlov's salivating dog experiment



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- Learning theories (cont.)
 - **Operant conditioning**
 - Also referred to as *instrumental conditioning*
 - Driven by the consequence of behaviour rather than by external stimuli
 - Focuses on conditioning by reinforcement and punishment and uses consequences to modify behaviour
 - Positive reinforcement encourages behaviour
 - Negative reinforcement will lead to an escape and active avoidance

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- Learning theories (cont.)
 - **Cognitive learning**
 - Emphasises the role of mental processes rather than the repetition and association of rewards with a stimulus
 - Learning takes place as a result of consumer thinking. Information processing and how consumers store, retain and retrieve information are part of this theory
 - Consumers' cognitive learning is usually evident in more complex decision-making processes as opposed to impulsive or quick decisions

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- Learning in a social context
 - The totality of social stimulation that influences an individual. Social learning is achieved through observing other people, and the visual or verbal cues are stored and used at a later stage in an applicable situation
 - Four steps in the process of social learning:
 - Attentional processing
 - Retentional processing
 - Reproduction processing
 - Motivational processing

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- Stages or types of memory
 - Memory refers to the way we store and relate information and events to each other
 - Memory and information processing is the process in which information is encoded, stored and retrieved

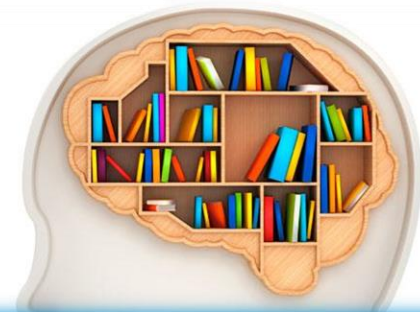


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- 5 types of memory:
 - **Sensory memory**
 - The temporary storage of information we receive from our senses
 - Holds sensory information less than one second after an item is perceived
 - 3 types of sensory memories:
 - Iconic memory
 - Echoic memory
 - Haptic memory

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- 5 types of memory (cont.):
 - **Short-term/working memory**
 - Limited capacity
 - Allows recall for a period of several seconds to a minute; about 15 to 30 seconds
 - **Long-term memory**
 - Permanent storehouse of information
 - Can store much larger quantities of information for a potentially unlimited duration



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- 5 types of memory (cont.):
 - **Declarative/Explicit memory**
 - Requires conscious recall in that some conscious process must call back the information
 - Subdivided:
 - Semantic memory
 - Episodic memory
 - **Implicit memory**
 - Past experiences that influence behaviour, although it is not possible to recollect the specific experience

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- Methods used to enhance learning and memory
 - Repetition
 - Visuals
 - Self-referencing rehearsal
 - Chuckling
 - Humour
 - Exaggeration
 - Elaboration



Learning Unit 4 Outcomes:

- Be able to define perception, learning and memory.
- Know what the different characteristics of perceptions are.
- Understand the different perceptual defense mechanisms and be able to apply them to a practical example.
- Know the stages in the perceptual process and be able to apply each stage practically.
- Understand the different theories of perception – especially Gestalt Psychology.

Learning Unit 4 Outcomes (Cont.):

- Understand the different elements of learning and be able to apply each practically.
- Understand the different learning theories – all are equally important.
- Know and understand the different types of memories and the sub-dimensions of each.