

Behavior Modification Report

Your task is to plan and then, following approval, perform and report on an exercise in behavioral modification. You will apply what you have learned about habituation, classical or operant conditioning to change the behavior of a subject, carefully recording what you do and how your subject responds.! Follow the guidelines below:

1) Prepare a **BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION PLAN** covering the following points. For each of them, be sure to explain your reasoning carefully and completely, using appropriate terms.

a) Who is the subject? (This could be someone (else), but it could be yourself or a pet. Consider whether you will need to seek informed consent. It is also important that it be someone whose behavior you can monitor for several weeks);

b) What is the behavior you would like to change? (This could be something the subject already does or something you would like the subject to do. Pick a behavior which is interesting to you but it is important that the behavior is also one which can be easily observed and quantified, for you will have to measure in an objective way how the frequency of the behavior changes. I will also insist that your choice be "legal, moral and ethical");

c) Operant: What will you use as "consequences," that is reinforcers and/or punishers? (Generally, reinforcers are preferable. You want to identify consequences which you believe will work for your subject, and explain why you believe they will work);

Classical: What two stimuli will you pair? What Unconditioned stimulus already elicits the behavior? What Neutral Stimulus do you want to condition?

Habituation: What is the stimulus that needs to generate a modified response? What is the plan for modifying arousal to the stimulus?

d) Operant: How will you deliver the "consequences" once you have determined what they will be? (You will need to consider in practical terms how you will be able to do this with your subject, and what "schedules of reinforcement" you will use. You may wish to use several different schedules of reinforcement over time for better results);

Classical or Habituation: How will you proceed with your study? Procedure?

e) How will you measure any changes in behavior. and over what period of time will you do so? (Here you need to propose a way of quantifying the frequency of behavior before, during and after the behavioral modification, and of noting when reinforcers are delivered. It can be helpful to create a retrieval chart so the behaviors and reinforcers can be easily tracked over time; do not rely on memory

or guesswork. The exercise will take several weeks: build in time to measure a "baseline" frequency of behavior before you begin, time to condition your subject's behavior, and time to see what happens to the behavior after consequences are no longer delivered (a test for "extinction"));

Think about acquisition, extinction, generalization, and discrimination?

f) Submit your plan for approval - via email - addressing the parts above.

2) AFTER your proposal has been approved by me, conduct your behavioral modification. (Follow the plan outlined in your proposal and keep careful notes of everything you do and all the data you collect.)

3) Produce a **BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION REPORT** of your behavioral modification and turn it in before the due date. Be as objective as possible, including (but commenting on) both successes and failures in your work.

Your Report should include the following:

- i) a title,
- ii) an introduction which explains what your project was about, give background on the techniques you are using with source citations.
- iii) a description of the procedures you used, (basically this will be very similar to the proposal you wrote by email earlier, but will incorporate any changes or improvements you made, and
- iv) a detailed account of the data you gathered (here, you can describe what you observed happening and include specific "numbers" quantifying how much the behavior changed over what length of time (perhaps using charts or graphs to do so),
- v) a discussion of any conclusions you can draw about behavioral modification and/or behaviorism (operant conditioning) from your experience (is it a useful tool, for example?) and
- vi) an evaluation (or critique) of your behavioral modification, mentioning any problem areas where you feel you could have improved your results. You could for example explain any flaws in your "method" which led to difficulties.