

ATTITUDE (Part 7)

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Attitude Change

A lot of human activities are designed or directed toward other people rather than toward things or objects. It can be seen in television commercials, sales person, preachers, etc, this serve one function which is changing the people mind to a certain things. These are some of the examples of people endeavouring to change attitudes of others. The process of changing ones attitude goes a long way. It could be due to the nature of the attitude itself. In discussing attitude change, we are going to look at certain issues such as the primary conditions for attitude change, attitude properties and attitude change, persuasion and attitude change, and strategies of attitude change.

In the primary condition of attitude change we can look at works by Newcomb. According to Newcomb et al.(1969), attitude change depends very generally on the receipt of new information that in some way or another is relevant to the attitude object from the point of view of the attitude holder. The new information has to be direct and obvious with the properties of the attitude object. Most of what we see about us as attitude change is initiated not by actual change in affect toward a particular object property, but by new information that adds or subtracts some important property from the cognized object. The interdependence of affective change and cognitive content of object is a prime fact of the study of attitude change. It is important in part because objects present multiple properties, and if your feeling toward the general object changes because of some new cognition of it, you may feel differently about some of its other properties as well.

There are actual object change and changes in information about objects in the primary conditions of attitude change. In the actual object change, there are obvious changes in the object properties and we receive information about that objects. One of the examples is the rapid industrialization of Russia. From illiterate, weak and few experts people to a country of super power. Since interest in attitude change has tended to grow up in settings where it appears easier or more desirable to try to change attitudes than to change the properties of the attitude object, we often lose sight of the fact that a change in object properties is the surest way to change attitudes towards the object even if it is not usually the simplest. In the changes in information about objects, there are some instances where an object remains constant but attitude change as a result of new information the individual

receives about it. The receipt of new information relevant to the attitude object is, then the primary basis for attitude change. Most often, such information simply serves to change the perceived properties of the object in ways that modify attitudes towards them. Sometimes, the influential information may be somewhat less direct. Rather than changing the perception of the immediate properties of the object, it may serve instead to redefine the relationship between a given individual and the attitude object.

Attitude properties and attitude change on the other hand discusses the further principles of attitude change which is the variations in the characteristics of prior attitudes toward the objects about which new information are received and the variations in the characteristics of the situation in which the information is transmitted. The degree of feeling toward the object is the first principle where it links attitude strength with attitude change. Usually, a “weak” attitude is more prone to change than stronger attitude or more extreme attitude. The centrality of the attitude object is the second principle. Psychologically central objects are likely to be those about which the individual has stored relatively great amounts of information. Hence, it follows that, on the average, attitudes towards remote objects are likely to be more susceptible to change through new information than those towards objects that are, for the individual, more central.