

Additional Try It Yourself Exercises Chapter 4

Try It Yourself

Do you prefer multiple-choice tests or essay tests? Why? If you said that “multiple-choice tests are easier”, you are reflecting the view that recognition tends to be easier than recall (at least most of the time). What about short-answer tests? Where do they fit in, and why? Have you ever asked a teacher for a hint about a question? What form of memory process do hints involve?

Try It Yourself

You may wish to explore your own memory, and how STM and LTM differ; the following examples can give you a starting point:

Short-term memory: To explore the capacity of STM, read through the list of letters below. Read the list slowly, but only once (or ask someone to read it to you).

Immediately after the last letter, try to write down the entire sequence in the original order.

L R X D F Q M V S B

For scoring, give yourself credit for each letter recalled in the correct order, not counting any reversals, omissions, or other errors. Typical recall would be about 6-7 correct.

Long-term memory: Are there episodes of your life, perhaps years in the past, that you remember vividly? What was the situation? Is this an example of episodic, semantic, or procedural memory? What details do you remember? How confident are you that your

recall of this memory is accurate? Was it emotionally significant, and if so, positive or negative? (Later in the chapter, we will consider the possibility that recall can be distorted or false, and the significance of emotions in memory.)

Try It Yourself

Would you like to become more creative? Here are some additional techniques that can be helpful:

- Take the time to define the problem. Be very sure of what the problem you want to solve is, and state it as specifically as possible. (If you don't understand a problem, you can't solve it—or you may try to solve the wrong problem!)
- Suspend judgment. DeBono advocated identifying what is 'plus, minus, and interesting' about a situation or idea, in order to avoid premature critical judgments. (Interestingly, writers reviewing products sometimes use this technique!) Using humour can also help, both to reduce the pressure that people sometimes feel when they believe they 'have' to be creative, and to see a situation from a different angle.
- Deliberately try to change your point of view. Imagine how other people might approach the problem: people you know, characters from books or films, historical personages, or people in the news. Even if they are not like you, thinking about this may ignite different ideas in your own mind.

Try It Yourself

Cognitive dissonance theory can be helpful in understanding a variety of everyday situations. For example, did you ever have to choose between two similar products,

bought one, and later decided that this was absolutely the best choice? (Alternatively, you may have felt that you made a mistake as soon as you left the store—this is called *post-decisional regret*.) Perhaps the one you bought really was the best one; on the other hand, you may have *made* it the best one by changing your attitude due to cognitive dissonance. See how cognitive dissonance has been used to explain terrorism in The World Today Box.

Can you think of a situation in which you have experienced dissonance? How did you resolve it? Do you think knowing about Festinger's theory will make it more or less likely that you will experience dissonance in the future?