

Concept of Learning

In a Layman's view, "Learning is something we did when we went to school." In reality, each of us is continuously going to school. Learning is occurring all the time. With every new experience, new event or new situation we learn something. But this concept of learning is purely theoretical. We cannot observe learning as we can observe the personality of a person or his attitude. We can see changes taking place but not the learning itself. Learning is used in many contexts. Simply speaking, learning refers to this modification of behavior through practice, training and experience.

Learning can be defined as the permanent change in behavior due to direct and indirect experience. It means change in behavior, attitude due to education and training, practice and experience. It is completed by acquisition of knowledge and skills, which are relatively permanent.

According to **Carl Rogers** (1983), learning is a powerful encouragement for many employees to stay in certain organizations. Learning has a major impact on individual behavior as it influences abilities, role perceptions and motivation. Along with its role in individual behavior, learning is necessary for knowledge management. **Knowledge management** enhances an organization's capacity to acquire, share and utilize knowledge for success. There are five important components of learning:

1. Learning involves change that may be for good or bad. Change may not be evident until a situation arises in which the new behavior can occur. Learning is not always reflected in performance.
2. Second component of learning is that not all changes reproduce learning. To constitute learning, change should be comparatively permanent. Temporary changes may be only reflective and fail to represent any learning. This requirement rules out behavioral changes caused by fatigue or drugs.
3. Thirdly, learning is reflected in behavior that is a change in an individual's thought process or attitude, not accompanied by behavior. Learning needs to result in behavior potentiality and not necessarily in the behavior itself. The reason for this difference is that an individual may learn but owing to lack of motivation, may not show any changed behavior.
4. The change in behavior should take place as a result of experience, practice or training. This implies that behavior caused from maturity, disease, or physical damages do not constitute learning.
5. The practice or experience must be reinforced in order for learning to occur. If reinforcement does not accompany the practice or experience the behavior will eventually disappear.