

Social Psychology



The scientific study of how we think about, **influence** and relate to one another.

Attribution Theory

- Suggests how we explain someone's behavior
- We credit that behavior either to the situation or....
- To the person's internal disposition.



Was my friend a jerk because she had a bad day or is she just a bad person?



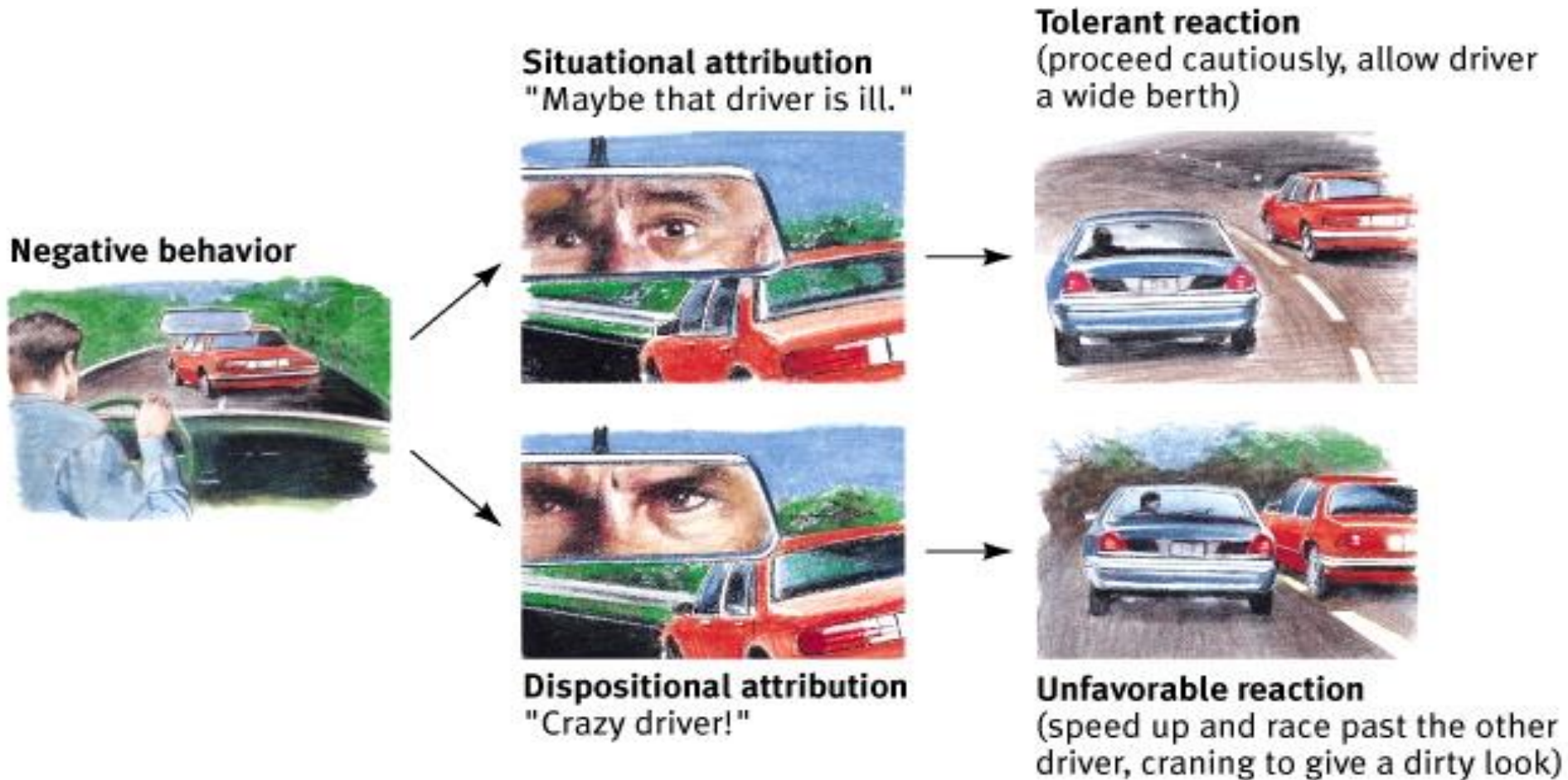
You are a teacher. Clive comes into class each day and is always hostile toward you. He tells you the class is a waste of time, that you're his least favorite teacher, and that he already knows more than you could possibly teach him. Using attribution theory, how could you explain Clive's behavior?



Situational Factors: *Clive's parents are getting divorced and he is lashing out, Clive has a bad memory of a teacher picking on him and now dislikes all teachers, Clive has class right before lunch and his hunger makes him wish class was over*

Clive's disposition: *aggressive personality, lazy, disrespectful*

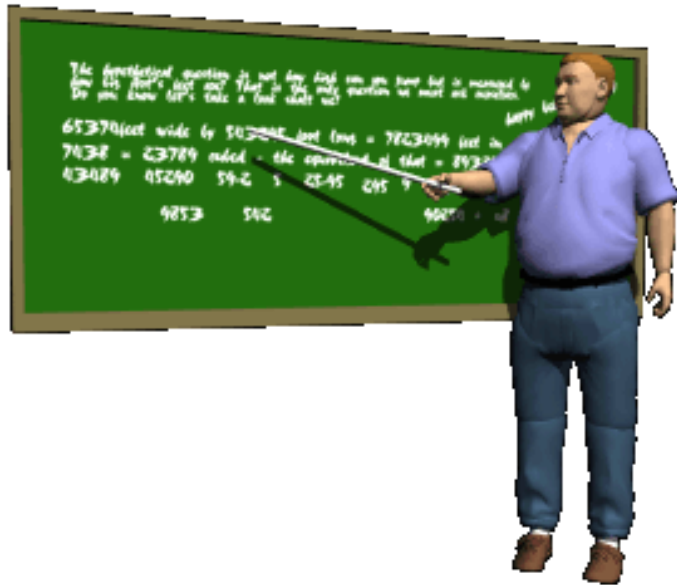
Attribution At Work



This is pretty simple, but the key question is... **when do humans typically attribute the situation or the person's disposition?** Well, it's a little complex.

Fundamental Attribution Error

- For **negative events**, we attribute other's behavior to their disposition, but our behavior to the situation
 - Reverse is true for **POSITIVE** events



How do you view your teacher's crabby behavior? *You probably attribute it to their personality rather than their profession.*

Fundamental Attribution Error

Who does the event happen to?

YOU

SOMEONE ELSE

Type of event?

Negative

Positive

Situation

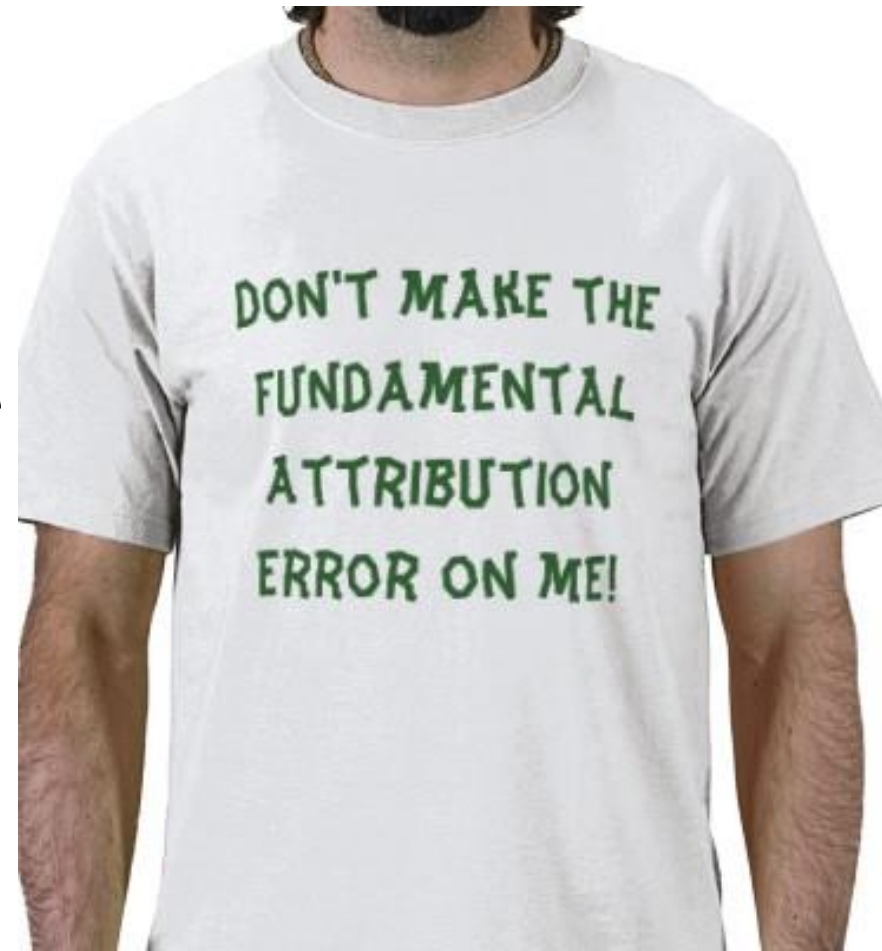
Disposition

Disposition

Situation

Why does the Fundamental Attribution Error happen?

- To **protect our self-esteem**
 - If we do something wrong, it makes us *feel better* to blame outside factors rather than ourselves
 - We like to put others down and makes ourselves look as good as we can



- Look at the worksheet with the scenarios you filled out earlier. These are all **NEGATIVE** events.
- Questions 1 and 2 pertain to attributing your **OWN** behavior. The Fundamental Attribution Error says you should blame situational factors.
- Questions 3, 4, and 5 pertain to attributing the behavior of **OTHERS**. The Fundamental Attribution Error says you should blame the person's disposition.
- Do your explanations match up with the fundamental attribution error?

Methods of Compliance

- **Compliance is a form of social influence that involves a direct request, often by a person in need, such as a friend or acquaintance who asked for a favor.**
- **Compliance is known to be enhanced by a number of situational manipulations such as foot-in-the-door, door-in-the-face, low-ball, and ingratiation.**

Foot-in-the-door



- a compliance tactic that involves getting a person to **agree to a large request** by first setting them up by having that person **agree to a modest request**

**the original small agreement creates a bond between the requestor and the requestee

**pro-social requests are especially effective with this technique

Door-in-the-face

- a compliance tactic that involves first making an **extremely large request** that the respondent will obviously **turn down** followed by making a second, **more reasonable** request



**works because the requestee feels guilty for turning down the first request and fears rejection if they continue to decline

**the second request looks good compared to the first

Low-ball

- a compliance tactic that involves first gaining closure and **commitment to the idea** you want the person to accept and then **changing the agreement** to make it more appealing for you



**How LOW
can you go?**

****people will behave consistently to their beliefs to sustain the commitment; or they may believe they can't back out after initially agreeing**

When people are offered a deal with an unattractive detail, most will refuse it. However, if the same unattractive detail is introduced after the deal is made, considerably fewer then refuse it. This is the low-ball effect.

(Cialdini et al., 1978)



Ingratiation

- a compliance tactic that involves getting **someone to like you** in order to obtain compliance with a request



Flattery: focus on the positive side of someone in order to let them know you think highly of them

Opinion conformity: agreeing with the beliefs and values of the person; allowing the target to “convince” you of their opinion

Self-presentation: presenting yourself in a manner that the target would like

Social Norms

- An unwritten but understood rule for accepted and expected behavior



"This looks like a good spot, momma, bring grandma and the kids!"

