

# ARCS Motivation Model

## Introduction

Keller (1979, 1983) has developed a four-factor theory to explain motivation. The first is attention (A), the second relevance (R), the third confidence (C), and the fourth satisfaction (S). The model also contains strategies that can help an instructor stimulate or maintain each motivational element.

### Attention Factor

A student's attention has to be aroused and sustained. This category also includes things that relate to curiosity and sensation seeking.

#### Strategies

- Perceptual Arousal. Gain and maintain student attention by the use of novel, surprising, incongruous, or uncertain events in instruction.
- Inquiry Arousal. Stimulate information seeking behavior by posing, or having the learner generate questions, or a problem to solve.
- Variability. Maintain student interest by varying the elements of instruction.

### Relevance Factor

After the student's attention is gained, a student may wonder how the given material relates to their interests and goals. If the content is perceived to be helpful in accomplishing one's goals, then they are more likely to be motivated.

#### Strategies

- Familiarity. Use concrete language and use examples/concepts that are related to the learner's experience and values.
- Goal Orientation. Provide statements or examples that present the objectives and utility of the instruction and either present goals for accomplishment or have the learner define them.
- Motive Watching. Use teaching strategies that match the motive profiles of the students.

### Confidence Factor

Students have to know that they will probably be successful before completing a given task. They have to feel somewhat confident. Success is not guaranteed and people enjoy a challenge. However, the challenge can't be too difficult.

#### Strategies

- Learning Requirements. Help students estimate the probability of success by presenting performance requirements and evaluative criteria.
- Success Opportunities. Provide challenge levels that allow meaningful success experience under both learning and performance conditions.
- Personal Control. Provide feedback and opportunities for control that support internal attributions for success.

### Satisfaction Factor

If the outcomes of a learner's effort is consistent with their expectations and they feel relatively good about those outcomes, they will remain motivated.

#### Strategies

- Natural consequences. Provide opportunities to use newly acquired knowledge or skill in a real or stimulated setting.
- Positive consequences. Provide feedback and reinforcements that will sustain the desired behavior.
- Equity. Maintain consistent standards and consequences for task accomplishment.

#### References:

Keller, J. M., & Suzuki, K. (1988). Use of the ARCS Motivation Model in Courseware Design. In D. H. Jonassen (Ed.), *Instructional Designs for Microcomputer Courseware*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.