

Box 1: Keywords

Word	Definition
Attribution	A perception of the reason for an outcome of an event
Internal attribute	Within the performer's control
External attribute	Outside of the performer's control
Stable attribute	Unlikely to change in the short-term
Unstable attribute	Can change in a short amount of time
Self-serving bias	Using external and/or unstable reasons for losing
Learned helplessness	Using internal stable reasons for losing
Attribution retraining	Changing the reasons given for success and failure
Mastery orientation	State of mind when the performer is high in confidence, believes in their own ability and thinks success is repeatable, while failure is temporary and changeable

Box 2: Key skills

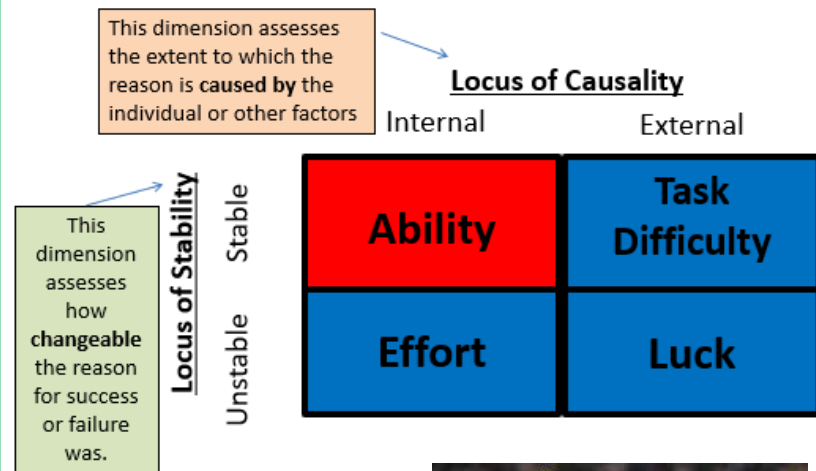
- Look at the reasons sports coaches and players give for success and failure by examining the Weiner model of attribution and understand how this model can be used to encourage players to keep trying.

Box 3: Attribution theory

In sport, reasons are given for winning and losing, or for playing well or playing badly. Those reasons are often given by coaches, managers or by the players themselves. The reasons are vital to maintain motivation and effort and therefore attribution is one of the most important factors in task persistence.

Classification of sporting attributes

Weiner, 1974 stated the reasons for success and failure could be placed under two dimensions: Locus of Causality and Stability.



A referee decision is an external and unstable reason given for the result





Box 4: Attribution and effort

Coaches and players can use attribution to make sure their players keep on trying, even after defeat.

Self-serving bias helps to promote self-esteem through using external and unstable reasons for losing. For example, a coach could suggest that with a little more effort the game could be won next time.

Never give reasons for losing that are stable and internal, such as ability, this might cause the player to lose motivation and **Learned helplessness** could occur.

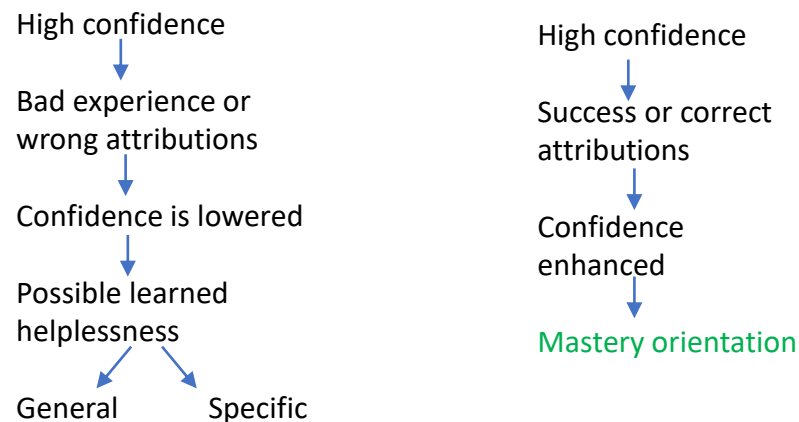
When self-doubt or a lack of belief in ability begins to affect the player, then confidence is lowered. The performer is so lacking in confidence that they think failure is inevitable and success is unlikely; there is no belief in their ability.

Learned helplessness can be **general**, when the player begins to feel they are no good at sport overall or at a type of sport, for example a player who feels they are not very good at racket sports, or it can be **specific** to one sport or one event, such as a player who thinks they are not very good at squash.

Learned helplessness can be developed not only by attributing success to internal and stable factors but also by negative feedback, criticism, negative experiences and a lack of success.

Box 5: Attribution retraining

Changing the reasons given for failure – change internal stable reasons for failure into external unstable ones.



Box 6: Pathway

Previous knowledge: Personality, attitude, achievement motivation, confidence and self-efficacy.

Future links: Social facilitation and inhibition, arousal, anxiety, stress management, aggression, leadership, group dynamics, goal setting.

Careers: from curriculum narratives

Box 7: Cross curricular links