

## Differences between

# Autonomy-Supportive and Controlling Behaviours

[Autonomy-supportive](#) behaviours facilitate more [self-determined forms of motivation](#) in students as opposed to [controlling](#) behaviours (Deci, Spiegel, Ryan, Koestner, & Kauffman, 1982; Flink, Boggiano, & Barrett, 1990; Reeve, 2006; Reeve, Bolt, & Cai, 1999; Reeve & Jang, 2006).

### Autonomy- supportive behaviours

- ✚ Listen carefully
- ✚ Create opportunities for students to work in their own way
- ✚ Provide opportunities for students to talk
- ✚ Arrange learning materials and seating patterns so students manipulate objects and conversations rather than passively watch and listen
- ✚ Encourage effort and persistence
- ✚ Praise signs of improvement and mastery
- ✚ Offer progress-enabling hints when students seem stuck
- ✚ Respond to students' questions and comments
- ✚ Communicate a clear acknowledgement of students' perspectives

### Controlling behaviours

- ✚ Keep possession of and monopolize the learning materials
- ✚ Physically exhibit worked-out solutions and answers before students have time to work on the problem independently
- ✚ Tell students the right answer instead of allowing them time and opportunity to discover it
- ✚ Utter directives and commands
- ✚ Introject "should", "have to", "must," or "got to" statements within the flow of instruction
- ✚ Use controlling questions as a way of directing students' work (e.g., "Can you do what I showed you?")

**Key definitions:**

<b>Autonomy-supportive</b>	Environments that minimize the salience of external incentives and threats, avoid controlling language, and acknowledge the learners' frame of reference (Black & Deci, 2000; Ryan & Connell, 1989). Autonomy-supportive teaching involves behaviors that seek to promote students' tendency to engage in learning because they value this activity or find it interesting (Roth, Assor, Kanat-Maymon, & Kaplan, 2007).
<b>Controlling</b>	Events that pressure people toward specified outcomes, thereby denying them the experience of choice (Deci & Ryan, 1980). Presence of salient external controls or incentives.
<b>Self-determined forms of motivation</b>	Self-determination theory assumes that different motivational regulations exist, each reflecting varying levels of self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Beginning with the most self-determined, intrinsic motivation involves pursuing an activity out of interest and enjoyment and without external contingencies (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Secondly, extrinsic motivation refers to partaking in an activity to attain an outcome separate from the activity itself. Extrinsic motivation can be further divided, in a descending order of self-determination. The more self-determined forms of extrinsic motivation include: integrated regulation (pursuing an activity because it is congruent with other aspects of the self) and identified regulation (undertaking an activity because one accepts the value of the activity). The less self-determined forms of extrinsic motivation include introjected regulation (partaking in an activity because of internal pressures such as guilt or shame) and external regulation (doing an activity because of external pressures or incentives; Ryan & Deci, 2002). Finally, amotivation refers to a perception that no worthwhile reasons for pursuing an activity exist and hence a complete absence of self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2002).

**References:**

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