Social Learning Theories: Growth vs Fixed Mindset Attribution Theory

MICROMESSAGING TO REACH AND TEACH EVERY STUDENT™ WORKSHOP

Goal

Apply awareness of social learning theories and related tools and resources to improve student success.

Objectives

- Evaluate the social theories

- Recognize the impact of social theories on your students

- Apply research-based tools to address:
  - fixed versus growth mindset
  - Attributions

- Create a classroom environment for CTE courses that is equitable.
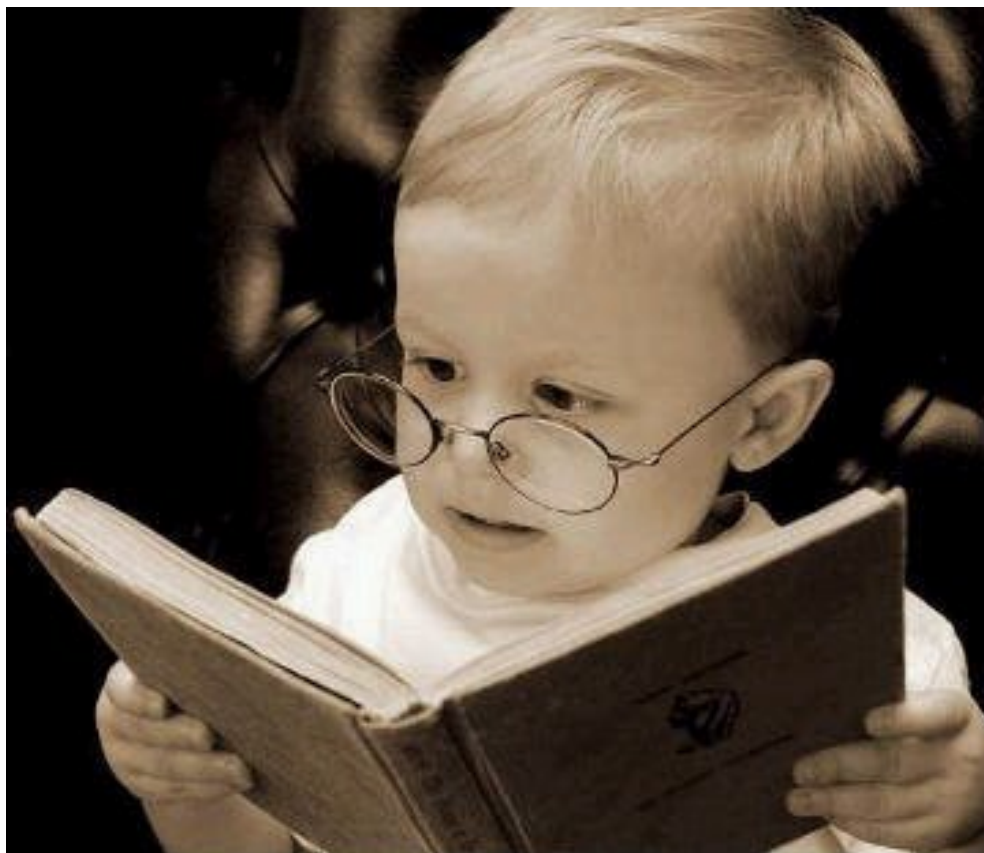
Fixed Versus Growth Mindset

How Do You View Intelligence?

In Math and Science, a Growth Mindset Benefits Every Student

| Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
Intelligence is static.	**Intelligence can be developed.**
Leads to a desire to *look smart* and therefore a tendency to	Leads to a desire to *learn* and therefore a tendency to
• avoid challenges	• embrace challenges
• give up easily due to obstacles	• persist despite obstacles
• see effort as fruitless	• see effort as path to mastery
• ignore useful feedback	• learn from criticism
• be threatened by others' success	• be inspired by others' success

- Teach students that intellectual skills can be acquired.

- Praise students for effort.

- Highlight the struggle.

- Gifted and talented programs should send the message that they value growth and learning.
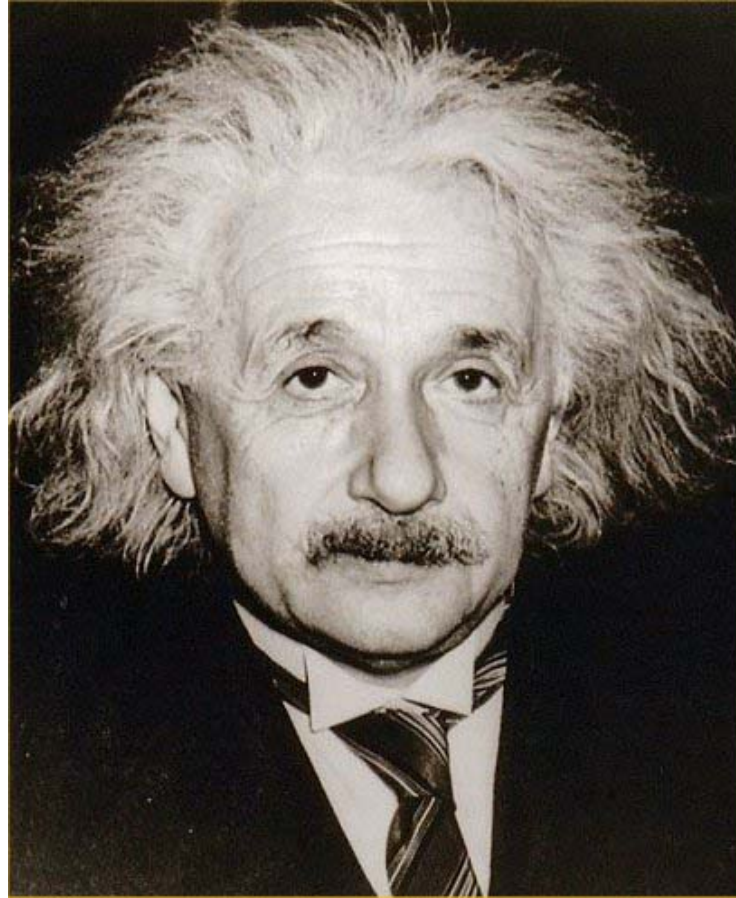
"Do not worry about your difficulties in Mathematics. I can assure you mine are still greater." **Albert Einstein**

Struggles

Challenges

Mistakes

Hard Work

Obstacles to Overcome

CTE!

Super Strategies

- Consistently emphasize that, with the right frame of mind, your students can learn nearly anything. According to Dweck, "With the right mindset and the right teaching, people are capable of a lot more than we think."

- Be conscious about how you praise students' accomplishments. Compliment students' abilities using a growth mindset strategy; acknowledge how hard they worked at something until they got it right, not how smart they are for getting it right.

- Teach students that failure, when treated as a temporary setback, leads to greater productivity if they treat failure as an opportunity to improve upon their skills.

- Share your own struggles with the content of your discipline.

- Consider giving credit for correcting errors on assignments and assessments.

- Praise risk taking among students, particularly when failure may be an outcome. Asking a question or the first question is a risk.

- Be a role model and take risks in the classroom by stepping outside your comfort zone, trying new strategies, or planning new activities. Failure or success, highlight the process of learning you experience and demonstrate its value as a model to your learners.

Attribution Theory

The Big Picture

Stereotype Threat

Environmental Influences

Student's Self-Efficacy

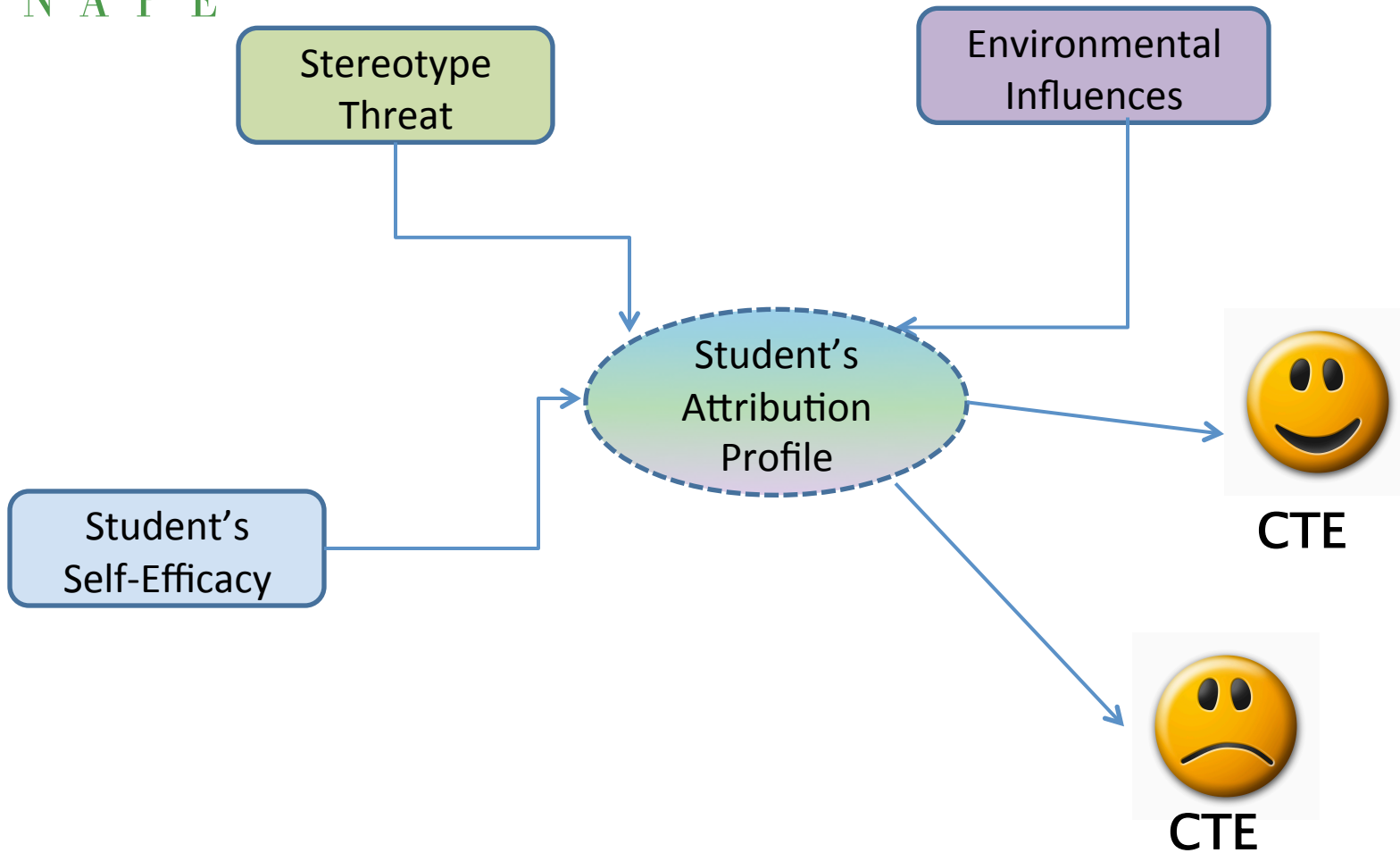Student's Attribution Profile

CTE

CTE

What Is Attribution?

Attribution refers to how we explain causes of behavior and events.

- Rationale used to attribute causes to things that happen in our lives
- How we make sense about our own and others' behavior
- Used to make predictions about future outcomes of similar actions

NAPEEF © 2014

12

Attribution Theory

NAPE

- The attributional process

- Attribution profile

- *Stereotype threat*, self-efficacy, and environmental influences all contribute to a student's attribution profile

"Sitting in the same classroom, reading the same textbooks, listening to the same teacher, boys and girls receive very different educations."
(Sadker and Sadker, 1994)

How Does Attribution Affect Academic Achievement?

How we attribute academic achievement is influenced by our perceptions of

1. Effort
2. Ability
3. Task difficulty
4. Situational factors
5. Luck

Causal Dimensions of Behavior

Locus of Control

Stability

Controllability
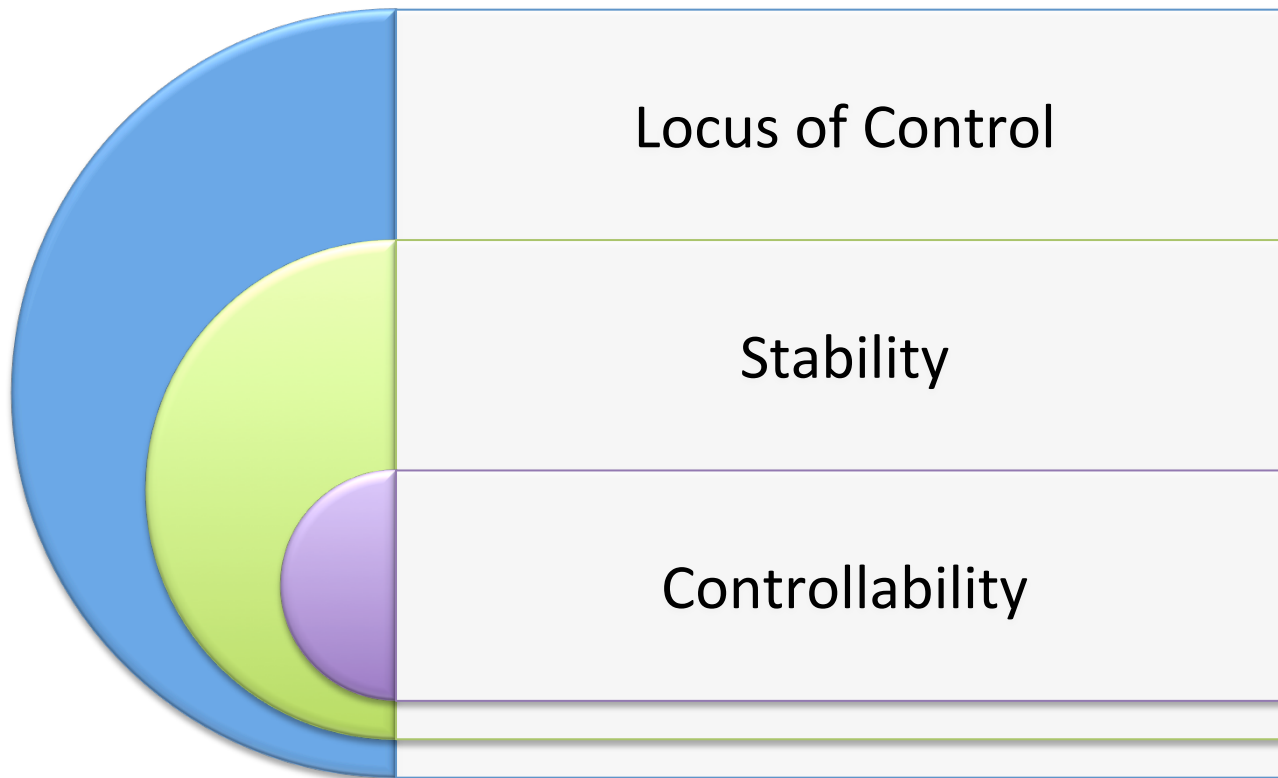
Locus of Control Internal/ External

- Explains outcomes based on self

- Disposition or personality

- Behavior is due to person's stable characteristics

- Can predict future behaviors

- Explains outcomes based on external factors

- Situation or environment

- Behavior is due to outside forces

- Says little about future behaviors

Internal (I)

External (E)

Stability
Stable/Unstable

- Disposition or personality
- Behavior is due to person's stable characteristics
- Explains our expectations for the future
- Often predicts future behaviors

- Situation or environment
- Behavior is due to outside forces
- Says little about future behaviors

Stable (S)

Unstable (U)

Control Controllable/ Uncontrollable

NAPE

- Controllable

- Disposition or personality

- Behavior is due to person's stable characteristics

- Can predict future behaviors

- Uncontrollable

- Situation or environment

- Behavior is due to outside forces

- Says little about future behaviors

Controllable (C)	Uncontrollable (U)

Understanding Attribution Cause and Effect

Previous Outcome	Attribution Profile Values	Future Outcome Prediction	Feedback
Success	**Internal**, **Stable** (Controllable or Uncontrollable)	Success	Praise effort
Success	**External**, (Stable or Unstable), **Uncontrollable**	Failure	Help them own success
Failure	**External, Unstable** (Controllable or Uncontrollable)	Success	Encourage effort
Failure	**Internal**, **Stable** (Controllable or Uncontrollable)	Failure	Provide support

NAPEEF © 2014

Activity: Student Attribution Profiles

N A P E

1. For each explanation for failure, create an explanation for success.

2. Think, pair, share.

Explanation for Success

Explanation for Success

2. He always has his hand up. He must be much smarter than I am.

Explanation for Success

1. This is the third problem I got wrong. I must not be able to learn this.

3. I am a girlie girl, so of course I can't do math.

Attribution Motivation Patterns

- Created when a student repeatedly fails and attributes failure to stable and uncontrollable causes.

- Once the student believes she is going to fail, she won't put forth any effort.

- Student will often resort to ineffective strategies for completing the task or withdraw completely.

- Student will often exhibit pessimistic explanatory style when describing success or failures.

- Mastery-oriented students see unsolved problems as challenges, and their optimistic efforts guide them to success.

- Student believes she has or can gain control over outcomes.

- Student remains task focused and determined regardless of task difficulties.

- Often exhibits an optimistic explanatory style when describing success or failures.

Learned Helplessness

Mastery Belief

NAPEEF ©

Gendered Attribution Trends (Female)

NAPE

Luck or chance played a role.

I'm not smart enough, or I'm not good enough.

Failure is taken personally.

Both fear of failure AND fear of success.

Internalization detrimental to self-confidence.

Decreased in risk-taking behavior.

Success = Externally Attributed	Failure = Internally Attributed

Gendered Attribution Trends (Male)

I'm inherently smart and therefore successful.

This was out of my control.

I had bad luck.

Others were jealous of me.

That teacher grades really hard.

Success = Internally Attributed

Failure = Externally Attributed

Deriving Feedback Strategies

How might you use the mastery belief attribution to motivate your students within the classroom setting?

Give *at least* one example of each:

▶ A handicapping behavior that you have seen

▶ A use of a successful attribution profile by a student

▶ A gender attribute-driven behavior from a student

For each, propose an action that might motivate or support the student. Refer to the different attribution profiles and attribution trends to inform your actions.

Fundamental Attribution Errors

- The fundamental attribution error is to attribute *others'* behavior to internal factors such as personality traits, abilities, values, and feelings.

- Incorrect attributions often are assigned:
  - Biases and stereotypes
  - Too much emphasis on internal factors
  - Marginalization of external or situational factors
  - Imposing our own personal attribution traits as a standard

NAPEEF © 2014

25

Self-Handicapping Attribution Trends

What is the reasoning?

1. A student who believes she will fail a difficult test may be inclined to refrain from studying for that test.

2. A student doesn't want others to think she *had* to study to do well.

Learned helplessness is typically an outcome of students *repeatedly attributing failure* to forces beyond their control.

(Internal/Stable-Unstable/ Uncontrollable)

Deficit Ideology

A worldview that explains outcome inequalities as resulting from supposed moral, intellectual, and cultural deficiencies in disenfranchised communities and individuals (think achievement gap).

The idea, for example, that poor people are poor because of their own deficiencies; that women do not have more leadership positions because they are unfit leaders.

Example: Deficit Ideology

Female students do not pursue advanced mathematics because they are not as good at math as male students.

Female students do not pursue advanced mathematics because they are subjected to gender-biased social and cultural pressures, including the media and peer pressure, that suggest they do not belong in advanced mathematics classes or programs.

Deficit View

Sociopolitical View

The Importance of Positive CTE Attributions

- Students' attributions impact their academic performance.

- Students become motivated and engaged with CTE topics.

- Students exhibit persistence and resilience when faced with failures.

- Students see "science" as a part of their identity.

Super Strategies

- Provide feedback that is most useful to each student.
- Identify difficult concepts and be specific when students master them.
- Attribute success to hard work—"This was a difficult concept; I can tell you studied/practiced."
- Assess and retrain attribution style.
- Encourage students toward internal/stable Attribution Profile.
- Remind females that they are as good as males in math.
- Remind males that literacy skills are important for all students to be successful in college and careers, and they can do as well as females.
- Repeatedly highlight successes that counteract the students' inaccurate attributions.

NAPEEF © 2014

Wrap-up

Goal

Apply awareness of social learning theories and related tools and resources to improve student success.
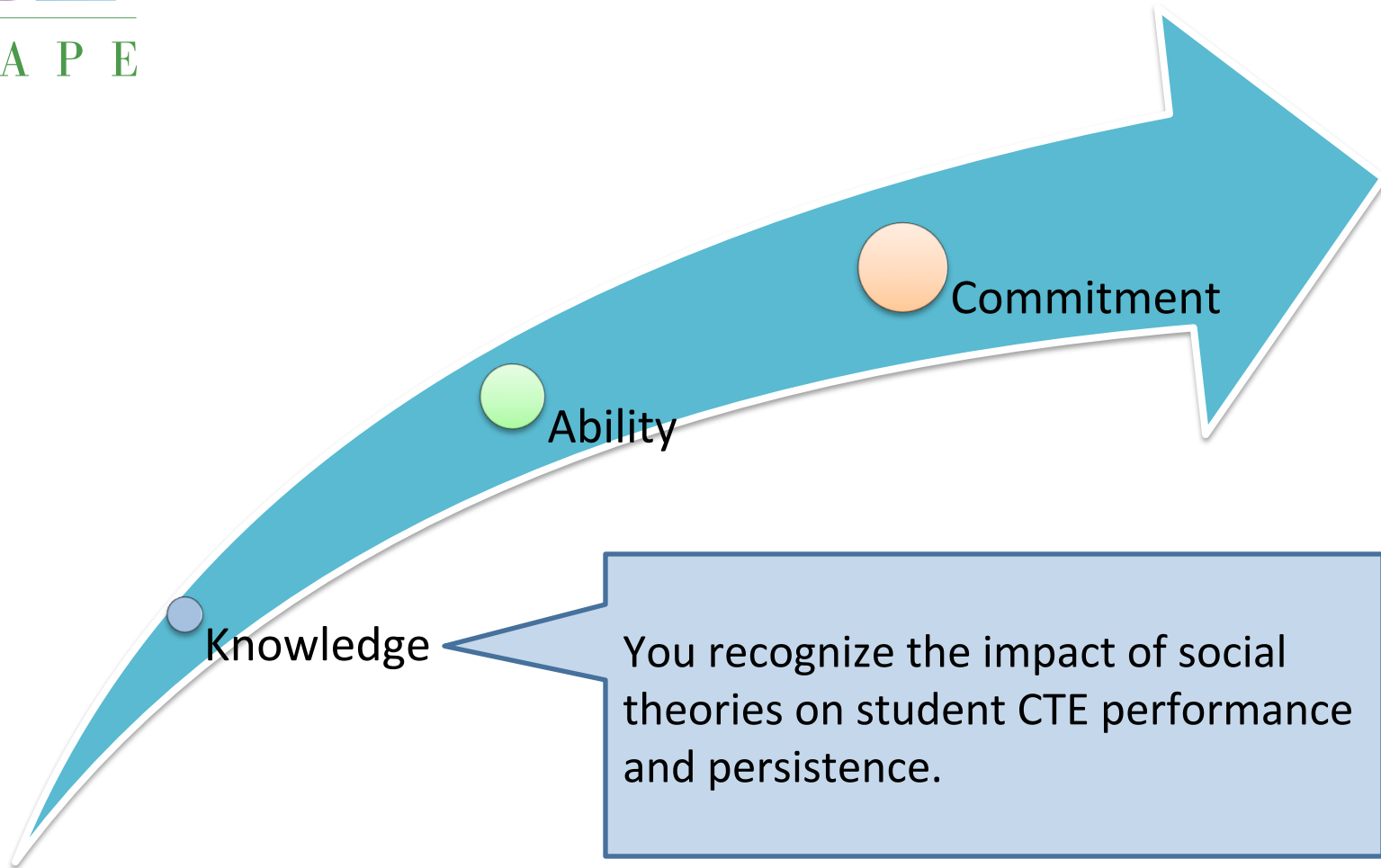
Objectives

- Evaluate the social theories
- Recognize the impact of social theories on your students
- Apply research-based tools to address:
  - fixed versus growth mindset
  - Attributions
  - self-efficacy
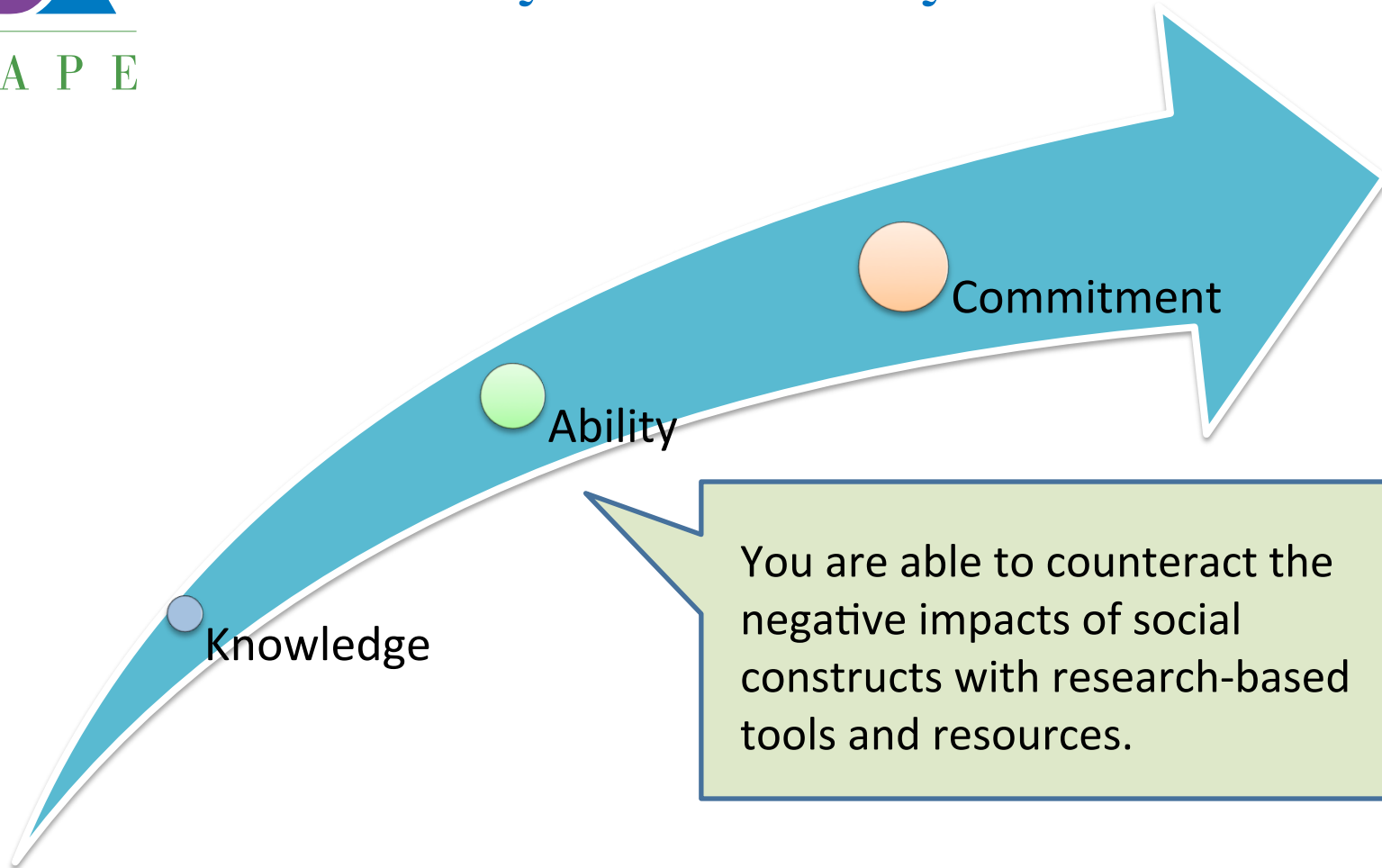- Create a classroom environment for STEM/CTE courses that is equitable.

NAPEEF © 2014

33

Key Takeaway Points

Commitment

Ability

Knowledge

You recognize the impact of social theories on student CTE performance and persistence.

Key Takeaway Points

Knowledge

Ability

Commitment

You are able to counteract the negative impacts of social constructs with research-based tools and resources.

Moving Forward

- Use super strategies for fixed versus growth mindsets in your classroom.

- Develop and apply micro-affirmations to address attributions, counteract stereotype threat, and improve student self-efficacy.