Culture plays an important and complex role in shaping how people learn. Learning is a dynamic process that continues across the life span. The continuous shaping and reshaping of neural connections across the life span results from the integration of many types of learning (deliberately and unconsciously) in response to experiences. Learners adapt to experiences and their environment.

**Motivation is essential to learning.**

- Engagement and motivation develop and change over time and are strongly influenced by cultural and developmental processes.
- Motivation to learn is facilitated across the life span when a learner feels a sense of belonging and purpose in learning environments.
- Educators can support learners’ motivation through a variety of different actions targeted at different levels including the individual learner, group of learners, the setting and the larger environment.

**The use of learning technologies requires careful planning.**

- Educators need to consider characteristics of the learner, type of learning being targeted, and sociocultural context before incorporating learning technologies into the educational environment.
- Effective use of learning technologies in formal education and training requires consideration of alignment of technology with goals for learners, provision of professional development and other supports for instructors and learners, and equitable access to technology.
- Ongoing assessment of student learning and evaluation of implementation are also critical to ensuring that a particular area of technology is optimal and to identifying needed improvements.

**Implications for classroom.**

- To understand the cultural nature of learning and development in every classroom, educators need to attend to cultural influences on learning.

Supporting the learner includes a consideration of cultural influences, allowing students to take charge of their own learning, and supporting strategies for learning.

**Priorities for future research.**

The committee identified research objectives in two main areas:

- **Assessment of learning** can be informed by understanding the processes of learning.
- **Supporting the learner** includes a consideration of cultural influences, allowing students to take charge of their own learning, and supporting strategies for learning.

Given the increased use of technology across all fields, research is needed to examine the implications of the science of learning for the design of technology to support learning across the life span; the complex interactions between characteristics of the learner, the content to be learned, and the learning environment from technology may be influencing the nature of what people need to learn and the psychology of learners; and potential drawbacks. Attention should be paid to whether technology is well suited to the ecological learning niche in which it may be used; the effects of engagement in self-selected online activities on academic learning, and ways to improve the suite of learning technologies available.

![Image of a page from the book *How People Learn II* by Sujeeta Bhatt, Alix Beatty, Heidi Schweingruber, and Barbara Wanchisen](image-url)