Neural Mechanisms of Learning and Decision Making

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 Using basic neural and computer models, Michael Frank studies how we learn and make decisions. He hopes to shed light on how these pathways lead to more complex cognitive functions, such as working memory and cognitive control. Franks theoretical work has important clinical applications, and may help us understand, for example, how brain disorders such as Parkinsons disease alter cognition. Frank is also analyzing individual differences in cognition, in other words, why we all think in different ways. He uses a variety of techniques, including theoretical modeling, genetic analyses, and electrophysiological studies. In 2010, Frank was among the inaugural recipients of the APS Janet Taylor Spence Award for Transformative Early Career Contributions.

Q&A with Michael J. Frank