


Chapter 3 – Perception, Attribution and Judgment of Others



"If the doors of perception were
cleansed every thing would appear to
man as it is, infinite. For man has closed
himself up, till he sees all things
through narrow chinks of his cavern."

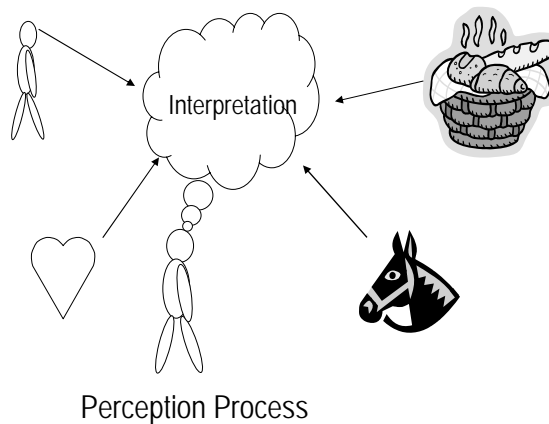
~ **WILLIAM BLAKE**

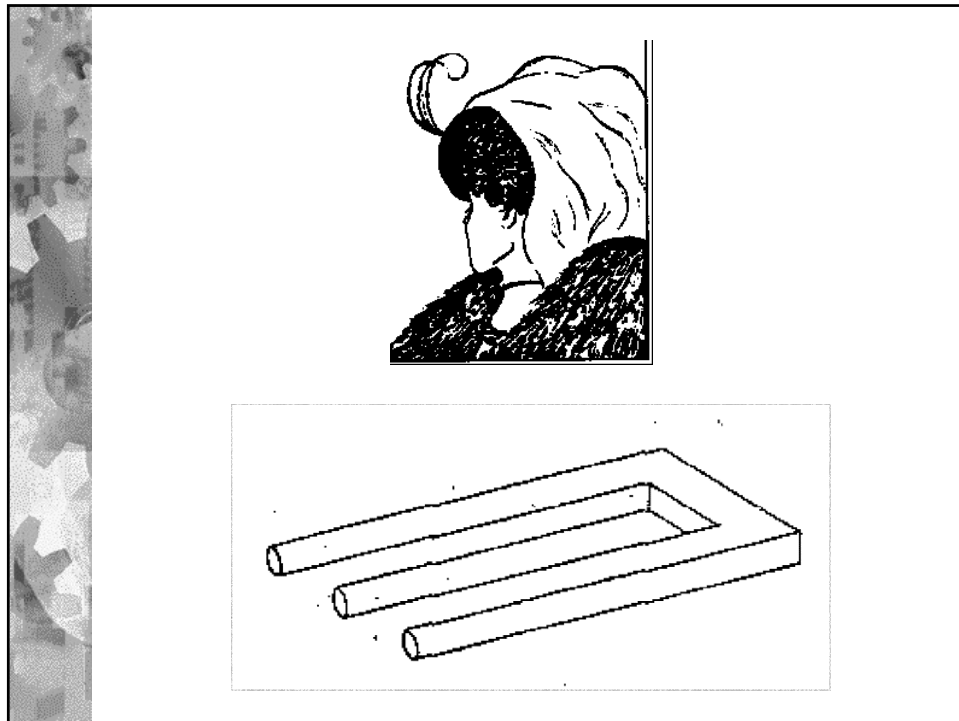
Objectives of the Chapter

- Perception, attribution and Judgment of others are critical to the effective management of organizations, that is why we study them – e.g., Bank of Montreal
- Define and explain perception
- Explain Social Identity and Bruner's Model of the Perceptual Process
- Define and Explain Attribution
- Define and Explain Workforce diversity

What is Perception

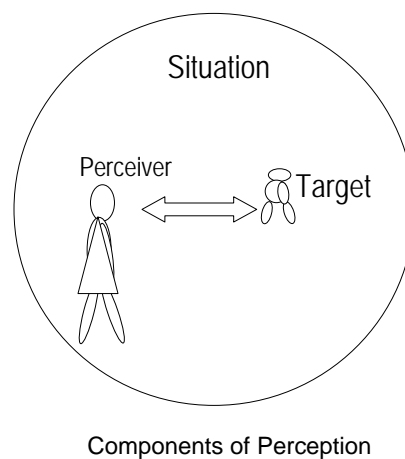
- **Perception** – the process of interpreting the messages of our senses to provide order and meaning to the environment.





Components of Perception

- Three components
 - Perceiver
 - Target
 - Situation
- Each of these influence the perceivers interpretation of reality



Factors that influence perception

- Perceiver

- Past experience or expectation (e.g., race and gender promotion opportunities, p. 76)
- Needs or motivation – 4-8 year olds drawing bigger santas and sack of toys two weeks before X-mas than after X-mas
- Emotions – anger, happiness; happy employee perceives company policies as fair and brands unhappy co-worker as simply whiney.

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- Target

- Ambiguity – ambiguous targets are susceptible to interpretation
- Situation; charged, feisty, gloomy;
 - Generally adds info. to the target

Perceptual Defense: tendency of the perceptual process to defend the perceiver against unpleasant emotions.

SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

- Question: Who am I?
- According to social identity theory people form perceptions of themselves based on their characteristics and memberships in social groups.
 - Personal Identity – based on our unique personal characteristics (traits, abilities)
 - Social Identity – based on the various social groups they belong to (nationality, religion,...)
 - Because people tend to see favorably their own social categories as compared to others, SIT is useful to understand stereotyping and discrimination.

Intelligent
Hard Working
Outgoing
Assertive
funny
Student

Strict
Moody
Bureaucratic
Admissions
Officer

US



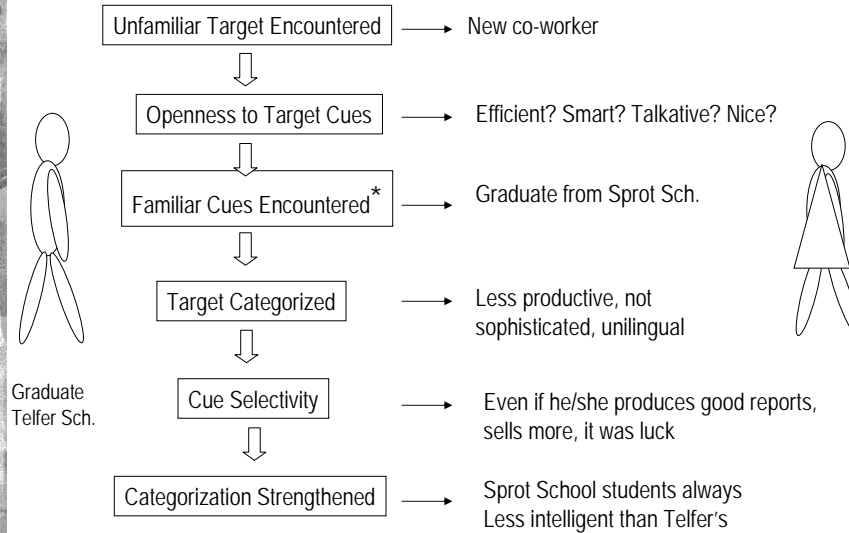
Telfer School of Mgt. Students

THEM



Admission officers

Bruner's Model of the Perceptual Process



* Social Identity Theory

Bruner's model's three important characteristics

- Selectivity – perceivers do not use all available cues
- Constancy – target is perceived in the same way across time and situations.
- Consistency – tendency to select, ignore and distort cues in such a manner to have a homogenous picture of the target.

Basic Biases in Person Perception

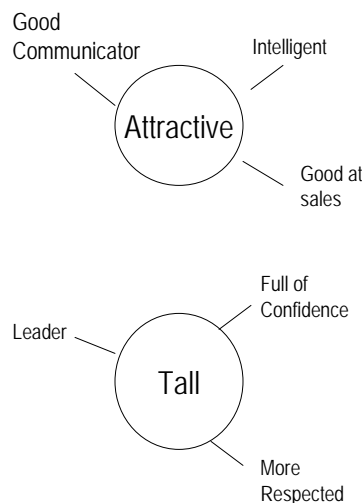
Biases that contribute to selectivity, constancy and consistency

* Primacy and Recency Effects




- * **Primacy Effects** – the tendency for a perceiver to rely on early cues or early impressions, e.g., tough labour negotiator the first day tough negotiator for ever. First Impression.
- * **Recency Effects** – giving undue weight to cues encountered most recently, e.g., big contract today erases the whole year's bad sales performance.

Basic Biases in Person Perception...

- * **Reliance on Central Traits**
– tendency to organize perceptions around personal characteristics of a target that are of interest to the perceiver
- * Because of one good/bad central trait, heap all the good/bad traits on a person.



Biases in Person Perception...

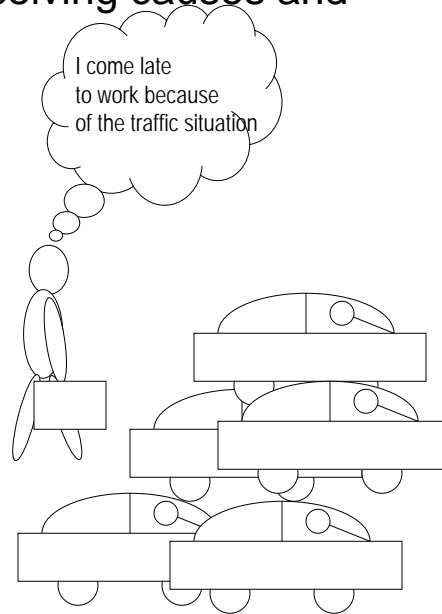
- Implicit Personality Theories – personal theories that people have about which personality characteristics go together. 
 - Small men cannot be good bosses
 - Quiet people are timid, incompetent
 - Bosses are insensitive
- Projection – the tendency for perceivers to attribute their own thoughts and feelings to others. 
 - A dishonest warehouse manager perceives that everybody is a potential thief
- Stereotyping – the tendency to generalize about people in a certain social category and ignore variations among them, e.g., race, gender. Paint everybody with the same brush. 
 - Women are less committed because they change jobs after maternity leave

Stereotypes

- Distinguish some category of people (professors)
- Assume that all have certain traits (absent-minded, disorganized, ivory-tower mentality)
- Why do stereotypes persist
 - Help us process info. quickly
 - Are reinforced by selective perception

ATTRIBUTION: Perceiving causes and motives

- Thus far we have seen how people perceive others, but how do we interpret the motives of the behaviour of others?
- Attribution – the process by which causes or motives are assigned to explain people's behaviour
 - Dispositional Attributions – explanations for behaviour based on an actor's personality or intellect,
 - Situational Attributions – explanations for behaviour based on an actor's environment



Behaviour: Dispositional or Situational Causes

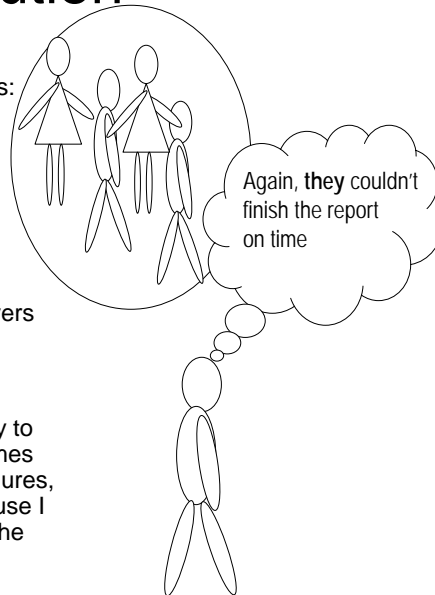
- So, should we attribute the behaviour of others to dispositional or situational causes?
 - **Consistency Cues** – does the actor engage in the behaviour consistently over time?
 - **Consensus Cues** – do most people engage in the behaviour or is unique to that actor?
 - **Distinctiveness Cues** – does the actor engage in the behaviour across a variety of situations?

	Consistency	Consensus	Distinctiveness	Likely Attribution
Smith	High	Low	Low	Disposition
Jones	High	High	High	Situation
Kelley	Low	High	Low	Temporary Situation

Exhibit 3.4
Cue combinations and resulting attributions.

Biases in Attribution

- The task of attribution is open to bias:
 - Fundamental Attribution Error – tendency to overemphasize dispositional explanations for behaviour at the expense of situational explanations.
 - Actor-Observer Effect – The propensity for actors and observers to view the causes of the actor's behaviour differently.
 - Self-Serving Bias – the tendency to take credit for successful outcomes and to deny responsibility for failures, e.g., Student, Good grade because I am smart, bad grade, because the prof. Is bad.



Person Perception and Workforce Diversity

- Workforce Diversity – refers to differences among employees or potential recruits in characteristics such as gender, race, age, religion, cultural background, physical ability and sexual orientation. Interest in diversity stems from two broad facts:
 - Workforce is becoming more diverse
 - There is growing recognition that many organizations have not successfully managed workforce diversity.



*"I can't decide,
let's just make a few of each..."*

www.blifaloo.com/humor/race.php



Workforce Diversity...

- The Changing Workplace
 - Women, older people, immigrants..., hire people that reflect you customer base
 - Globalization
- Valuing Diversity
 - Tolerate vs value
 - Diversity brings competitive advantage, creativity, flexibility,...
- Stereotypes and Workforce Diversity
 - Gender, race, age, ...



Stereotypes in Workforce Diversity

- Racial and Ethnic
 - stereotypes are pervasive and are often negative. Experiment showing that fictional groups got unfavourable reviews.
 - Attribution may play a part, if they do good it is because somebody helped them, or other situational reasons
 - Organizations are reflections of their environment



Stereotypes ...

✱ Gender

- ✱ Entrenched perceptions that some jobs are for men



Age...

- ✱ Knowing that a person falls into a certain age range, we have a tendency to make certain assumptions about the person's physical, psychological, and intellectual capabilities.
- ✱ Older workers are seen as having less *capacity for performance*, less creative, rigid, dogmatic.
- ✱ Hiring and promotion discrimination, forced to retire early.
- ✱ Research has demonstrated that age and job performance are not related.



Managing Diversity

- ✱ Given the prevalence of stereotypes valuing diversity does not happen automatically, it has to be managed.
- ✱ Select enough minority members
- ✱ Encourage min. and maj. Teamwork
- ✱ Ensure accurate info. about minorities
- ✱ Train people to be aware of stereotypes

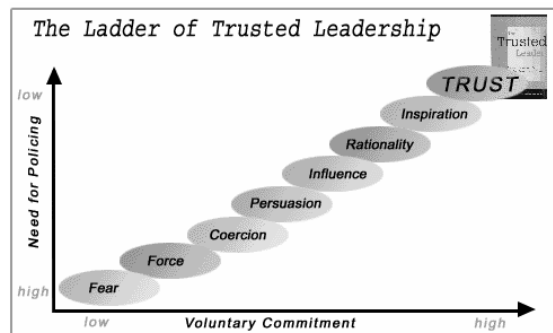


Companies that Manage Diversity

- ✱ At IBM diversity is considered to be a fundamental value and business imperative.
- ✱ Diversity at FedEx Canada focuses on communicating respect and fostering awareness of the importance of diversity to the business.
(http://fedex.com/ca_english/careers/diversityatfedex.html)
- ✱ BC Hydro has an Aboriginal Cross-Cultural Awareness Program that focuses on building relationships.

Perceptions of Trust Towards Management

- Trust – Willingness to be vulnerable and to take risks with respect to the actions of another party.
- Trust towards management is based on three distinct perceptions:
 - Ability – employee perceptions regarding management's competence.
 - Benevolence – employee perceptions regarding management as caring
 - Integrity – employee perceptions that management adheres to set values and principles.



Source: <http://www.thetrustedleader.com/topic1.html>

Trust towards Management...

- Higher perceptions of management ability, benevolence, and integrity are related to greater perceptions of trust.
- Perceptions of trust in management are positively related to job attitudes, job performance, and OCB and negatively related to turnover intentions.
- Trust toward management is related to the ability to focus on value producing activities.

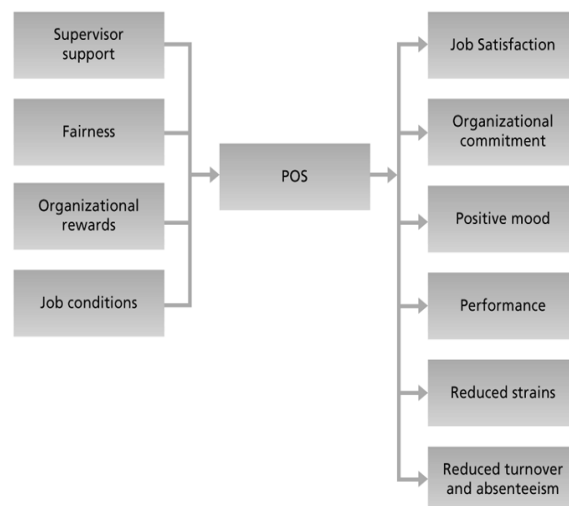
Perceived Organizational Support


- Employees' general belief that their organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being.
- When POS is strong, employees feel an obligation to care about the organization's welfare and to help the organization achieve its objectives.
- Research has shown that employees with high POS have higher JP and JS, are more committed, less likely to be absent and to quit, etc.

Perceived Organizational Support...

EXHIBIT 3.9
Predictors and consequences of perceived organizational support.


Source: Based on Rhoades, L., & Eisenberger, R. (2002). Perceived organizational support: A review of the literature. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87, 698-714.





Perceived Organizational Support (POS) (continued)

- What can organizations do to promote POS?
 - Invest on employees
 - recognize their contributions
 - involve them in decision making
 - give them opportunities for growth



Person Perception in Human Resources

- Perceptions play an important role in human resources in areas such as:
 - The employment interview
 - Applicant perceptions of recruitment and selection
 - The performance appraisal



Perceptions in Employment Interview

- The interview is one of the most common organizational selection devices.
- The interview is a valid selection device although it is far from perfectly accurate, especially when it is unstructured. Validity improves when the interview is structured.



Perceptions in the Employment Interview...

- A number of factors threaten the validity of the interview
 - Applicants are motivated to present a favourable impression of themselves
 - Interviewers compare applicants with a stereotype of the ideal applicant
 - Interviewers have a tendency to exhibit primacy reactions
 - Interviewers underweight positive information about applicants
 - Contrast effects sometimes occur in the interview

Contrast Effects

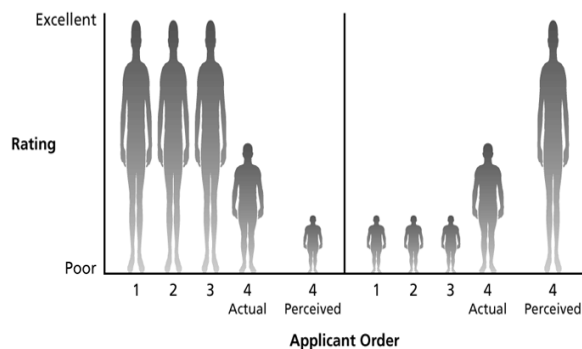


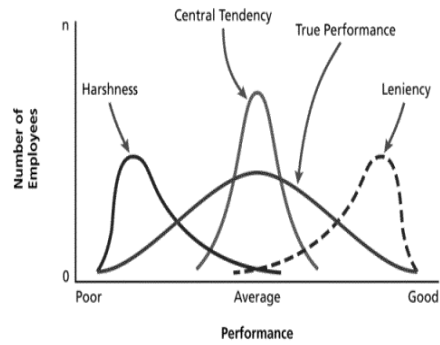
EXHIBIT 3.10
Two examples of contrast effects.

Perceptions of Recruitment and Selection

- How job applicants are treated during the recruitment and selection process influences their perceptions toward the organization and their likelihood of accepting a job offer.
- According to *signalling theory*, job applicants interpret their recruitment experiences as cues or signals about what it is like to work in an organization.

Perceptions in Performance Appraisal

- Objective and Subjective Measures, hard to find as we move up the hierarchy
- Rater Errors
 - Leniency
 - Harshness
 - Central Tendency
- Halo effect
- Similar to me effect



The End
Have A Nice Day!

