Chapter 2
Perception, Self & Communication
Chapter Goal

• To increase accuracy in your perception and get closer to reality on both sides in order to have improved communication.
  • Perception = Reality

Perception: Defined

• Your perception refers to the messages you take in and what meaning you give them. Or, i.e., what narratives you make of the messages taken in.

Common Perceptual Tendencies

• Attribution
• Self-serving bias
• Influenced by what is most obvious
• Cling to first impression
• Favor negative impressions over positive
• Perception & Culture

Taking on Someone Else’s Perception

• Sympathy

• Empathy

Perception Checking
1. A description of the behavior you noticed
2. At least two possible interpretations of the behavior
3. Request for clarification/confirmation
Culture & Self-concept

• Individualism

• Collectivism

Self-fulfilling Prophecy

• Defined:
  - “When a person's expectation of an event makes the outcome more likely than would otherwise be true.”
• Influence on your behavior
• Influence on another's actions

Impression Management

• Why manage our impression?
  
• Perceived Self

• Presenting Self
Chapter 2: Perception Checking Exercise

Purpose:
1. To become familiar with the parts of the perception check.
2. To develop competence in identifying ways to use perception checks.
3. To develop skills in creating appropriate perception checks.

Instructions:
1. Read each situation below and think about various perceptions of the event.
2. Create a three-part perception check to help you discern whether your perceptions are accurate. Write it as you would actually say it to the other person. Be sure to include:
   1. a description of behavior
   2. two possible, but different, interpretations of the behavior
   3. a request for clarification of how to interpret the behavior
3. Now, role-play with a classmate. Practice delivering your perception check to reflect a sincere attempt to understand.
4. Finally, consider whether you actually would use a perception check in each situation. Why or why not?

Case Study #1

For the last three evenings you’ve come home and found your neighbor’s car (Apt. 2) parked in your space (marked Apt. 3).

1. Description of behavior:

2. Offer two interpretations:
   a.
   b.

3. Ask clarifying question:

Cont.
Case Study #2

During a staff meeting your supervisor sighed loudly and rolled his eyes after you asked a question while he was speaking. You were bothered by his actions and want to follow up with him.

1. Description of behavior:

2. Offer two interpretations:
   a. 
   b. 

3. Ask clarifying question:

Case Study #3

Manager John is waiting for the monthly status reports from several of his team members. He remembers asking for them at last week’s staff meeting. Instead of getting mad at his employees for not turning in the status reports, John decides to do a little perception checking.

1. Description of behavior:

2. Offer two interpretations:
   a. 
   b. 

3. Ask clarifying question:

Case Study #4

During dinner, your mom appears upset and distracted. She seems to be leaning back-and-forth in her chair constantly and tapping her fork on the table. You want to talk to her to see if anything is wrong after dinner.

1. Description of behavior:
2. Offer two interpretations:
   a.
   b.

3. Ask clarifying question:

**Case Study #5**

You and your spouse agreed not to write checks until after deposits are made. You go to the checkbook (joint account) and find a space left for a deposit but no amount written in and two checks written out without funds.

1. Description of behavior:

2. Offer two interpretations:
   a.
   b.

3. Ask clarifying question:

**Case Study #6**

During an audit, the auditor notes that the department’s training records are not complete. Before issuing a warning letter, the auditor does some perception checking.

1. Description of behavior:

2. Offer two interpretations:
   a.
   b.

3. Ask clarifying question:
**Case Study #7**

Manager John overhears a staff member being impolite and brisk on the phone. Instead of getting mad at the staff member right away, John decides to do a little perception checking.

1. Description of behavior:

2. Offer two interpretations:
   a. 
   b. 

3. Ask clarifying question:

**Case Study #8**

Every time you share some good news with your friend he/she has something negative to say about it. You are tired of your friend’s negativity. You decide to try some perception checking.

1. Description of behavior (make up your own examples here):

2. Offer two interpretations:
   a. 
   b. 

3. Ask clarifying question: