Chapter 4: Social Perception and Attribution

- An Information Processing Model of Perception
- Stereotypes: Perceptions about Groups of People
- Self-Fulfilling Prophecy: The Pygmalion Effect
- Causal Attribution

Perception: An Information Processing Model

Stage 1: Selective Attention/Comprehension
- Competing environmental stimuli
  - People
  - Events
  - Objects

Stage 2: Encoding and Simplification
- Interpretation and categorization

Stage 3: Storage and Retention

Stage 4: Retrieval and Response

Judgments and decisions

Figure 7-1

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Social Information Processing Model of Perception

- **Stage 1: Selective Attention/Comprehension**
  - Attention is the process of becoming aware of something or someone
  - People pay attention to salient stimuli

- **Stage 2: Encoding and Simplification**
  - Encoding is the process of interpreting environmental stimuli by using information contained in cognitive categories and schemata
  - The same information can be interpreted differently by people due to individual differences

**Schema**

- **Schema** mental picture of an event or object
Social Information Processing
Model of Perception

- **Stage 3: Storage and Retention**
  - Encoded information or stimuli is sent to long-term memory
  - Long-term memory is composed of three compartments containing categories of information about events, semantic materials, and people

- **Stage 4: Retrieval and Response**
  - Information is retrieved from memory when people make judgments and decisions

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Perceptual Errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptual Error</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Halo</td>
<td>A rater forms an overall impression about an object and then uses that impression to bias ratings about the object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leniency</td>
<td>A personal characteristic that leads an individual to consistently evaluate other people or objects in an extremely positive fashion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central tendency</td>
<td>The tendency to avoid all extreme judgments and rate people and objects as average or neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recency effects</td>
<td>The tendency to remember recent information. If the information is negative, the person or object is evaluated negatively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrast effects</td>
<td>The tendency to evaluate people or objects by comparing them with characteristics of recently observed people or objects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Model and Example of Attribution Process

General Model Of Attribution Process

- **Antecedent**: People consider the antecedents of the behavior - Why did the behavior occur?

- **Attribution**: People determine the causes of behavior - This represents an attribution

- **Consequence**: Attributions affect our subsequent behavior and expectations about people

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Model and Example of Attribution Process

- **Antecedent**: - This employee never did this before. - The employee is going through a bad divorce. - This employee is motivated.

- **Attribution**: The poor performance was due to personal issues outside of work.

- **Consequence**: I will go talk to employee and offer support and coaching.
Kelley’s Model of Attribution

**Basic Premise:** An attribution is based on the consensus, distinctiveness, and consistency of the observed behavior.

- **Consensus**
  - Involves comparing an individual's behavior with that of his or her peers.
  - Low consensus indicates an individual is different from peers.
Kelley’s Model of Attribution

- **Distinctiveness**
  - Involves comparing a person’s behavior or accomplishments on one task with the behavior or accomplishments from other tasks.
  - Highly distinctive behavior or results represents a situation where the current behavior or result is significantly different from typical behavior or results on other tasks.
Kelley’s Model of Attribution (continued)

- **Consistency**
  - Involves comparing a person’s behavior or accomplishments on a given task over time.
  - High consistency implies that a person performs a certain task the same, time after time.

![Kelley's Model of Attribution - Consistency](image-url)
Kelley’s Model of Attribution (continued)

- **Predictions**
  - Internal or personal attributions are made when a behavior is associated with low consensus and distinctiveness, and high consistency.
  - External or environmental attributions are made when a behavior is related with high consensus and distinctiveness, and low consistency.

Modified Version of Weiner’s Attribution Model

- **Judgment/evaluation** → **Causal analysis consequences** → **Psychological consequences** → **Behavioral consequences**
Modified Version of Weiner’s Attribution Model

Someone performs a task

Judgment of success

Internal Factors
  • self esteem (+)
  • expectancy of future success (+)
  • pride (+)
  • shame (-)
  • depression (-)

External Factors

Higher Future Performance

• self esteem (+ or -)
• expectancy of future success (+ or -)
• pride (+ or -)
• shame (+ or -)
• depression (+ or -)

Lower to Higher Future Performance

• self esteem (-)
• expectancy of future success (-)
• pride (-)
• shame (+)
• depression (+)

Lower to Higher Future Performance

• self esteem (+ or -)
• expectancy of future success (+ or -)
• pride (+ or -)
• shame (+ or -)
• depression (+ or -)
The “Prima Donnas”

- Describe the critic's views of the behavior of the opera stars presented in the video.
- Describe the opera stars' own views of their behavior.
- How do the perceptions of the critics and the stars differ?
- How do the attributions of the critics and the stars differ?
- What explains these differences?
- What changes are necessary to ensure accurate perceptions and attributions by both critics and opera stars?

Attributional Tendencies

- **Fundamental Attribution Bias**
  - ignoring environmental factors that affect behavior
- **Self-Serving Bias**
  - taking more personal responsibility for success than failure
Stereotypes

- **Stereotype** is an individual's set of beliefs about the characteristics of a group of people.

Characteristics of Stereotypes

- Are not always negative
- May or may not be accurate
- Can lead to poor decisions and discrimination
**Stereotyping is a Four-Step Process**

1) Begins by categorizing people into groups
2) Infer that all people in a category possess similar traits or characteristics
3) Form expectations of others and interpret their behavior according to stereotypes
4) Stereotypes are maintained

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**“Age & Attitudes”**

- Why does age discrimination occur in the workplace?
- What are the consequences for older workers and for other workers?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of employing older workers?
- Why should an organization develop a diverse work force that includes older workers?
- What legal responsibilities does a manager have regarding using age as a hiring or promotion criteria?
Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

- Self-Fulfilling Prophecy or Pygmalion Effect, is that people’s expectations or beliefs determine their behavior and performance, thus serving to make their expectations come true.