Chapter Six

Social Perception and Attributions

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
Social Information Processing
Model of Perception
(continued)

- **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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Common Perceptual Errors

- **Halo**: A rater forms an overall impression about an object and then uses the impression to bias ratings about the object.
- **Leniency**: A personal characteristic that leads an individual to consistently evaluate other people or objects in an extremely positive fashion.
- **Central Tendency**: The tendency to avoid all extreme judgments and rate people and objects as average or neutral.
- **Recency Effects**: The tendency to remember recent information. If the recent information is negative, the person or object is evaluated negatively.
- **Contrast Effects**: The tendency to evaluate people or objects by comparing them with characteristics of recently observed people or objects.
Model and Example of Attribution Process

Causal Attributions: Suspected or inferred causes of someone’s behavior.

General Model Of Attribution Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antecedent</th>
<th>Attribution</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People consider the antecedents of the behavior - Why did the behavior occur?</td>
<td>People determine the causes of behavior - This represents an attribution</td>
<td>Attributions affect our subsequent behavior and expectations about people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attribution Example

An employee turns in a report that contains many errors

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

The poor performance was due to personal issues outside of work.

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.

Figure 6-3a

Consensus

Kelley’s Model of Attribution

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

- 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.

Figure 6-3b

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 (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.

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?
Fundamental Attribution Bias

The tendency to attribute another person’s behavior to his or her personal characteristics.

Self-Serving Bias

The tendency to take more personal responsibility for success than for failure.
Weiner’s Attribution Model

**Internal Factors**
- Self esteem (↑)
- Expectancy of future success (↑)
- Pride (↑)
- Shame (↓)
- Depression (↓)

**External Factors**
- Self esteem (↑ or ↓)
- Expectancy of future success (↑ or ↓)
- Pride (↑ or ↓)
- Shame (↑ or ↓)
- Depression (↑ or ↓)

Stereotypes

A 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
Common Types of Stereotypes

- Sex-Role Stereotypes
- Age Stereotypes
- Race Stereotypes
- Disability Stereotypes

“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?