


Slide 1




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MGB2230 Organisational Behaviour

Week 3: Individuality  
in Workplaces:  
Perception, and  
Attribution.



MGB2230 – Organisational Behaviour

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Slide 2



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Lesson Objectives

1. Define 'social perception' and explain the factors that affect it

2. Identify five common barriers to social perception

3. Explore perceptual errors and ways in which they can be minimised

4. Explain the attribution process and how attributions affect managerial behaviour



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Slide 3



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This week's essential readings

Textbook Chapter 3

Luksyte, A., Waite, E., Avery, D. R., & Roy, R. (2013). Held to a different standard: Racial differences in the impact of lateness on advancement opportunity. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 86(2), 142-166.

Bertolino, M., M. Truxillo, D., & Fraccaroli, F. (2013). Age effects on perceived personality and job performance. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 28(7/8), 867-885.

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## Slide 4

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### Perception

Perception is a psychological process that creates individual differences.

**Social perception** is the process of interpreting information about another person.

Nelson et al. (2012)

People's behaviour is often based on their perception on what reality is, and not necessarily on reality itself.

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## Slide 5

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### Common Judgement statements based upon perception:

- Old/young people cannot drive
- Blondes are dumb
- People without degrees lack intelligence
- People with degrees lack "real world" experience
- Parents who smack their children are unfit parents

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## Slide 6

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### Social Identity Theory

- A person's sense of who they are based on group memberships
- A combination of our self-perceptions and how we perceive others

**Personal Identity** – unique traits that make you, you; i.e. Personality, appearance etc.

**Social Identity** (where we fit in the social world) – groups we belong to, school, organisation etc.

**Categorisation** – Compare characteristics of our groups with other groups

**Homogenisation** – Similar traits within a group; different traits across groups

**Differentiation** – Develop less favorable images of people in groups other than our own

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Slide 7

 <h2 data-bbox="426 250 572 262">Barriers to Social Perception</h2> <p data-bbox="426 280 572 320"><b>Selective perception</b> The process of selecting information that supports our individual viewpoints while discounting information that threatens our viewpoints</p> <p data-bbox="426 309 572 320"><b>Stereotype</b> Generalizing about a group of people based on our perception. As we share stereotypes, they are validated by others and become stronger.</p> <p data-bbox="426 327 572 338"><b>First impression error</b> Forming lasting impressions about an individual based on initial perceptions</p>	<p data-bbox="572 219 726 230"><b>Falsification</b> The process of creating a false or distorted image of someone or something</p> <p data-bbox="572 250 726 262"><b>Projection</b> False-consensus effect, or overestimating the number of people who share the same beliefs</p> <p data-bbox="572 280 726 291"><b>Self-fulfilling prophecy</b> The situation in which our expectations about people affect our interaction with them, in a way that our expectations are fulfilled.</p>
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Slide 8

# Stereotyping

Process of assigning traits to people based on their membership in a social category

Generalisation based on our perception of a specific group (e.g. race, appearance, gender, class, schools attended, home location etc)

- Categorical thinking
- Strong need to understand and anticipate others' behaviour
- Enhances our self-perception and social identity

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
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Slide 9



# Minimising Stereotypes Biases

- Diversity awareness training
  - Educate employees about the benefits of diversity and racial myths
- Meaningful interaction
  - Contact hypothesis – the more we interact with someone, the less we rely on stereotypes to understand them
- Decision-making accountability
  - Making people accountable for their decisions motivates them to consider objective info rather than stereotypes



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Attribution theory

Explains how individuals pinpoint the causes of their own behaviour or that of others.

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Attribution theory

Deciding whether behaviour or events are caused by internal or external factors

2 components:

- Internal attribution
  - ✓ Blame the person
- External attribution
  - ✓ Blame external circumstances

For example, employee absenteeism

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Attribution Biases

1. Fundamental attribution error

Tendency to make attributions to internal causes when focusing on someone else's behaviour.

2. Self-serving bias

Tendency to attribute one's own successes to internal causes and one's failures to external causes.

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## Slide 13



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How individuality can affect us at work...

Bertolino, Truxillo and Fraccaroli (2013)

The role of stereotypes in the workplace is relevant because stereotypes can influence work decisions. Decision-makers with unfavorable stereotypes about a group make unfavorable attributions about group members.

Consistent with the intergroup bias phenomenon (cf. Hewstone et al., 2002), older raters tended to evaluate an older worker more positively, and younger raters tended to rate younger workers more positively.

For example, older workers were perceived to be higher on conscientiousness than younger workers, but this effect was weaker among younger raters.

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## Slide 14



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How individuality can affect us at work...

Employment Interview

Perceptual biases of raters affect the accuracy of interviewers' judgments of applicants

Impression formed in a single glance – 1/10 of a second!

Performance Expectations

Self-fulfilling prophecy (Pygmalion effect): lower or higher performance of employees reflect preconceived leader expectations about employee capabilities

Performance Evaluations

Appraisals are often the subjective (judgmental) perceptions of appraisers of another employee's job performance

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## Slide 15



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How individuality can affect us at work...

Luksyte et al. (2013)

Examined employee lateness behaviour (Black versus white employees)

In comparison with their White coworkers, Black employees perceived that their lateness behaviour had a stronger negative impact on their chances for advancement (Study 1), and they were also rated more negatively as a consequence of their lateness (Study 2).

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Slide 16



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Hill  
Business



NEXT WEEK!

Individuality in Workplaces: Attitudes

Textbook Chapter 4

Erdogan, B., Bauer, T. N., Truxillo, D. M., & Mansfield, L. R. (2012). Whistle while you work: A review of the life satisfaction literature. *Journal of Management*, 38(4), 1138-1162.

Tarls, T. W., & Schreurs, P. J. (2008). Well-being and organizational performance: An organizational-level test of the happy-productive worker hypothesis. *Work & Stress*, 22(2), 120-136.



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