

Picture Perfect

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COM120: Interpersonal Communication

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Abstract

Overview

Perception and self-concept are two of the most difficult parts of interpersonal communication. How we view ourselves and how we think others see us play central roles in how we communicate. If we assume that people are concentrating on our flaws rather than on our message, we may choose not to communicate at all. In this assignment, you are going to think critically about how perception and self-concept play a role in our personal and professional lives. You should spend approximately 6.5 hours on this assignment.

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Defining Self-Concept and Perception

Self-Concept and perception go hand-in-hand. In simplest terms, **self-concept** is how one perceives themselves as a person whereas **perception** is how others perceive another individual as a person. These terms are synonymous concepts such as “self image”. Both of these terms are important when discussing interpersonal communication due to how they affect many other factors for how well an idea will be communicated to the other party, which we will discuss later. I say that Self-Concept and perception go hand-in-hand because, more often than not, those with a higher level of positive self-concept will also perceive others in a positive light as well (Markus et al., [1985](#))

The Interaction Between King George and President Roosevelt

The interaction we witnessed between that of King George and President Roosevelt was an excellent illustration of solid interpersonal communication skills. King George’s self-concept was initially in a seemingly poor state. He believed that he was seen as a weak leader to his subjects, or that he was not *fit* to be leader to his citizen because of his stutter. This heavily tarnishes King George’s self-image. We can even see that while he is talking and begins to stutter, he ends up getting even more frustrated which in turn makes the stuttering worse (Michell, [2012](#)). President Roosevelt attempts to change King George’s self-concept by confidently speaking to him whilst moving about the room they are in without the aid of his wheelchair (Michell, [2012](#)). In reality, I am not sure if this act would really be seen in the way that Roosevelt intended. In many situations in which someone is experiencing a hardship and describing the situation to someone else, they would not necessarily be overjoyed by the act of someone “showing-off” their own pain and how well they can handle it compared to someone else. This could be seen as pontificating and pandering, which was described to us as something to avoid when attempting to be effective in interpersonal communication and ensuring that the other individual’s psychological context remains in a safe space (Headlee, [2015](#)).

The Importance of Self-Concept and Perception in Communication

Self-concept and perception are huge components to effective and efficient interpersonal communication. Everyone has had their bad days and we all know that during those bad days it is difficult to feel “good” about anyone else, be it in their successes or failures. When we feel good about ourselves, it is far easier for us to feel good for others (Pan & Davis, [2019](#)). In “*Hyde Park on Hudson*”, President Roosevelt’s perception of others was that the citizens and subjects either man is in charge of are not there to find mistakes and flaws, but rather guidance and leadership. I am not entirely sure if that is actually the case. Nowadays, anyone someone turns on the news one would be hard-pressed to find a story which is not describing the mishaps and mistakes of our country’s politicians and business leaders. It seems that people specifically target flaws before all else when determining how to feel about any situation. There are many reasons we as humans do this, but I believe the main reason is that when other people make mistakes it allows us to feel better about the mistakes we have made ourselves (Gerd Antos & Eija Ventola, [2008](#)).

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