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Chapter 2 Activity: Perception – Salience and Schemata (10 Points)

Read [Section 2.1](https://open.lib.umn.edu/communication/part/chapter-2-communication-and-perception/) of the textbook and review the related materials posted on the Canvas assignment page: Google Slides, YouTube Video Playlist, Google Doc. Next, complete this document and upload it in Canvas.

Note: the textbook uses the term “schemata,” which is the plural of “schema.” Some of the materials provided for this assignment use “schema” (singular) or “schemas” (plural). The concepts are the same, the terms interchangeable.

**Overview**

Perception Concepts: Salience and Schemata (From *Communication in the Real World*, [Section 2.1](https://open.lib.umn.edu/communication/part/chapter-2-communication-and-perception/))

* [In the selection process,] "We tend to pay attention to information that is salient. **Salience** is the degree to which something attracts our attention in a particular context."
* "We interpret information using **schemata**, which allow us to assign meaning to information based on accumulated knowledge and previous experience." (Key Takeaways)
* “Interpretation is the third part of the perception process, in which we assign meaning to our experiences using mental structures known as schemata. **Schemata** are like databases of stored, related information that we use to interpret new experiences. We all have complicated schemata that have developed over time as small units of information combine to make more meaningful complexes of information.”

**Instructions**

*On the lower portion of this document, respond to the following prompts. Upload the completed document to the Canvas assignment page.*

1. Think about some of **your schemata** that help you make sense of the world around you. You might think of schemata as the “baggage” we carry, positive and negative, which shape our perceptions. You might also consider them as mental “compartments” in which we store experiences, knowledge (“lessons learned”), memories, expectations, etc.
2. For each of the following contexts, think about **your schemata**. **Make a list of and classify them based on the categories below.**
   * Academic (Education: elementary to high school, CVTC courses – general education and program, other college or occupational courses you have taken, if any.)
   * Professional/Occupational (Jobs you've held – related to your CVTC program or others.)
   * Personal (Roles and interactions with family, friends, acquaintances, strangers; consumption of popular culture and media.)
   * Civic (Experiences in the community or from extra-curricular activities and memberships.)
3. After making your list, think about how a few of those schemata affect your perception. **Write a short reflective response** that addresses how at least TWO of those schemata influenced how you perceived an interpersonal experience (positive or negative) or a current event/news story about an issue that interests you.

**My Schemata**

* Academic: Altoona Elementary, Middle, and High school education. 3 years of undergraduate school at UWEC in various programs. One semester of the IT – Data specialist program at CVTC.
* Professional/Occupational: Many years of experience in retail and food service industry. Currently employed as a food specialist at the Boys & Girls Club.
* Personal: Movie buff and gamer. Divorced family and disowned from father’s side. Recently reconnected with sister from father’s side.
* Civic: Attending community events in parks and theatres. Hobbies in school like track & field and cross country.

**Reflective Response**

I think the years I’ve spent in the service and customer service industry have made me more empathetic than I otherwise would be. If someone is being rude or mean, I’ve had that experience many times at this point and can handle myself in a reasonable way. I’m able to listen and empathize rather than responding out of an immediate emotion. I did, however, accrue a fair amount of stress and emotional baggage from those experiences that I think I’m still carrying today. My food industry experience has fed into my love of cooking on my own, and it’s something that I always seek to watch, learn, and talk about now.

I’ve loved movies and have made them with my friends ever since I was a kid. It’s something that I’ve always dreamed of doing but have never really been able to pursue financially. I think it’s helped me keep an open mind to new ideas and abstract concepts, and to just empty my mind and have some dumb fun at times. I’m a pretty goofy guy and I think many movies, and the experiences I’ve had watching them with people has influenced that.