

A piece of evidence from today's scenario regarding the Google server shutdown that our group felt like we could easily dismiss and understand was the article about ethical hacking. Ethical hacking, which is also known as penetration testing, is usually when a group of experts purposefully try to hack into a computer system or network to find weaknesses that an ill-intended hacker could find and use to their advantage. This information seemed straightforward to us because the name "ethical hacking" is self explanatory; ethical seemed to have a positive connotation to it, which led us to consider that it was "good". Furthermore, the definition of ethical hacking was basically given to us. This meant that we didn't have to dig deeper to find the meaning. How we perceive this information is similar to how people are stereotyped. When we make assumptions about the world around us, we don't want to dig deeper and find the true meaning behind their actions.

However, the meaning behind ethical hacking was interpreted in a completely different light after we received new information from the investigation. As we learned about Will Stark's connection to I3 and how his company was helping Google find any vulnerabilities, our group realized that there was something more going on that was not visible on the surface. It turned out that Stark was using the company for his own personal gain to get back at his former professor by finding the weaknesses in his server, and then by turning it off. We believe that this was no longer ethical because he wasn't doing it to help Google, like he was asked, but for himself. Will also abused his power as a person who has access to valuable information which also made this the opposite of what a person with morals would do. This steered us away from the similarity between stereotyping and dismissing information as we started to understand the true intention behind Stark and I3. As we found more and more evidence to counter the meaning of ethical hacking, the generalizations that were made no longer applied.

Using the examples provided earlier, how we perceive and interpret information can have very different meanings. When observations are made, we almost instinctively start to perceive things based on pre-existing stereotypes. This is not a healthy way to think, which was clearly shown when we disregarded the article on ethical hacking because it ended up being a completely different understanding of what we thought to what it actually was. How we perceive others can be used in better ways if it leads to interpretation. Interpreting things requires us to ignore stereotypes and consider other possibilities as to why something is the way it is. Although it is more work to think through things instead of taking them at face value, the payoff is worth it.