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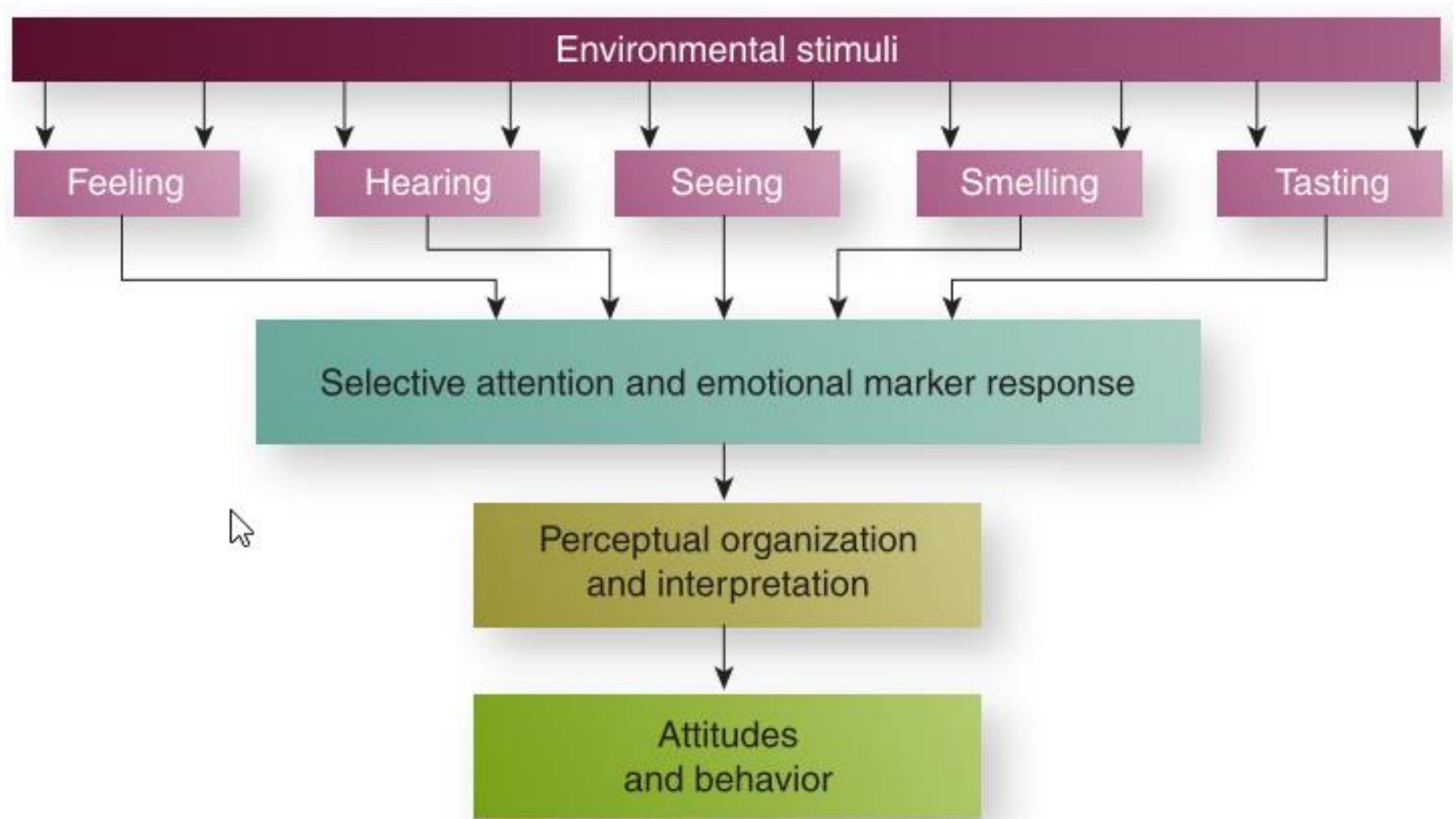
Perceiving Ourselves and Others in Organizations

Perception Defined



- The process of receiving information about and making sense of the world around us
 - What gets noticed
 - How information is categorized
 - How information is interpreted within our existing knowledge

The Perceptual Process



The Perceptual Process



Whenever two people meet there are really six people present. There are the two people as they see themselves, the two people as they see each other, and the two people as they really are.

Restated from Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., medical scholar and author (in *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*, 1858)

Self-Concept Defined

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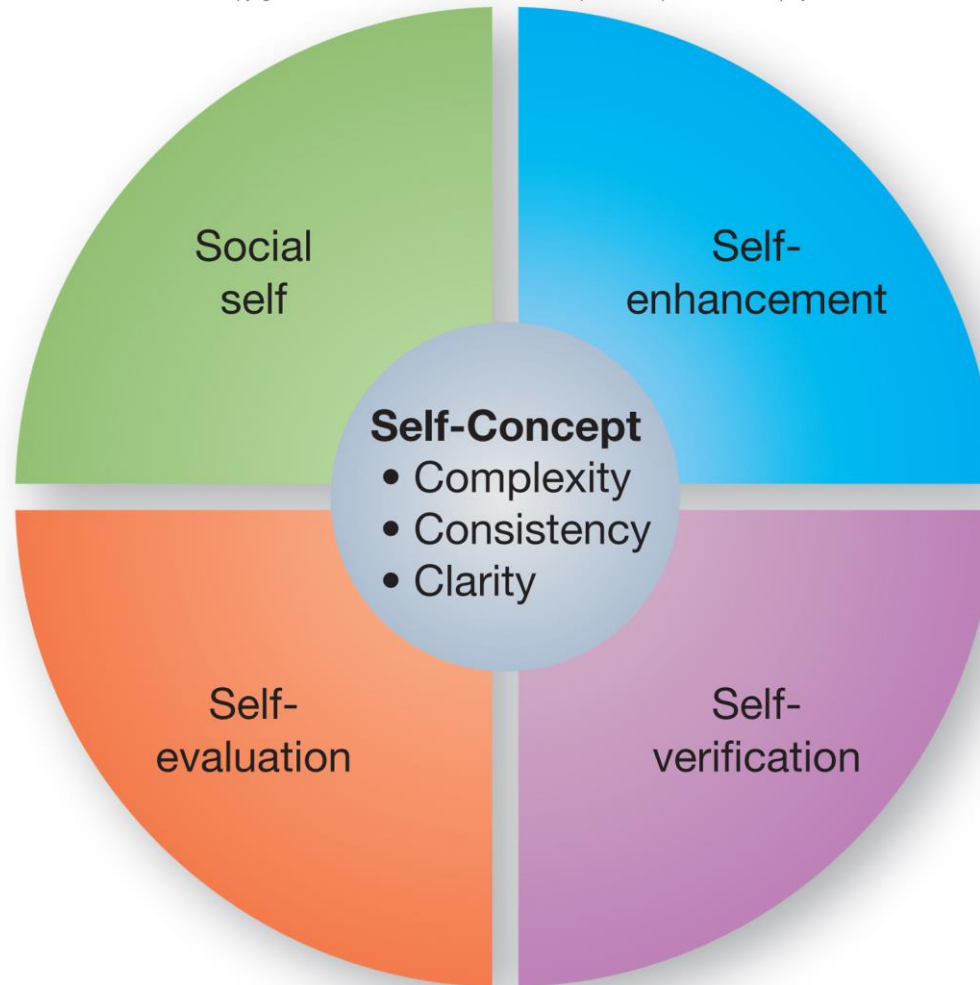
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- An individual's self-beliefs and self-evaluations
 - “Who am I?” and “How do I feel about myself?”
- Compare perceived job with our perceived and ideal selves.
- Includes three self-concept characteristics and four “selves” processes

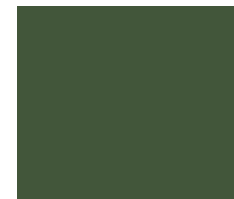
Self-Concept Model: Three C's and Four Selves



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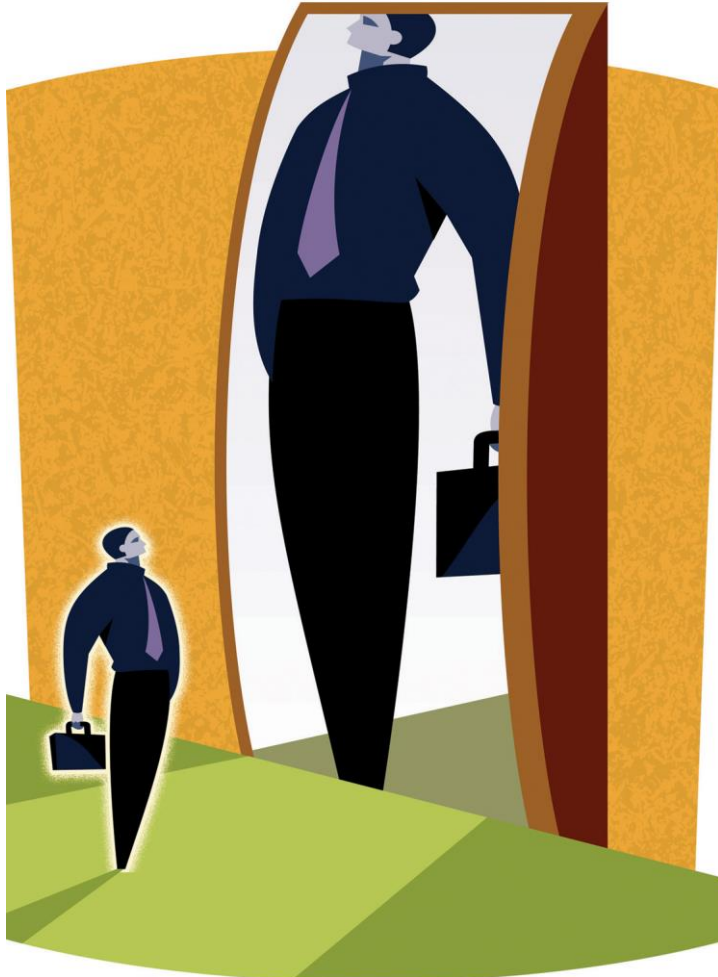
Self-Concept Characteristics (3 C's)



- Complexity
 - Our self-view has many distinct, important roles/identities
 - High complexity: many identities but little overlap/connection
- Consistency
 - Multiple selves have compatible personality, values
- Clarity
 - Self-concept is clear, confidently described, internally consistent, and stable across time
- People have better well-being with:
 - multiple selves (complexity)
 - well established selves (clarity)
 - selves are similar and compatible with traits (consistency)

Self-Concept: Self-Enhancement

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- Drive to promote/protect a positive self-view
 - competent, attractive, lucky, ethical, valued
- Self-enhancement outcomes:
 - Better adjustment and mental/physical health
 - Higher “can-do” motivation
 - Riskier decisions, slower recognizing own mistakes

Self-Concept: Self-Verification



- Motivation to verify/maintain our self-concept
- Stabilizes our self-concept
- Prefer feedback consistent with self-concept
- Self-verification causes us to:
 - remember information consistent with our self-concept
 - ignore/oppose feedback contrary to our self-concept
 - associate with those who affirm/reflect our self-concept

Self-Concept: Self-Evaluation



■ Self-esteem

- To like and respect oneself
- High self-esteem: less influenced by others, more persistent, more logical thinking

■ Self-efficacy

- Belief that we can successfully perform a task
 - Perceived support from MARS model elements
- General self-efficacy – “can-do” belief across situations

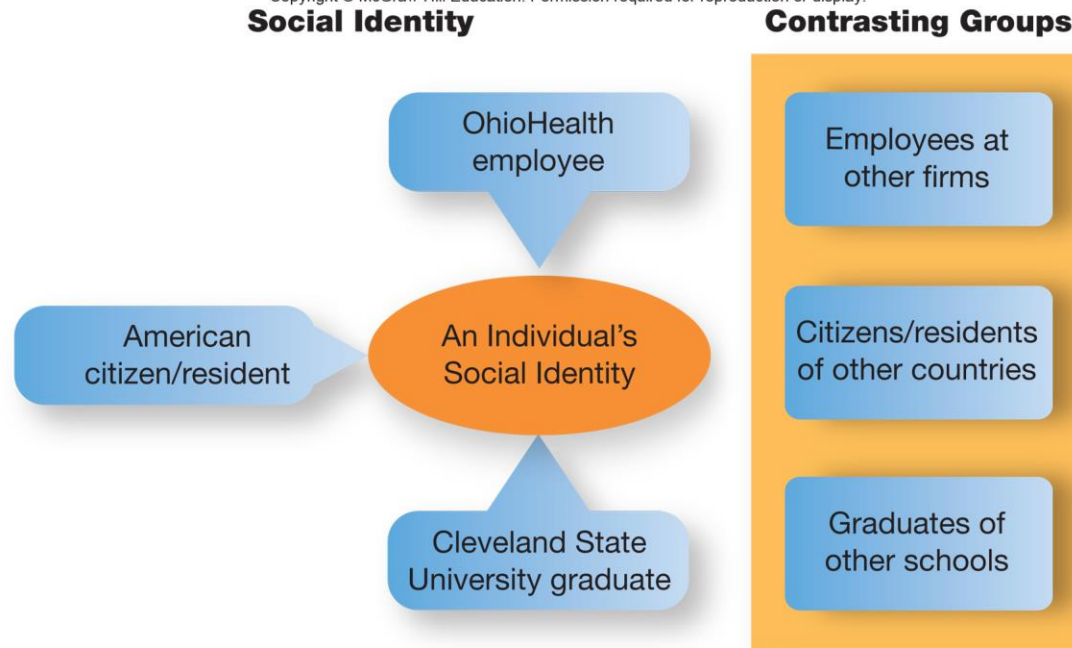
■ Locus of control

- General belief about personal control over life events
- Higher self-evaluation with internal locus of control

Self-Concept: Social Self

- Social identity -- defining ourselves in terms of groups to which we belong or have an emotional attachment
- Social identity groups are easily identified, you are a minority in setting, the group has high status

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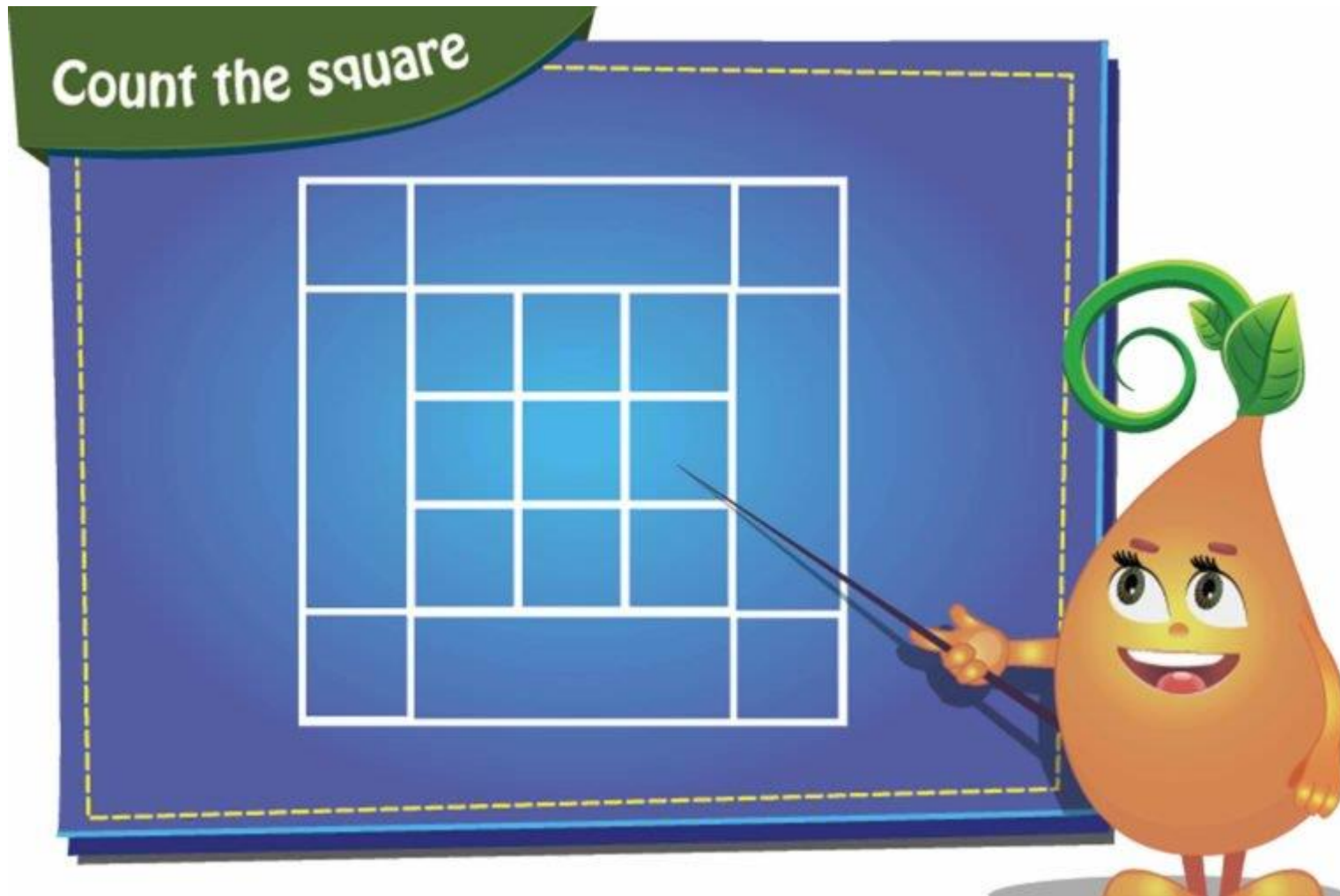


Selective Attention



- Selecting vs. ignoring sensory information
- Affected by person/object's features (e.g. size, motion)
- Affected by the perceiver's characteristics – assumptions, expectations, needs
 - Emotional markers are assigned nonconsciously to information
- Confirmation bias
 - Screening out information contrary to our beliefs/values

Perceptual Organization/Interpretation



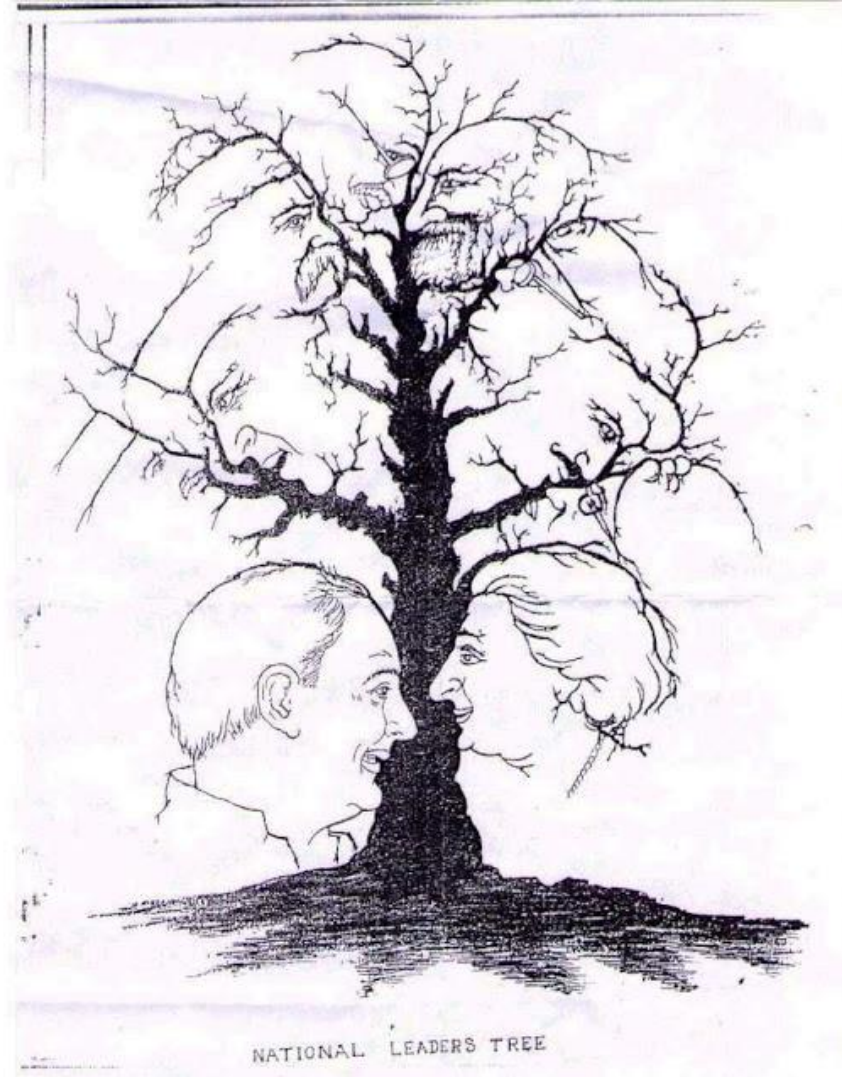
Perceptual Organization/Interpretation



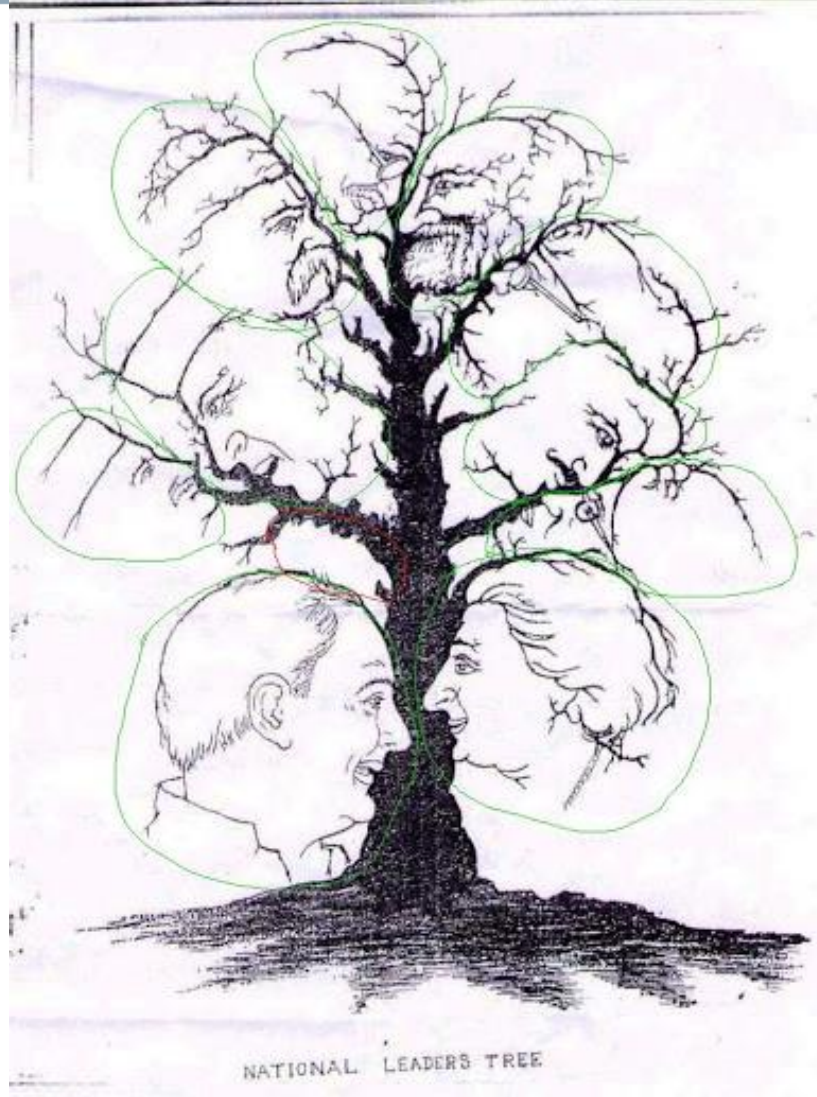
Selective attention test

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo>

Perceptual Organization/Interpretation



Perceptual Organization/Interpretation



Perceptual Organization/Interpretation



- Categorical thinking
 - Mostly nonconscious process of organizing people/things (perceptual grouping)
- Perceptual grouping principles
 - Similarity or proximity
 - Closure -- filling in missing pieces
 - Perceiving trends
- Interpreting incoming information
 - Emotional markers automatically evaluate information

Mental Models in Perceptions



- Knowledge structures we create to describe, explain, predict the external world
- Help make sense of situations
 - Fill in missing pieces
 - Help to predict events
- Problem with mental models:
 - May block recognition of new opportunities/perspectives

Stereotyping

- Assigning traits to people based on social category membership
- Why people stereotype:
 - Categorical thinking
 - Drive to comprehend and predict others' behavior
 - Supports self-enhancement and social identity



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Categorization, Homogenization, Differentiation



Stereotyping applies three activities derived from social identity and self-enhancement:

- Categorization process -- Categorize people into groups
- Homogenization process -- Assign similar traits within a group; different traits to other groups
- Differentiation process -- Assign less favorable attributes to other groups

Problems with Stereotyping



- Problems with stereotyping
 - Overgeneralizes – doesn't represent everyone in the category
 - Basis of systemic and intentional discrimination
- Overcoming stereotype biases
 - Difficult to prevent stereotype activation
 - Possible to minimize stereotype application

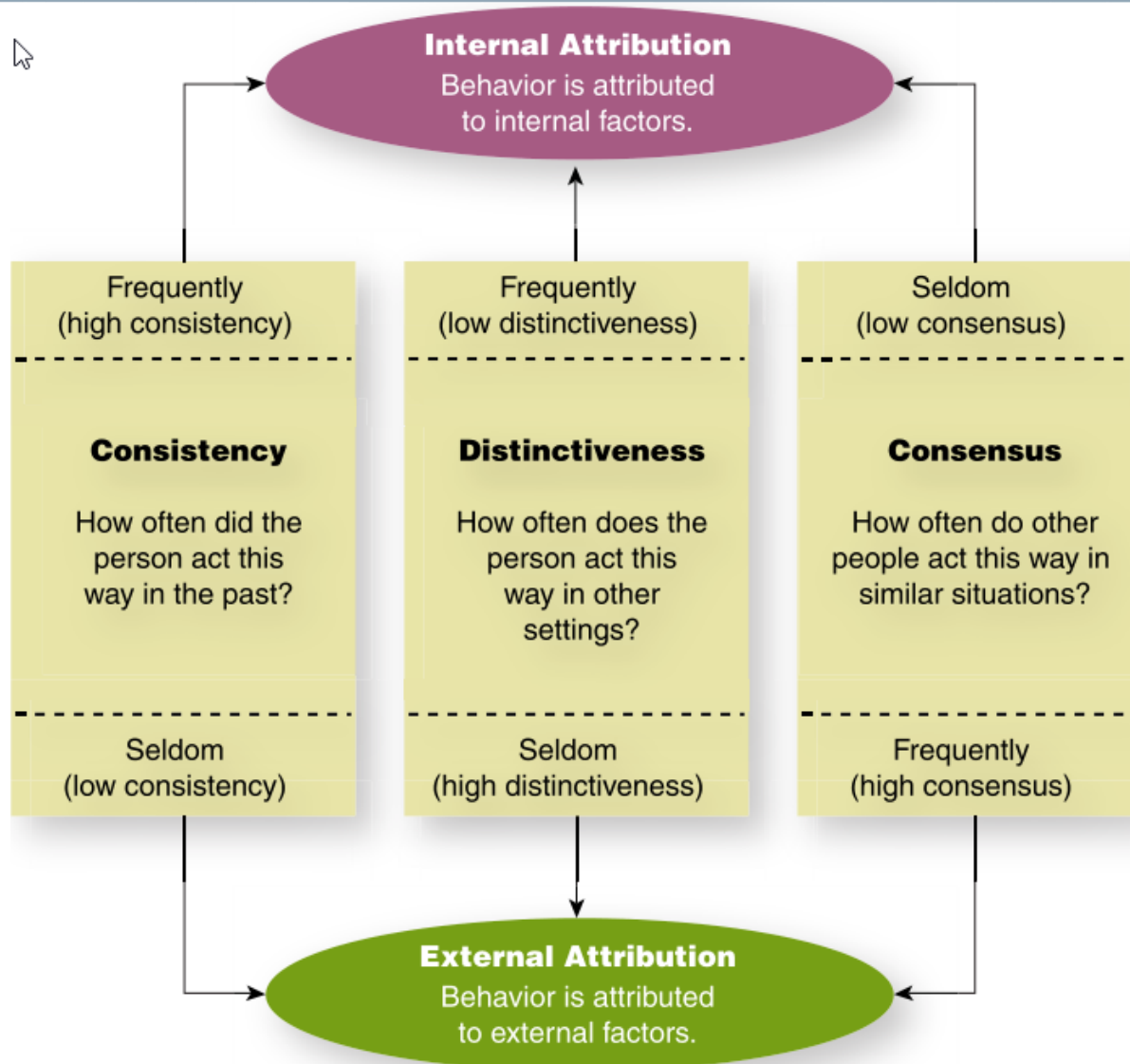
Attribution Process



Perception that behavior is caused by person's own motivation or ability

Perception that behavior is caused by factors beyond person's control (situation, fate, etc.)

Attribution Rules

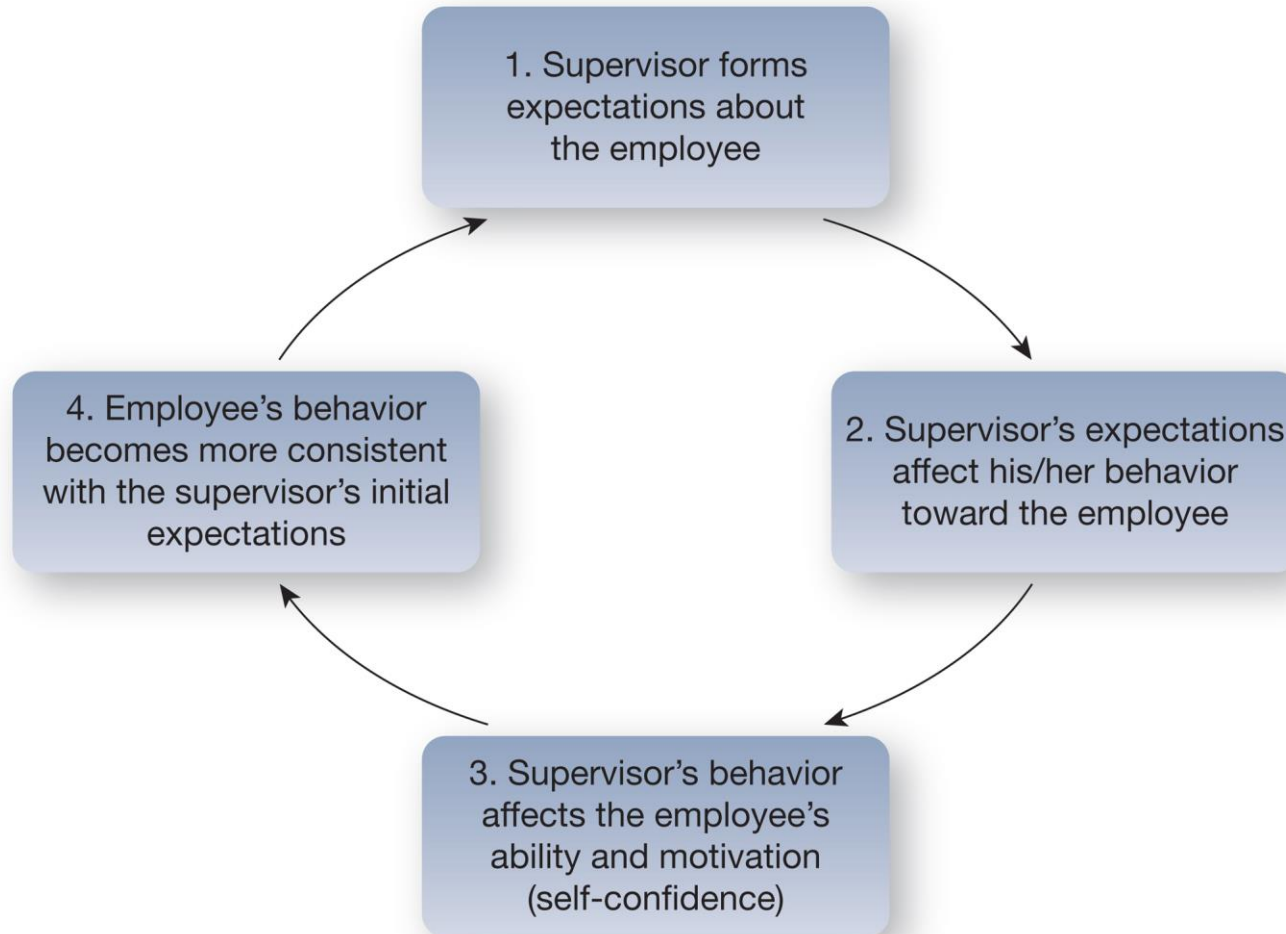


Attribution Errors

- Importance of the attribution process:
 - Improves our mental model of causation.
 - We respond differently to internal versus external attributions of our own behavior and performance.
- Self-Serving Bias
 - Tendency to attribute our successes to internal factors and our failures to external factors
- Fundamental Attribution Error
 - Tendency to overemphasize internal causes of another person's behavior, whereas we recognize external influences on our own behavior
 - This error is less common than previously thought

Self-Fulfilling Prophecy Cycle

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Self-Fulfilling Prophecy Effect is Strongest...



- ...at the beginning of the relationship (e.g. employee joins the team)
- ...when several people have similar expectations about the person
- ...when the employee has low rather than high past achievement

Leaders need to develop and maintain a positive, yet realistic, expectation toward all employees.

- Minimizing self-fulfilling prophecy error.
 - Awareness, minimal benefit.
 - Supporting/learning organizational culture.
 - Hiring supervisors who are inherently optimistic toward staff.

Other Perceptual Effects



- Halo effect
 - Form a general impression of others from one trait/behavior
 - Distorts our perception of person's other traits/behaviors
- False-consensus effect
 - Overestimate how many others have similar beliefs or traits like ours
- Primacy effect
 - Forming perception of others (categorization) based on first information we receive about them
 - First impressions are difficult to change
- Recency effect
 - Most recent information dominates perceptions

Improving Perceptions



1. Awareness of perceptual biases

- Increases mindfulness of biases
- Limited effectiveness on reducing biases

2. Improving self-awareness

- Increase awareness of our beliefs, values, attitudes
- Test for biases -- Johari Window

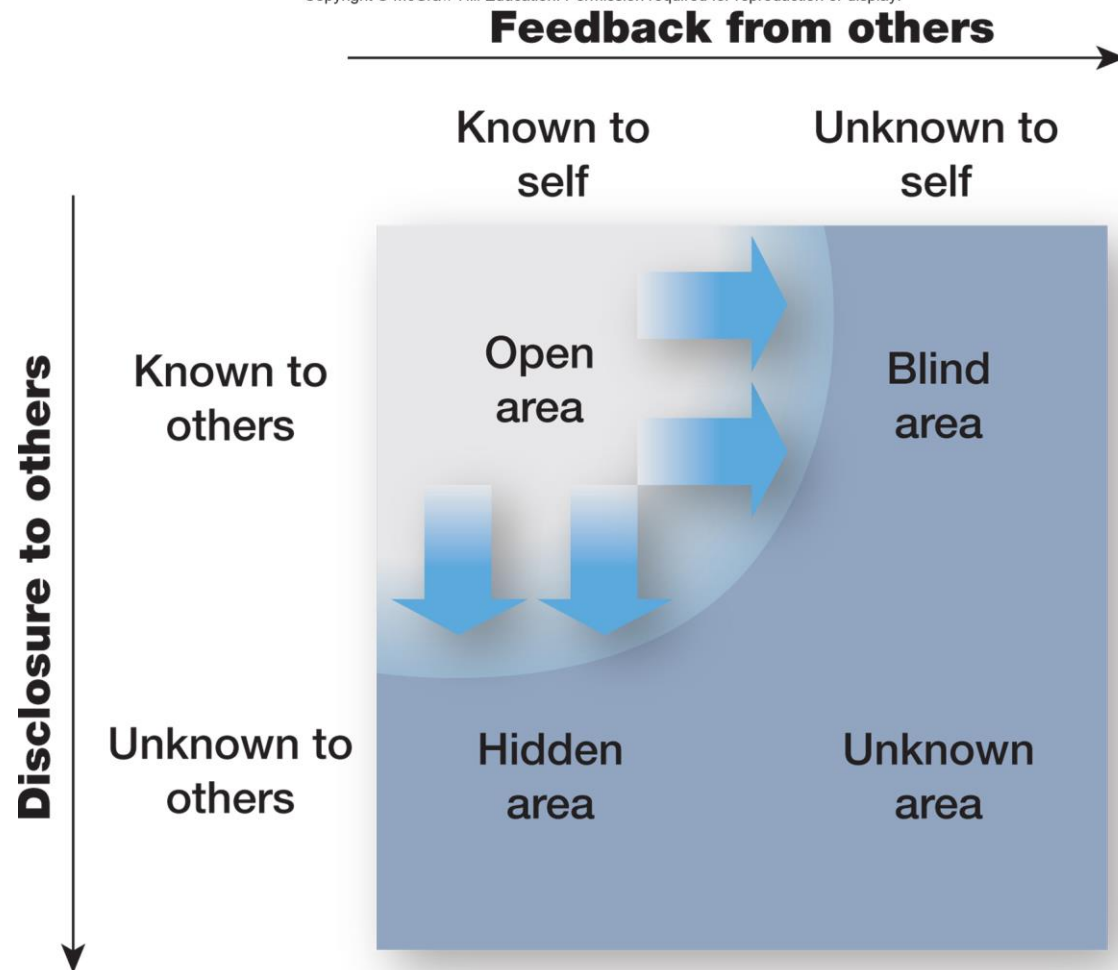
3. Meaningful interaction

- Interact with others from different backgrounds
- Based on contact hypothesis
- Interaction best when:
 - close and frequent
 - toward a shared goal
 - meaningful task
 - equal status
 - Improves empathy: Understanding and being sensitive to the feelings, thoughts, and situations of others.

Know Yourself (Johari Window)



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Global Mindset

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- Awareness of, openness to, and respect for other views and practices in the world
- Understand mental models of people from other cultures
- Process complex information about novel environments
- Quickly develop useful mental models of foreign situations

Developing a Global Mindset

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1. Improve self-awareness
2. Compare mental models with those of people in other cultures
3. Develop better knowledge of people and cultures – especially through immersion

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3



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