

Lecture 7/8, Jan 23, 2023

Perception

- How we understand other people and situations
- We study perception because we want to understand how others perceive us
 - People base their actions on their perception of reality rather than reality itself
- Establishing a good first impression opens opportunities – we want others to perceive us positively
 - e.g. dressing up for interviews
- Includes 3 components; all of these influence how we perceive
 - Perceiver
 - * People have stereotypes and biases and different moods
 - * We focus on our biases, fears and emotions rather than the entire situation
 - Situation
 - * Depending on the situation, we observe different cues about the target and understand different things
 - * We pay more attention when the context doesn't match the target
 - Target
 - * The person and all the cues they're given off

Social Identity Theory

- We want others to know our social identity; our personal identities are kept to ourselves
 - Personal identity is based on our unique characteristics (e.g. interest)
 - Social identity is based on our perception that we belong to various social groups (e.g. gender)
 - These help us answer “who am I?”
- We form perceptions of ourselves based on our personal characteristics and memberships in social categories
 - We categorize ourselves and others into in-groups and out-groups (people who we identify with and people who we don't)
- Social identity theory:
 1. We perceive ourselves and others as embodying the most typical attributes of a category (“prototypes”)
 2. We form perceptions of others based on their membership in social categories
 3. Social identities are relational and comparative
 4. People tend to perceive members of their own social categories more positively
- These factors all contribute to who we are