

# Perception Overview

**Degree Course (Three Years)**

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Definitions:

Perception: is a process by which an individual selects, organizes and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the environment. Differs from one person to another, depending on the needs, values and expectations. People respond to situations on the basis of their perception about the reality rather than reality itself.

(1) Perception includes all those process by which an individual receives information about his environment seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting & smelling. The study of these perceptual process shows that their functioning is affected by the three classes of variables - The objects or events being perceived, the environment in which perception occurs, and the individual during the perceiving.

(2) “Perceptual process” should be understood as the manner in which the first causal affect of existing objects on our senses becomes an object of our perceptual judgment.

(3) Perception is the process whereby stimuli are received & interpreted by the individual and translated into a response (Engel et.al, 1968).

(4) Perception is the entire process by which an individual becomes aware of his environment & interprets it so that it will fit into his own frame of reference (Walter, 1970).

(5) Perception is the process of becoming aware of situation of adding meaningful associations to sensation (Giliner & Halter, 1970).

(6) Perception can be defined as the process of receiving, selecting, organizing, interpreting, checking & reacting to sensory stimuli or data (Pareekh, et.al, 1981).

(7) Perception can be defined as a process by which individuals organize & interpret their sensory impression in order to give meaning to their environment (Stephen, 1989).

An analysis of these definitions reveal that:

1. Perception is the interpretation of the meaning of sensation.
2. Sensations are the constituents as raw materials of perception.
3. Whereas sensation is the first or at least the first conscious response born out of the stimuli, perception is the second response of the stimuli after sensation.
4. Perception refers to what is immediately experienced by an individual & it is a way in which the stimuli are interpreted.
5. Perception is a mental activity which acquaints us with situations by giving us direct knowledge of it.
6. Perception screens out that which an individual does not find relevant & involves not only the reception of physical stimuli but also the interpretation that an individual gives to the sensation he receive.
7. Perception is the direct response to the sensation & only an indirect response to the physical stimulus.
8. Individual actions, emotions, thoughts, feelings of ultimately his behaviour are set of in motion by a perception of his surrounding (Kumar, 1995:161).

All individual do not view the world in the same perspective. People see things differently & there are radical difference in which way people think & react.

Differences in perceptions should, not, however, lead to the misleading conception that the perceived world is a chaotic one (Kumar, 1995:163). It is rather an orderly world, in which perceiver discuss an interpretative meaning from the perceived object. It may be true that the some object may look clear & meaningless to one person, but it may be more meaningful, genuine or real to the one who perceives it to be so. Perception is thus formed in some orderly manner & can be studied systematically by the manager.

Theories of Perception: Two major theories that have shaped current thinking about perception are- (a) Gestalt theory of perception: - Gestalt contends that a whole object cannot be predicted simply by adding up our perceptions of the parts. The parts may, in fact, become unobservable when combined with other parts. The term “gestalt” means “whole form or configuration’. The Gestalt theory holds that we perceive form above all else. Other way in which it can be interpreted is simply “the whole adds up to more than the sum of its parts.” This theory contends that a whole object cannot be perceived simply by adding up our perceptions of its parts some of the parts may, in fact become unobservable when combined with other parts. Gestalt psychology Postulates that the whole is different from the sum of its part. Hence, when several objects are present in visual field, we tend to perceive a fine form only, leaving the rest. In other words, when several objects are present in the visual field, we tend to perceive them organized into patterns or growing according to proximity, similarity & continuity. A very good example could be seen in arrangement of the McDonald’s jingle “You are the one” which change in different versions of the commercial. It may be played fast & bouncy or in a slow balled style, it is sometime sung by a single vocalist.; Sometimes by a group, sometimes presented in an instrumental. But whatever form it takes, consumers usually recognize it as a familiar tune song for McDonalds. Or in Gestalt terms the form, we perceive remains constant ever though specific points may be change. Hence, Gestalt approach is considered especially useful in understanding how individuals process perceptions data into meaningful wholes (Berkman & Gilson, 2003). A contemporary branch of philosophy that deals with perception, phenomenology carries this view one step further. Phenomenologist assert that deep medicating can bring is to eidetic reduction that is, a perception of the most basic qualities of a form; these feature alone allow an object to be perceived as itself. This principle seems evident ever in the evolution of corporate logos. Sine “lower order variables” - color, single tones and the live can change without affecting our perception of form must be based on “higher order variables.” Certain laws of organizations emerge from Gestalt experiments. When visual stimuli are ambiguous, that is capable of being interpreted in two or more way, these laws determine perception of shape.

- Area:- The smaller a closed region, The more it tends to be seen as figure.
- Anonymity :- Dots or objects that are close together tend to be grouped together.
- Closed ness:- Areas with closed contours tend to be seen as figures more than do those with open contours.

- **Symmetry:-** The more symmetrical a closed region, the more it tends to be seen as a figure.
- **Good Continuation:-** That arrangement of figures and ground tends to be seen that will show the fewest changes or interruptions in straight or smoothly arriving lines or contours.

Hence three aspects of organization of perception are-

**(a) Figure and ground :-** It is supposed to be the most basic form in organization of perception. It is a distinction of a central object from the surroundings i.e. the ability of an individual to distinguish an object from its general back ground, which is basic to “Form Perception”. Therefore, according to this concept perceived objects stand out as separable from their general background. The figure seems to be well defined, at a definite location, solid, and in front of the ground. In contrast, the ground seems to be indefinite, shapeless and continuous behind the figure. The common outline of the Figure and the Ground appears to belong to the figure rather than to the ground

**(b) Grouping:** Gestalt psychology postulates that the whole is different from the sum of its parts. In a situation presenting a set of figures, an individual is not content with the mass of unrecognized figures. He devises and perceives a fine form only, leaving the rest. In other words, when several objects are present in visual field, we tend to perceive a fine form only, leaving the rest. In other words, when several objects are present in the visual field, we tend to perceive them as organized into patterns or grouping, according to proximity, similarity and continuity.

**(c) Proximity:** The principle of proximity also referred to as the principle of nearness suggests that the objects which are nearer to each other are grouped together. We notice a row of small dots grouped from lower left to upper right. In an organization several group of employees are identified as a single group because of the principle of proximity. Similarly, people sitting in one room or coming from the same place or working on a same machine are perceived to be belonging to the same and one group. Taking the clue of this principle the Japanese management style insists on wearing the same type of clothes, same layout and furniture in the office and having meals together at the work place for all levels of employees, so that the whole organization is perceived as one single entity and the sense of belongingness in the workers is enhanced.

**(d) Similarity:-** The principle of similarity of familiarity clarifies that the greater the similarity of the stimuli, the greater is the possibility of being perceived as a common group or whole.

Any two objects similar in any way e. g. figure, shape, size or colour etc. have the tendency of being perceived as a group. Similarity is conceptually related to proximity but generally similarity predominates proximity. **(e) Continuity:-** The principle of continuity states that one will tend to perceive continuous lines of patterns because an individual sees only obvious lines and fails to have some creative thinking.

**(f) Closure:-** The Principle of closure is almost similar to principle of continuity. This principle states that if the stimulus pattern is incomplete, the perceiver tends to fill in missing elements.