

HOW
ARE YOU
PERCEIVED



Perception Management Techniques

HOW TO CORRECT NEGATIVE OR INCORRECT PERCEPTION

Heart & Mind of a Leader | May 1, 2016

What is perception?

Perception is essentially how one sees, thinks, or understands another person or situation from their own point of view based on interaction with or observation of a specific person or situation.

Why perception is such an important part of a leadership and personal development?

Have you ever met someone for the very first time and after speaking with that person as well as observing how he or she acts around you and other people, you had created your own personality and behavior profile of this person in your mind? That is exactly how perception is created, whether it is accurate or inaccurate.

The reason why it is so important to make sure other people have accurate perception of you is, because, you want for your actual personality traits to be known and understood, as well as your true intentions to be taken into account when important business or promotional decisions are being made and based on facts versus inaccurate perception that other people may have about you. Additionally, incorrect perception creates tension and sometimes negativity, which may lead to negative effect and reduction in overall productivity of a business.

Why do we do it? Why do we create potentially incorrect perception of someone based on our observations versus simply speaking with a person in question and asking questions to learn more about them and to address our perception concerns?

In most situations we are simply afraid or uncomfortable in approaching another person whether it is our colleague or business leader with no specific reason at all. Instead, many people choose to fall back on their original perception as their reality, whether it is accurate or not. That is how incorrect perception of you or someone else is created.

Now let's look at perception of you in the eyes of others (ex. Your colleagues, clients, business partners, etc.). How would you feel if someone had a negative or incorrect perception of you? I am sure that it would not be a very good or positive feeling to have. I've been there and know that it's very uncomfortable to be viewed from incorrect perception, especially if you are unaware of the misperception and unable to address it right away.

How does one learn about and address incorrect perception of himself or herself and what is Perception Management?

Steps that one may take in order to learn about his or her perception:

1. Ask for open and honest feedback about you from your colleagues, business leaders, employees during the business meetings and/or individual meeting sessions
 - a. Be open to and willing to receive direct and constructive feedback during these sessions. It is one of the most important steps in successful feedback uncovering.
 - b. Do not interrupt or try to address incorrect perception with the person speaking during the meeting
 - c. Encourage additional and detailed feedback
 - d. Take notes of the information that is being shared with you
2. Conduct regular feedback sessions in order to encourage continuous feedback for you
 - a. This could be a quick 15-30 min sessions held once per month, or whatever time frequency works best in your situation
3. When you are meeting with your business leader, employee, or colleague for the very first time, you may discuss your preferred communication and leadership styles, and at the same time encourage an open feedback from the person you are speaking with to be shared with you in the future

What are the ways to an effective perception management?

1. Focus on the feedback received versus your ego
2. Do not react negatively to the constructive feedback shared with you by others when it comes to incorrect perception
3. Be open and willing to receive negative feedback
4. Ask for clarification or examples for an additional clarity and to make sure you are focusing on addressing the perception shared with you versus the one you thought that you've heard
5. Do not interrupt another person while they are sharing their perception with you, instead take good and detailed notes
6. After you had received the feedback from an individual or a group, then address incorrect perception with them by sharing your true intentions or specific behavior(s) observed
7. Thank the person or group for sharing their valuable feedback with you and encourage open feedback going forward
8. Set up regular feedback sessions with your group or individually in order to show your commitment to an open communication

9. Always be mindful of the perception of yourself that you may be giving out to others to ensure that perception shared is the perception that is intended to be shared
10. Act on addressing incorrect perception after it was shared with you and explain to the individual or a group who shared the feedback on how you are planning to address specific perception behavior observed
11. Ask others for help in addressing and overcoming your areas of opportunity
12. Before you take a particular action, think about how your action can be perceived by the person or group who is a recipient of such action or information
13. Do not assume that everyone receives the correct perception of you and the one you intend to give. Ask for feedback.
14. Smile more often, regardless how overwhelm or busy you may be
15. Spend some time interacting with you employees daily. It does not have to be long, just few minutes per day.
16. Be available for questions and feedback. Keep your office door open, when at all possible.
17. Leave your personal problems or worries at home, do not bring them with you to your place of business
18. Lead by example. Don't ask your employees to do something, unless you are willing to do it yourself, when needed.

