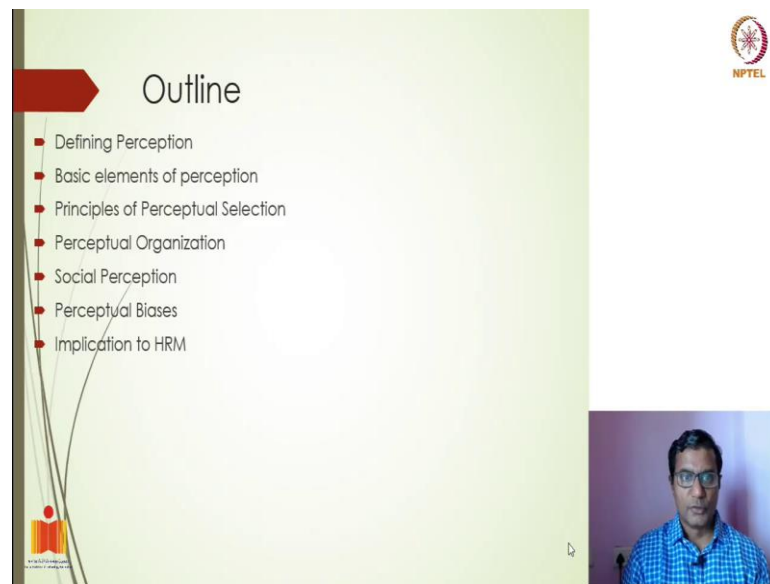


Organizational Behaviour - an Introduction
Dr. M. P. Ganesh
Department of Liberal Arts
Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad

Lecture – 06
Perception – Part 1

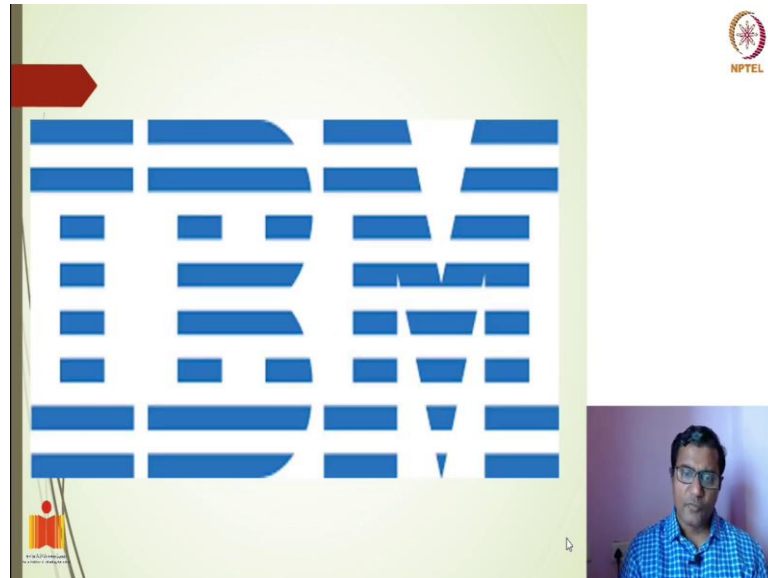
Hello all, I welcome you to this lecture series on Organizational Behaviour. Today, we are going to look at a very interesting topic which is Perception.



The slide features a light green background with a dark red arrow pointing right at the top left. The title 'Outline' is centered at the top. Below it is a list of seven topics, each preceded by a small red square bullet point. In the bottom right corner, there is a small video inset showing a man with glasses and a blue checkered shirt. The NPTEL logo is visible in the top right corner of the slide area.

- Defining Perception
- Basic elements of perception
- Principles of Perceptual Selection
- Perceptual Organization
- Social Perception
- Perceptual Biases
- Implication to HRM

So, this is going to be the outline of this second chapter which is on perception. We will look at each of these topics elaborately in detail. So, this entire chapter, I will break it down into different sections of videos which are 20 to 30 minutes in length. So, broadly in this chapter we are going to look at the technicalities of perception as a process and also the idea of social perception, or how perception has an impact in social relationships or in social behaviour especially in organizational behaviour.

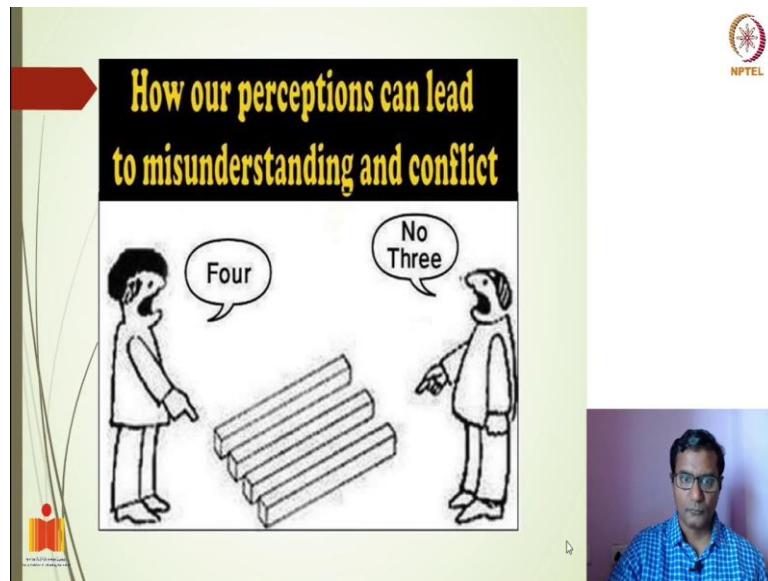


So, many of us would have heard of this term perception. We will in a very day-to-day normal conversation, use this word perception. So, what is perception? Just have a look at this slide, what do you see in this slide? You see IBM is not it? Many of us will be able to see this name IBM, which is a brand name.

But what actually is there in this slide? There are just blue horizontal lines, they are not even connected. But in spite of just blue horizontal lines in this slide, we are able to make sense out of or we are able to give meaning to these lines, and read particular alphabets, and also understand it as a company's name; IBM's name. Many of you would have heard of this company IBM ok.

And also maybe this idea of IBM will also trigger many thought process also in some of us, maybe you would have had a computer which is IBM made, or the history of IBM if you would have you know studied the history of IBM or case study on IBM in your principles of management course, many thought process might follow.

A simple thing like this horizontal blue horizontal lines has so much of meaning or you know as individuals we give so much of meaning to these physical stimuli. So, this is what is perception. In fact, if you are a psychology student, you would have studied perception as a chapter in your Introduction to Psychology Course.



So, perception in very simple words is giving meaning to sensory stimulus which means there is a sensory stimulus or there is an outside stimulus to which we try to make sense out of it, and also give meaning to it ok. So, this is what is perception.

For example, let us say you are walking in the road, and there is a loud noise which you hear, which captures your attention. So, how would you interpret this noise? Let us say if it is a busy road in a summer afternoon – hot summer afternoon, you will interpret it as probably you know some bus would have got punctured ok.

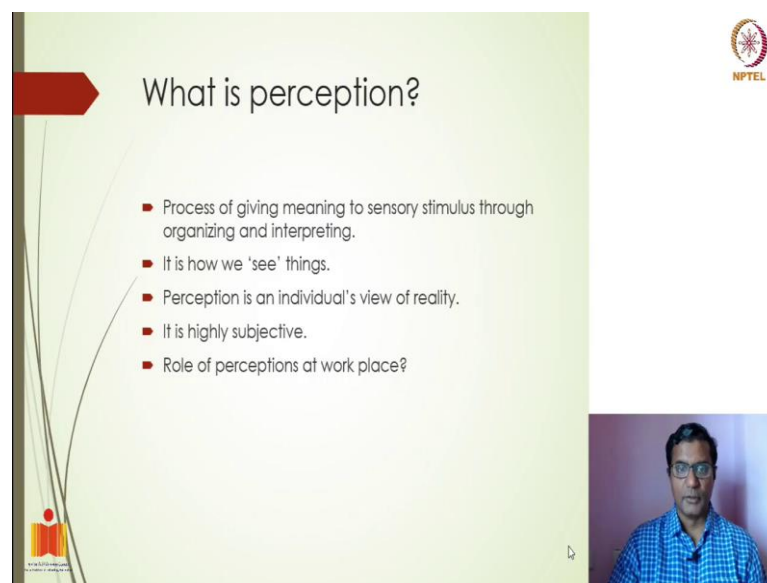
Similarly, vis-a-vis you know you are in a place where there are lot of tension; political tension or a communal tension, you would interpret it as you know some unwanted happening or a bomb blast something like that ok. And if nothing else, you would interpret it as some accident ok. So, the same incident based on our previous experience and also context, we interpret this in different ways. This is what is perception. So, perception is highly subjective.

And when I say subjective it varies from one person to another person. So, in simple words, it is a person's understanding of reality ok. And for each one of us the understanding of reality varies depending on different factors like I said your background, your experience, your stage in life, your understanding of the context and things like that.

So, why this idea of perception is very important to understand? One, since perception is highly subjective it can lead to miscommunication. For example, in this particular slide,

one person says there are three blocks, another person says there are four blocks. In fact, both of them are wrong, because this is an optical illusion, and both of them are right in their own way.

So, having this subjective understanding of reality can lead to misunderstanding, miscommunication, and in extreme cases conflict also. So, that is why understanding perception becomes very important in both socio-psychology context or and also in organizational behaviour context.



The slide features a light green background with a dark red arrow pointing right at the top left. The title 'What is perception?' is centered at the top. Below the title is a bulleted list of five points. In the bottom right corner, there is a small video inset showing a man with glasses and a blue checkered shirt speaking. The NPTEL logo is in the top right corner, and a small book icon is in the bottom left corner.

What is perception?

- Process of giving meaning to sensory stimulus through organizing and interpreting.
- It is how we 'see' things.
- Perception is an individual's view of reality.
- It is highly subjective.
- Role of perceptions at work place?

So, this is the definition of perception. Perception is process of giving meaning to sensory stimulus through organizing and interpreting it. We will talk about how we organize sensory stimulus and how we interpret it there are some theories associated with these terms like organizing and interpreting especially in psychology.

And the second statement perception is how we see things, which means each one of us see the reality in a different way. There is nothing like objective reality, I mean this is one way of explaining you know objectivity and subjectivity.

So, in some philosophical theories, people say that there is nothing like true reality, it is all how it is perceived by different people. For example, let us say you look at a flower ok, you look at a pink rose, rose flower. What do you see in this flower or what is the colour of the flower?

Many people will agree it is pink in colour ok, but the level of pink varies from or the perception of the level of pink varies from one person to another. In fact, what you see is not pink, what you see is reflection of light with a certain wavelength from that particular object ok.

So, in that sense you know the reality of what is this as a colour depends on the wavelength of the colour and how your retinal capacity to grasp the wavelength ok. So, even in a biological sense objective reality is a very tricky idea ok. So, let us not get into philosophical arguments of is there a true reality or not, but what I am trying to say is we all see things differently ok. And in the idea of reality is very questionable. And each one of us see something as real in different ways ok.

I will give you an example. Let us say you are walking in your office corridor ok. And in one of those offices which is covered with a glass door, two people are talking in a very emotional way or you know they are like very they are talking in a very serious way with lot of hand movements, gestures, facial expression and things like that. How would you interpret it?

Some people may interpret as you know these two people are fighting. Especially, if you know them those two people one person is a boss and another person is a subordinate. So, you will interpret it as the boss is shouting at the subordinate ok; or if you do not know them, you will interpret it as two friends fighting ok.

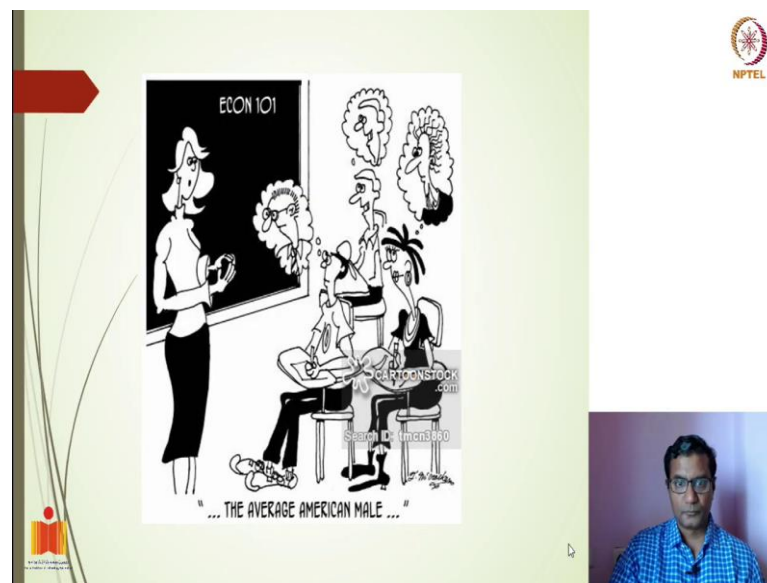
Let us say since it is an office context, you interpret it as disagreement between two people ok. But in reality they might be discussing about the movie which they saw last evening, and they were like you know discussing, or they are in a very you know intense way they are trying to argue about what they liked and things like that ok. So, it can be.

So, the same phenomena the reality is what we perceive it as reality ok. Unless and until we go and verify it. So, it is very subjective. And also you know especially in workplace, perceptions are very important.

Why because, or understanding that perceptions are subjective and objective realities can be questionable, this understanding is very important in workplace context especially if you are a manager. Why because, you will know that people may understand the same

thing in different way and that can lead to miscommunication and misinterpretation. And there is a possibility that this can lead to conflict.

But again these differences in terms of perception, perception being a subjective thing, is not a bad thing at all. In fact, if as a manager if you use it wisely, it will help you bring in diverse ideas, it will help you bring in creative ideas from different perspectives, and it will help make decisions in a better way, in a holistic way. So, understanding perceptions at workplace is very important for a manager.



So, even in a classroom context, you have to be very careful about using certain ideas or certain concepts because each one in the class will understand it differently. A very simple thing like average American male or let us say Indian. You know who is an Indian, how will you visualize an Indian in India? India is such a diverse country, you cannot call one prototype or one image as Indian ok.

The slide features a title 'Basic elements of perception' in a large, dark font. Below the title is a bulleted list of sub-processes: Selection and screening of information, Organization of stimuli, and Sub-processes of perception. The sub-processes are further detailed as Stimulus, Registration, Interpretation, Feedback, and Consequence (the response). The slide includes a red arrow graphic on the left, a small logo in the bottom left corner, and the NPTEL logo in the top right corner. A small video inset in the bottom right corner shows a man with glasses and a blue checkered shirt speaking.

So, now we are moving to the elements of perception, the technicalities of perception. In psychology, if you are a psychology student, you would have heard of Gestalt theory. Gestalt theory is a group of or Gestalt school is a group of thought theories which are framed by a certain school of psychologists, which means it is an idea that people make sense out of things by selecting certain elements of reality and combine them together and make meaning out of them.

One famous phrase or one famous statement in Gestalt theory is the sum is greater than the sorry the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. So, there might be individual parts when they come together and people look at it in a certain way, they make sense out of it as a holistic image ok. So, I repeat the whole is greater than sum of its parts the whole is greater than the sum of the parts ok. So, according to Gestalt theory or Gestalt's school of thought perception involves selection and screening information.

The first step, so these are the steps in perception. The first step is we select and screen information. The second step is once we select and screen information, we organize them depending on our need and experience. The first two steps I will explain.

Let us say you know you are in a busy today in a classroom you are sitting and listening to the teacher ok. let us say you are very attentive; you know you are listening to the teacher. Apart from the teacher talking there might be various other stimuli which will be physical stimuli which will be happening around you. And your body is like bombarded or your sensory parts are bombarded by this stimuli.

So, let us say you have the fan swirling, you know noise from the next class, the people in the next bench talking, you know tube light flickering both you know many forms, and also you are feeling hungry, you know many stimuli might be happening around you.

And you may not pay attention to all those stimuli, it is not just in classroom you know in throughout our life you know we are bombarded by we are we come into interaction with many such stimuli, but we would not attend to all the stimuli, because if you do that, you will become mad. So, we will select only few which are important at that particular point in time.

For example, the teacher is you know explaining the concept, you are listening, and you would not even notice the fan is running or the fan is working in the class. But suddenly there is a power cut ok, the fan stops. After 10 minutes, you will feel warm, and then you will notice the fan is not working. And then again you will switch off from this whether fan is working or not, and then you are attending to the teacher.

But suddenly you will pay attention when the power comes back, you know the fan will start moving, so you will know that you know the power has come. So, till a certain point you never paid attention to the fan running, but at certain point it became important to you.

And then again you will notice when it started working again you will notice that it is working ok. So, we do it very automatically is not it? We do not use lot of energy, mental energy to do all these things, it all happens very automatically. So, this is what is selection and screening. We select and screen based on the importance of that particular stimuli and the context.

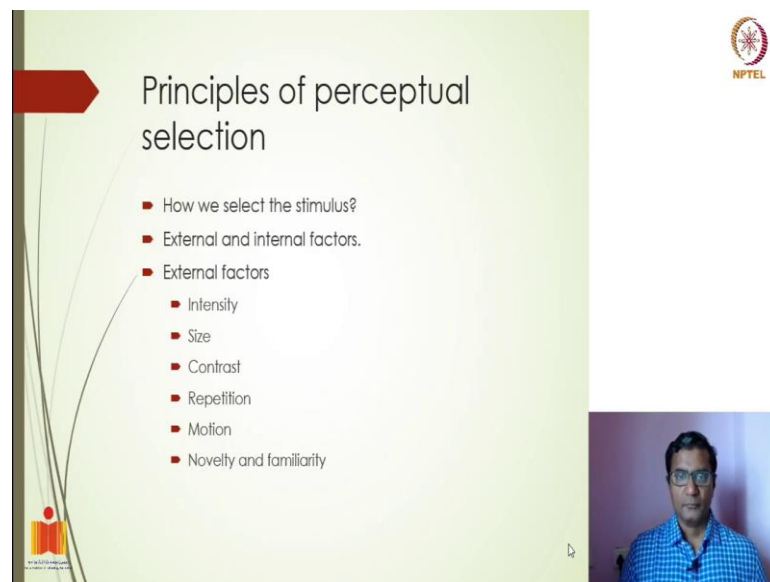
And then once we have the stimuli different, we select and screen that information we organize it ok. So, let us say there is a power cut you know you suddenly felt warm; and then after some time there is a small noise which is like the power coming back or the generator running. So, all these bits and pieces of information you organize them together and try to make sense out of it. You will create a story out of it. You will try to understand what happened ok. Now, the power is gone; so the fan has stopped; it is becoming hot, and you know now the generator is started. We can expect the fan to run in some time, and then we will feel comfortable ok, this is how we organize and organize different stimuli.

Meanwhile, you will also listen to the teacher; it is not like you know you would not listen to the teacher. So, everything happens simultaneously ok. So, the sub process of perception involves a stimulus.

So, stimulus is singular; stimuli is plural. So, there is a stimulus. And if it is important, if it is attractive, you will pay attention to it and that will get registered in your mind, you will interpret it, and then you seek feedback or you give feedback, and there is a consequence ok.

I will explain it with an example. Like I said you are walking in the road and suddenly there is a noise, it is a very attractive noise or it is something which is very different. So, you register it, you try to interpret it what it means. Let us say if you do not understand it, you look around, you ask people or you will try to you know get more information, and then you respond accordingly.

Let us say if you think there is a transformer or an electric transformer burst, you will not go there ok; vis-a-vis if there is a punctured tire of a bus you do not care much after that ok. So, this is how sub-process of perception happens ok.



The slide features a light green background with a red arrow pointing right at the top left. The title 'Principles of perceptual selection' is centered. Below it is a bulleted list:

- How we select the stimulus?
- External and internal factors.
- External factors
 - Intensity
 - Size
 - Contrast
 - Repetition
 - Motion
 - Novelty and familiarity

In the top right corner, there is a circular logo with a star and the text 'NPTEL'. In the bottom right corner, there is a small video inset showing a man with glasses and a blue checkered shirt speaking.

So, when I said in the in the previous slide, we said you know we pay attention to only certain stimulus; it is not like all the stimulus which is there around us we will pay attention to it. We select stimulus and then interpret them based on its importance. So, the selection of stimulus or what stimulus we will choose among various other stimuli around us depends on many factors.

Primarily, we can classify those factors into external and internal factors. So, external factors mean factors related either to that particular stimuli a particular stimulus itself or the context or so that is external stimulus. Internal stimulus is because of things within us, because there is some need within you or because you are interested in it, you choose certain stimulus over others.

So, why we choose or pay attention only to certain stimulus? Depends on many factors, and these factors can be classified into internal and external factors. Now, we look at external factors or factors associated with the stimulus itself.

So, let us say you are walking in the road in a busy you know market road, there will be like lot of light around you, there will be noises around you, it will be like you know lot of people talking walking you know announcements, traffic jam, you know horn of vehicles, there will be lot of things around you ok.

So, what will capture your attention? Let us take only based on the external factors or what are the external factors which will decide whether a particular stimulus will attract you or not. Let us say you are walking suddenly there is a huge billboard with lot of light – colourful light, you will notice it.

In fact, that is the whole point of keeping those big billboards or you know big banners, the intensity of the stimulus you know lot of light, or there is some music, loud noise or announcement which was made in a loud manner. So, it will capture your attention intensity of the stimulus.

Two, size of the stimulus. Let us say the size of stimulus is very large, you would have seen you know in advertisements, you would have seen big balloons, you know shops using very huge balloons to advertise their brand. So, because these big things attract our attention. The third element or the characteristics of a stimulus which can seek our attention is contrast.

Contrasts means there are two extreme things at the same time ok. For example, you know in billboards in large billboards with lot of light, you see contradicting colours or there will be a red and a blue, or a red and white light which is like moving, so that is contrast. Contrast means two different or extreme extremely different stimuli coming together, either colour or music or whatever.

The fourth point is repetition. Repetition means if something appears in a very repetitive manner, it seeks our attention. For example, many of these advertisements in TV; you get them you know very frequently. Why because things which come very repetitively seek our attention, or attract our attention.

The next point is motion. If something moves, if something you know if some stimulus is like moves in a uniform pattern, then it seeks our attention. Same you know serial light in advertisements like you see those lights used for advertisements which move in a certain manner, the idea is to attract customer attention.

And then the last point is novelty and familiarity. Sometimes novel things attract our attention, and sometimes familiar things also attract our attention. For example, you are walking in the road and you see a new model bike, so that is like you know some foreign made bike two-wheeler – motorbike; it will seek your attention you know because you have never seen it in India, and suddenly you saw you see it in the road you look at it to see and understand what is this model, and what is this brand.

Similarly, familiarity, for example, if you have a particular kind of a motorbike or you know you have a particular kind of apparel shirt or a T-shirt. If somebody wears the same thing, it will obviously, attract your attention ok. So, these are some of the factors related to the stimulus itself which leads. So, which leads to people getting attracted to those stimuli.

Principles of perceptual selection

- Internal factors
 - Habit
 - Motivation and interest
 - Learning
 - Organizational role and specialization

NPTEL

Small inset video of a man in a blue checkered shirt.

In terms of internal factors, factors related to the person itself. What are the factors which influences whether we will select a particular stimulus or not? The first factor is habit. Habit means you are habituated to something you know you are you been doing it for many years, and even without conscious effort you will do it.

For example, people who smoke. So, even without much thought process, they will crave for smoking. Or people who jog when it becomes a habit you have been doing it for many years, it happens even with less you know cognitive effort, and it becomes a necessity for you ok. So, if you are habituated to something, objects related to that will seek your attention ok.

For example, if you are a cyclist; a cycle enthusiast you would have this hobby of doing cycling for long distance. Whenever you walk through a road you will you know when there is an advertisement on bicycles or you know sports bicycles, it will seek your attention ok. Or if you are a motorcycle enthusiast, so whenever you walk outside you know the particular brand which you would like you will you know look at it and pay attention to it, so that is habit.

Motivation and interest, something which you are interested in, similar to habit, something which you are motivated. For example, if you are very thirsty at that particular point in time. So, this thirst will drive you to look for or when there is an advertisement on a cold drink, or you know maybe a beverage, you will pay attention to it, because there is a need which you have at that particular point in time.

Third is learning many a times we are learn to seek certain information. For example, if you are a very spiritual person, you will seek or you know when you walk out you look you know when there is a temple or a worshipping place or a mosque or a church, it will seek your attention. When you look it will attract your attention. You will pay attention to it.

And also the fourth point in organizational context is based on your organizational role and specialization certain stimuli will attract your attention. For example, if there is a report, if I am a HR manager I will look for certain information; if I am a marketing manager I will look for certain information will seek my attention. If I am a finance person you know I will look for financial information. So, you know the kind of information we look for varies from our role and specialization ok.

So, I will stop here. So, what did we see today we looked at what is perception and why it is important to understand this idea of perception, especially in work context. And we also looked at the different stages of perception, or what are the different levels in which perception happens, different steps in perception.

And then we also looked at selection of a stimuli, what factors contribute to selection of a particular stimulus when there are many stimuli around us. So, we classify them into internal and external factors. So, internal factors are factors associated to the individual himself or herself. External factors are factors associated with the stimuli itself ok.

So, I will stop here. As an exercise, I would like you to think about a particular instance where this differences of perception has led to problem either an interpersonal problem or a confusion within yourself. Interpersonal problem means between two people, maybe between you and your friend, or between you and your parent, between you and your boss.

So, these differences in perception it would have caused some problem between two of you. So, think about it or for you also you have misinterpreted something and you got confused ok. So, think about such situation and try to understand what happened, and how did you resolve it, if you have resolved it ok.

So, I will stop here. Have a nice time, and we will meet in the next lecture.