

3.5: Glossary

Affect Dealing with a person's feelings toward the person or object.

Attitude A predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable way to objects or persons in one's environment.

Attribution biases Covers both the fundamental attribution error and the self-serving bias.

Attribution theory Concerns the process by which an individual interprets events as being caused by a particular part of a relatively stable environment.

Behavioral justification The need to ensure that one's behaviors are consistent with their attitudes toward the event.

Body language The manner in which people express their inner feelings subconsciously through physical actions such as sitting up straight versus being relaxed or looking people straight in the eye versus looking away from people.

Cognitive consistency The need for behavioral justification to ensure that a person's behaviors are consistent with their attitudes toward an event.

Cognitive dissonance Finding one's self acting in a fashion that is inconsistent with their attitudes and experiencing tension and attempting to reduce this tension and return to a state of cognitive consistency.

Dispositional approach Argues that attitudes represent relatively stable predispositions to respond to people or situations around them.

Fundamental attribution error The tendency to *underestimate* the effects of external or situational causes of behavior and to *overestimate* the effects of internal or personal causes.

Halo effect The influence of positive arbitrary biases.

Job involvement Refers to the extent to which a person is interested in and committed to assigned tasks.

Job satisfaction A pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience.

Organizational commitment Represents the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in an organization.

Perception The process by which one screens, selects, organizes, and interprets stimuli to give them meaning.

Perceptual defense A defense that perceives emotionally disturbing or threatening stimuli as having a higher recognition threshold than neutral stimuli. Such stimuli are likely to elicit substitute perceptions that are radically altered so as to prevent recognition of the presented stimuli that arouse emotional reactions even though the stimuli are not recognized.

Perceptual organization When meaning has been attached to an object, individuals are in a position to determine an appropriate response or reaction to it.

Perceptual selectivity Refers to the process by which individuals select objects in the environment for attention.

Response disposition The tendency to recognize familiar objects more quickly than unfamiliar ones.

Response salience The tendency to focus on objects that relate to our *immediate* needs or wants.

Selective perception The process by which we systematically screen out information we don't wish to hear, focusing instead on more salient information.

Self-serving bias The tendency for individuals to attribute success on an event or project to their own actions while attributing failure to others.

Situational approach This approach argues that attitudes emerge as a result of the uniqueness of a given situation.

Social perception Consists of those processes by which we perceive other people. **Social-information-processing approach** Asserts that attitudes result from "socially constructed realities" as perceived by the individual.

Stereotyping A tendency to assign attributes to people solely on the basis of their class or category.

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