Intrapersonal Communication

“Whether you think you can or think you can’t --you are right.” Henry Ford

In order to **successfully** communicate with others you must first learn to communicate with yourself. Intrapersonal communication is the most basic level of communication. You must understand who you are and what you think of yourself.

**Self-talk** is the inner speech that includes the questions and comments you make to yourself. It is a powerful influence. You use it when you:

- Think things through
- interpret events
- interpret messages of others
- respond to your own experiences
- respond to your interaction with others

Research has shown that **positive** self-talk increases focus, concentration and performance.

**Perception Process**

The process you use to assign **meaning** to data about yourself or the world around you is called perception. People seldom share precisely the same perceptions because we are **unique**.

**Three Steps Involved in Perception**

1. **Sensory** perception - the physical process of taking in data through the senses.

2. **Selective** perception - mental process of choosing which data or stimuli to focus on from all that are available to you at any given time.

The following can influence your selections:

- **Intensity** the more intense or dramatic the stimulus, the more likely we are to notice it.
- **Repetition** like dripping faucets, ticking clocks, advertising messages etc.
- **Uniqueness** things that are new, unusual, unexpected & unique are often noticed.
- **Relevance** noticing things that mirror our own interests, needs & motivations.

To manage selective perception you should:

1. Stay alert
2. Make **conscious choices** about what is important data.
3. Screen out **distractions & noise** that may interfere with concentration.
4. Monitor the way you select data and improve your weaknesses.
3. Personal perception - your own understanding of reality. It becomes the basis for your judgments and decisions you make. It also determines appropriateness of your communication choices.

Factors that influence personal perception:

- **Values** reflect your priorities and what you think is important
- **Beliefs** what one believes to be true that often helps you decide what to accept or reject
- **Culture** family, community, or organizations to which you belong
- **Bias** consistent attitude, viewpoint or pattern of perception
- **Prejudice** preconceived judgment (to pre-judge on opinion rather than facts)
- **Attitudes** power influences that can be positive or negative
- **Expectations** basing a judgment on what is expected rather than what actually happened
- **Knowledge** what you know influences how you organize & interpret information.
- **Communication Skills** if lacking in part of the communication process may have difficulty in understanding and being understood.

Analyzing perceptions

Two people in the same room can have completely different perceptions of the same event. Varying perceptions can cause **conflict** and **misunderstandings**. To overcome this you must continually check your own perceptions and make sure they are accurate.

Perception check - are questions that help you determine the accuracy and validity of your perceptions.

Key - Never assume that what you perceive as the truth is the actual, absolute truth.

Intrapersonal perception check:

- question your **sensory** perception
- question your **selective** perception
- question your **personal** perception

Interpersonal perception check:

- **clarify** your perception of others messages.
- **analyze** others' points of view
- Take **responsibility** for your own communication.
**Self-Concept** is self-perception or the view you have of yourself. It is the person you **think** you are, formed in your **beliefs** and **attitudes**. It is influenced by how **others** see you, how you were in your **past**, are **today**, and would like to be in the future.

It is made of many dimensions:

- **Real** self - your “core” self; who you really are.
- **Perceived** self - who you see yourself to be.
- **Ideal** self - who you want to be now or in the future.
- **Public** self - the self you freely disclose to others or in public situations.
- **Private** self - the self you do not share with others; who you are in private.
- **Professional** self - who you are in your job or profession.
- **Social** self - who you are when you interact with other individuals, groups, in society, or in social situations.
- **Intellectual** self - who you are as a student and a learner; the part of you that acquires and uses knowledge.
- **Emotional** self - the part of you that processes feelings.
- **Physical** self - who you are physically; including the concept of your own body, athletic ability, gracefulness and coordination, level of attractiveness, physical health and well-being.
- **Artistic** self - the part of you that is creative or artistic.

Factors that influence your self-concept:

- how you **perceive** that you are seen and treated by others
- your own **expectations** & the **standards** that you set for yourself
- how you **compare** yourself to others

Self-concept lays the foundation for your communication with others one to one, in groups, or one-to-group.

Building a positive self-concept

- can give you **confidence** you need to communicate effectively
- must draw from your **strengths**
- must know where you need to **improve**
- set goals for **change**

**Self-fulfilling prophecy** - a prediction or expectation of an event that shapes your behavior, making the outcome more likely to occur.

- It comes from your own self-concept and the expectations you establish for yourself.
- It also comes from what you think others expect of you.

**Self-disclosure** is the deliberate revelation of significant information about yourself that is not readily apparent to others. It can be tricky because it can either be appropriate or inappropriate for a particular time, place or circumstance.

- Must know what facts, opinion, or feelings are appropriate to reveal under circumstances.
- Consider the purpose of self-disclosure and your communication goals.
The Johari Window is a four part diagram communicators use to identify what they know about themselves and others. It is helpful for analyzing and evaluating the effectiveness of your communication.

1. **Open**
   - Known to Self
   - Not Known to Self
   - Known to Others
   - Not Known to Others
   - It is called open because many of a person’s behaviors, motivations, feelings, likes, and dislikes are openly communicated to others.

2. **Blind**
   - Known to Self
   - Not Known to Self
   - Known to Others
   - Not Known to Others
   - You are blind to what others perceive about you. Feedback can make you aware of this information, but you may or may not decide to adapt or change.

3. **Hidden**
   - Known to Self
   - Not Known to Self
   - Not Known to Others
   - It represents the things you know or believe about yourself but that you do not choose to share with others.

4. **Unknown**
   - Known to Self
   - Not Known to Self
   - Not Known to Others
   - Things that neither you nor others know or acknowledge. It could be subconscious fears or things you do not remember.