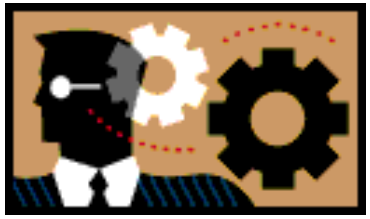
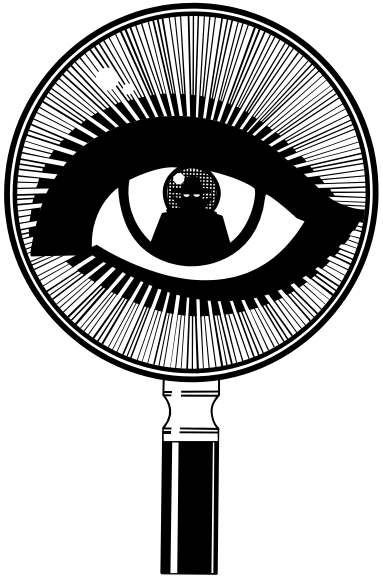
Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Principles of Managing Tourism Organisations (POMTO)
People & Organisations (P&O)



Perception and Communication

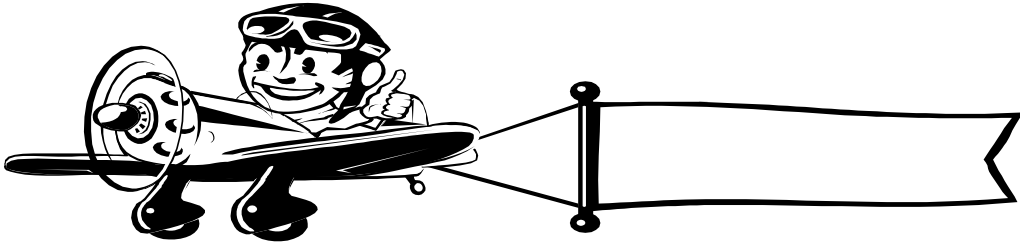


Last time we....

1. Identified the nature and scope of change
2. Discussed the forces favouring change and the targets of change in contemporary organisations
3. Identified the change strategies used by managers
4. Explained why people resist change and describe strategies to overcome resistance

Today's Objectives

1. To explain the nature of the perceptual process and its importance in determining workplace attitudes and behaviour.
2. To examine internal and external factors that help help give people meaning
3. To examine the stimuli and perceptual illusions
4. To assess the importance of selection and attention, organisation and judgement
5. To identify problems and difficulties in perceiving other people and non-verbal communications
6. To review the importance for managers of an understanding of perception and communication.



Before we begin, a word from our sponsors.....

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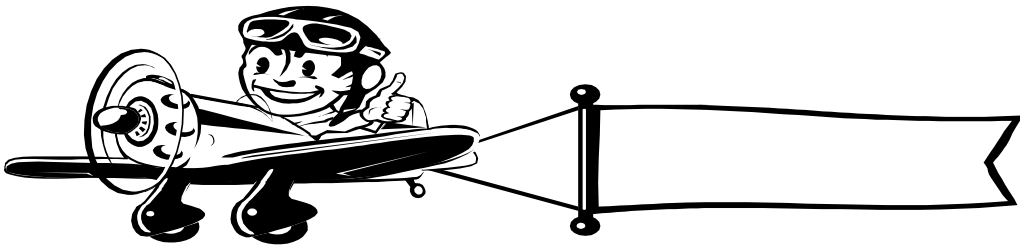


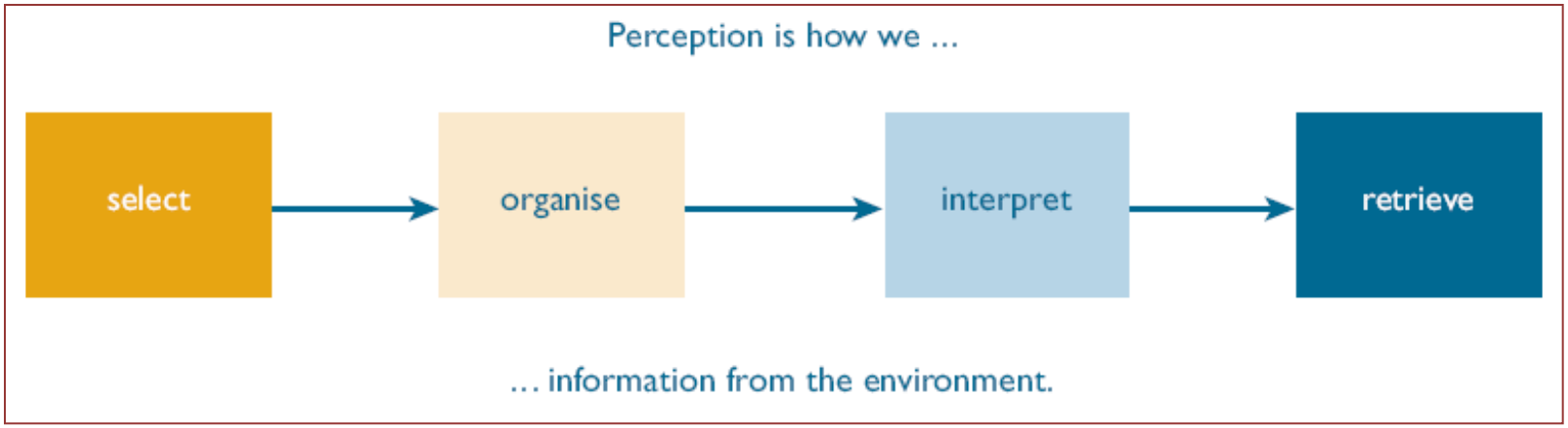
How does Darth's view of the situation differ from reality?

Perception

The dynamic and complex way, in which individuals select information (stimuli) from the environment, interpret and translate it, so that a meaning is assigned that will result in a pattern of behaviour or thought.

Mullins (2016)

The Perceptual Process



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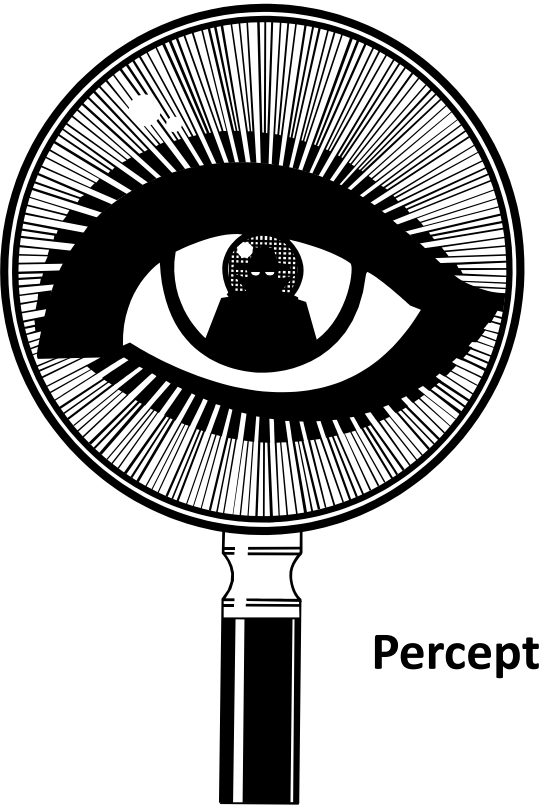
Perception within an organisational context

Perception, attitudes and organisations



- Attitudes and perceptions of actual customers
- Attitudes and perceptions of potential customers
- Attitudes and perceptions of the wider community
- Attitudes and behaviour of employees
- Supplier attitudes and perceptions
- The organisation's competitors
- Regulators
- Shareholders

Perception, attitudes and control

- In order to control behaviour managers must either:

a) Order others to carry out management wishes

b) Persuade individuals willingly to undertake what is required of them

(Martin & Fellenz, 2010)

Activity 1: Perceived Reality - What do you see?

Figure 6.2

Activity 2

A member of senior management sent an e-mail to team leaders asking for details of all overtime worked in the past 6 months and projected overtime for the next 6 months.

In what different ways could this action be perceived by the different leaders?

Perceptions as information processing

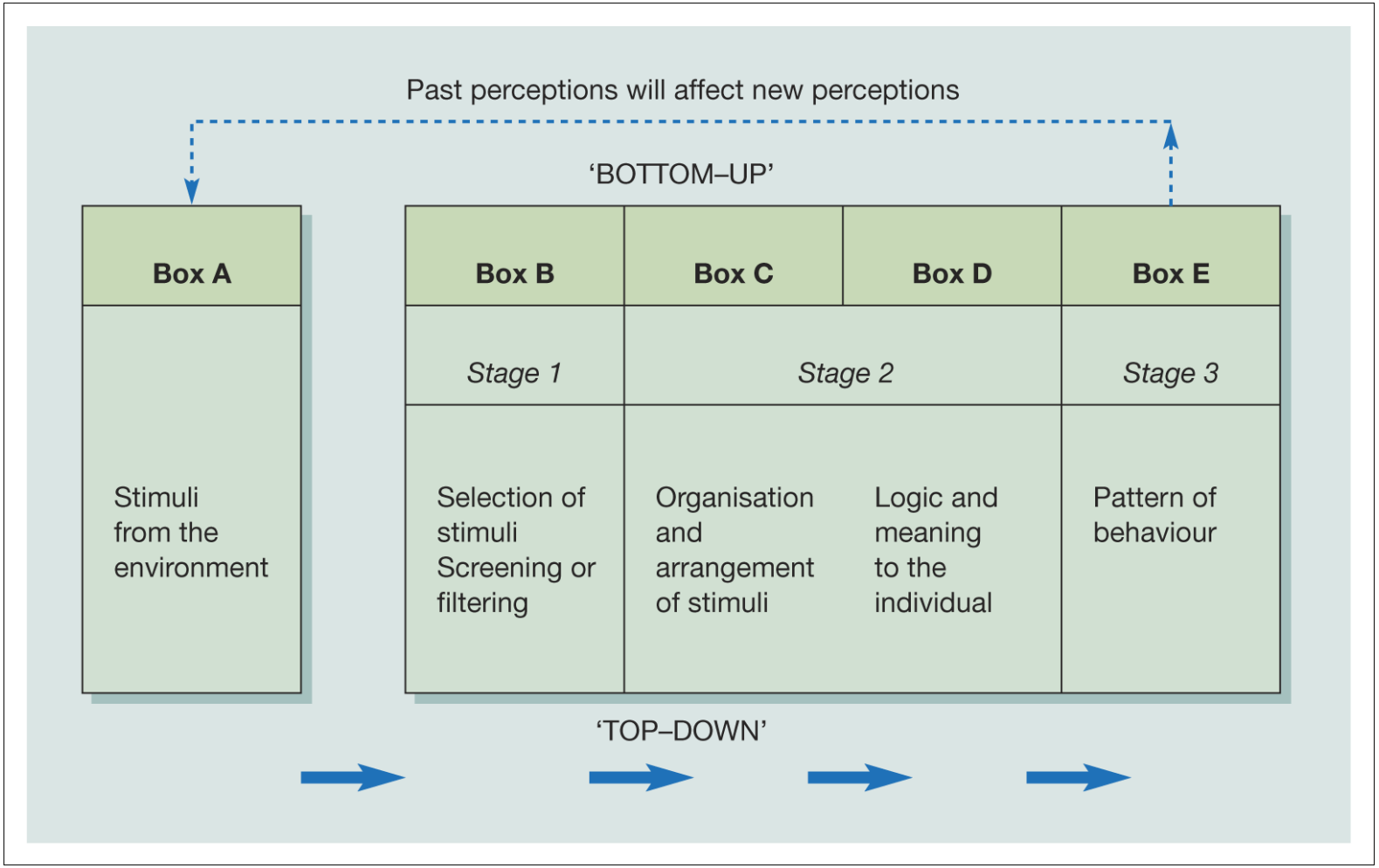


Figure 6.1 Perceptions as information processing

The process of perceptual selection

- The first process of perception is selection and attention
- The process of perceptual selection is based on internal factors and external factors:
  - Internal – relating to the state of the individual
  - External – the environment

Factors affecting an individual's perceptual set

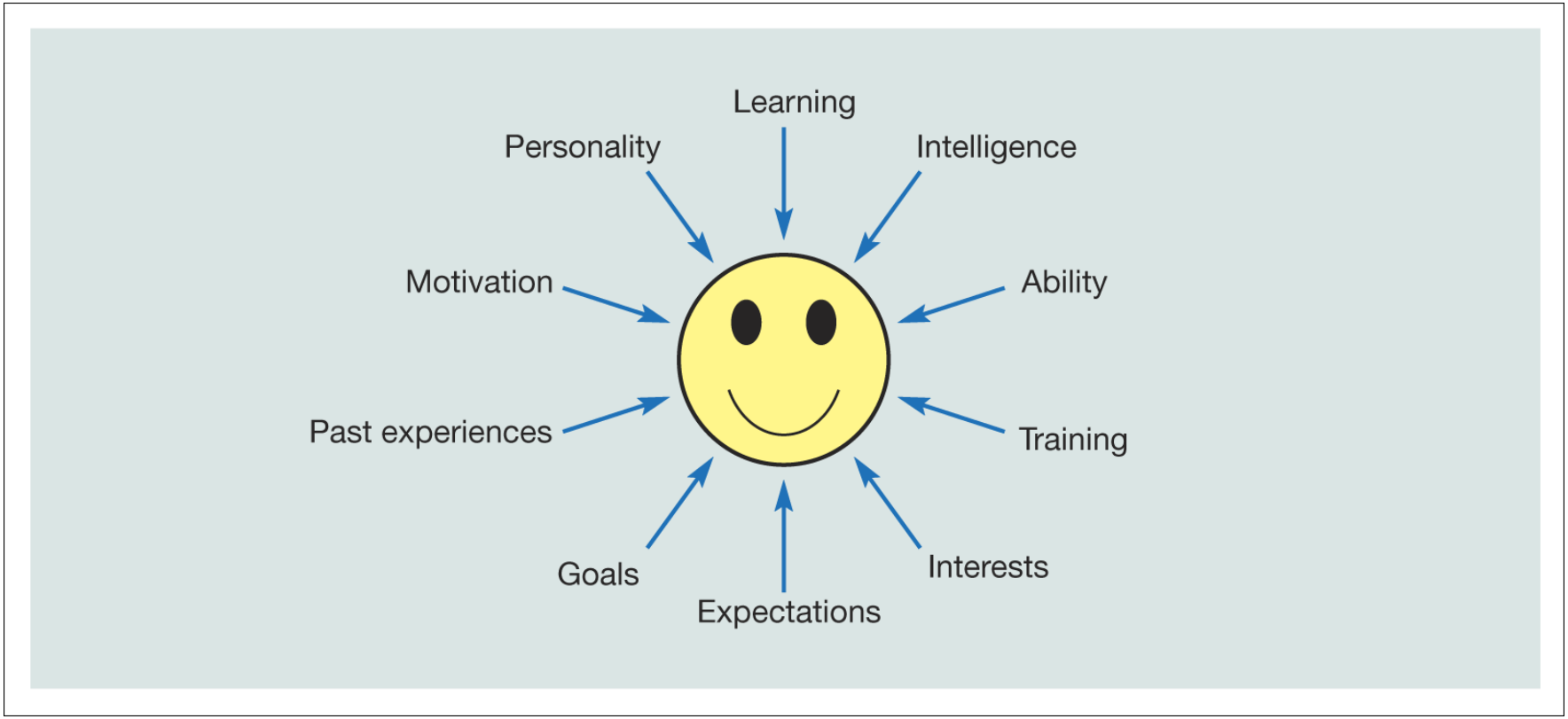


Figure 6.3 Factors affecting an individual's perceptual set

Cultural differences

- The way people interact is also subject to cultural differences and these can be misconstrued.

- The ways in which words are used and assumptions made about shared understanding are dependent on a person's culture and upbringing, for instance:
  - Low Context Cultures: explicit communication (US)
  - High Context Cultures: assumed meanings (France)

(Hall)

External factors

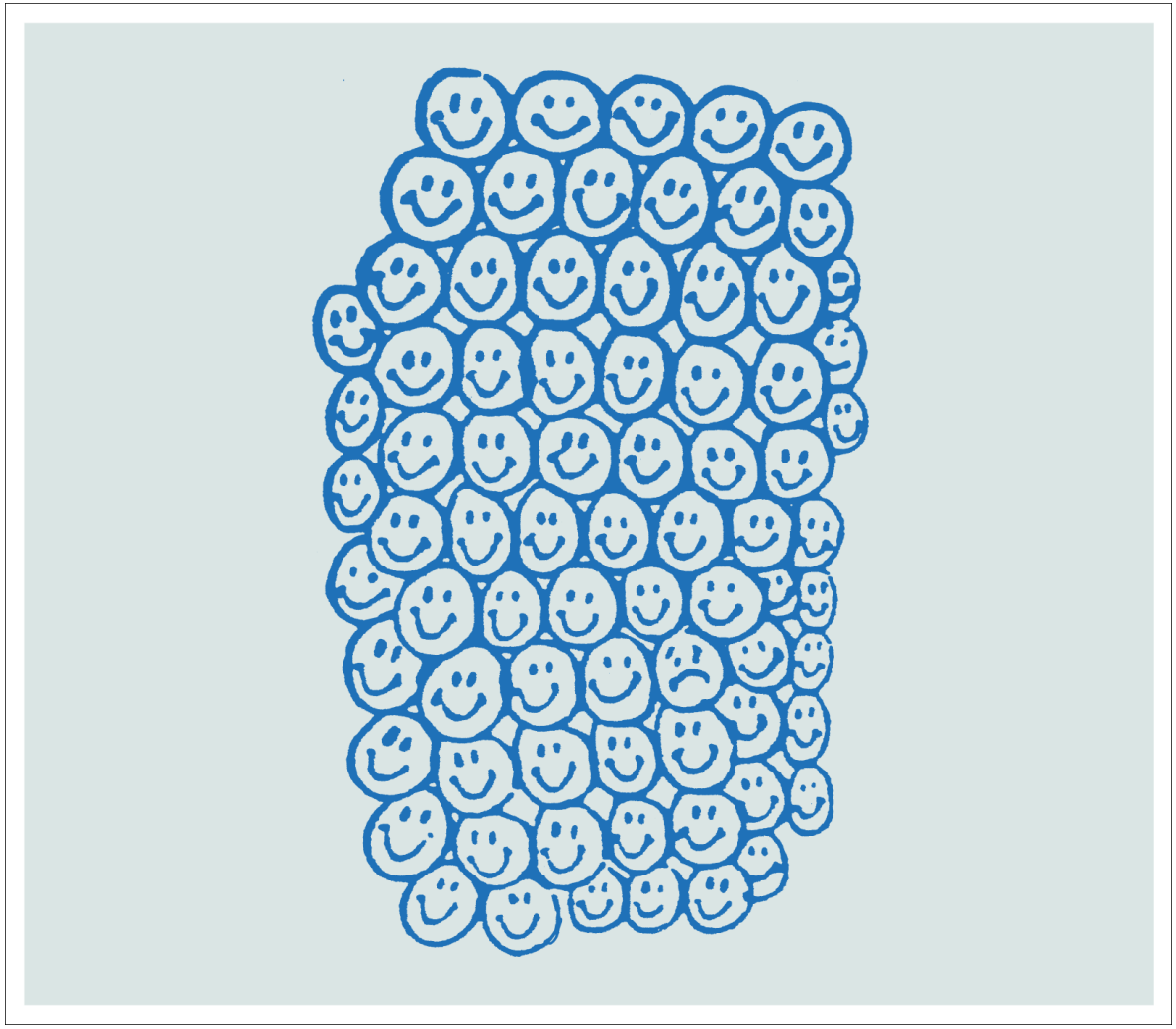
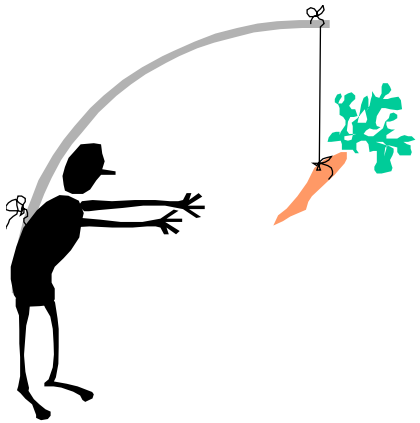


Figure 6.4 Is everybody happy?

Source: Block, R. J. and Yuker, H. E., *Can You Believe Your Eyes?*, Robson Books (2002), p. 163

The organisation and arrangement of stimuli



- The Gestalt School claimed that:
  - the process of perception is innately organised and patterned (built-in)
  - the human brain acts like a dynamic, physical field in which interaction among elements is an intrinsic part
- They identified three important principles of perception:
  - Figure and ground
  - Grouping
  - Closure

The Gestalt School: principles

- **Figure and ground:**
  - Figures are seen against a background
  - What is significant (figure) and what less so (ground)?

The Gestalt School: Figure and Ground

Figure 6.5

The Gestalt School: **principles**

- Figure and ground:
  - Figures are seen against a background
  - What is significant (figure) and what less so (ground)?
- **Grouping:**
  - a tendency to organise patterns and shapes instantly into meaningful grouping of patterns on the basis of their proximity or similarity
  - What assumptions might result about groups of individuals?

The Gestalt School:
Grouping

347 474 347474 34 74 74

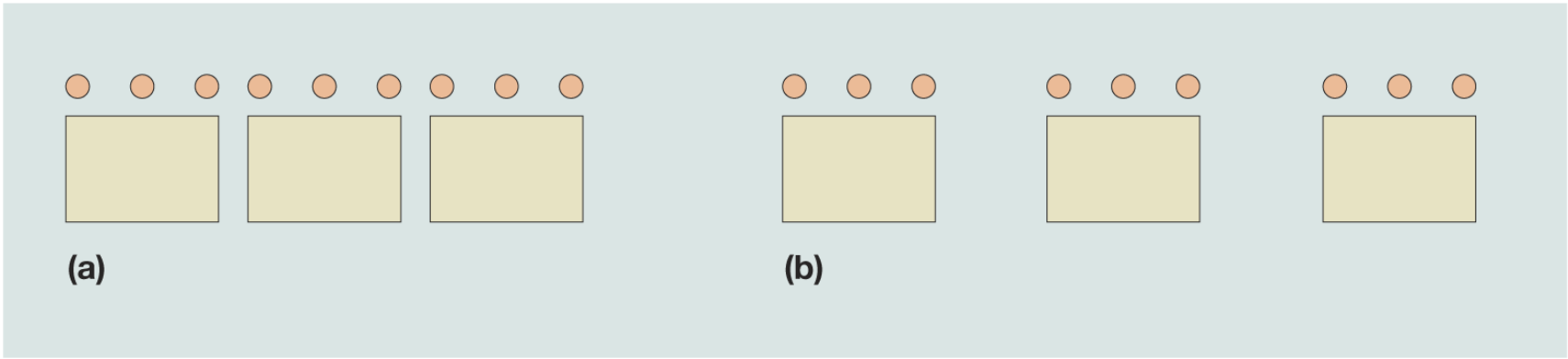


Figure 6.6

The Gestalt School: **principle**s

- Figure and ground:
  - Figures are seen against a background
  - What is significant (figure) and what less so (ground)?
- Grouping:
  - a tendency to organise patterns and shapes instantly into meaningful grouping of patterns on the basis of their proximity or similarity
  - What assumptions might result about groups of individuals?
- **Closure:**
  - the tendency to complete an incomplete picture, to mentally fill in the gaps and perceive a figure as a whole
  - What assumptions are being made about the environment?

The Gestalt School: Closure

Figure 6.7

Source: King, R., *Introduction to Psychology,* Third Edition, McGraw-Hill (1996) Reproduced with permission from the author, Professor Richard King, University of South Carolina and the McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Perceptual illusions

Our brains can be fooled.

- People make assumptions about things that go beyond the pure sensations our brain receives.

Perceptual illusion 1

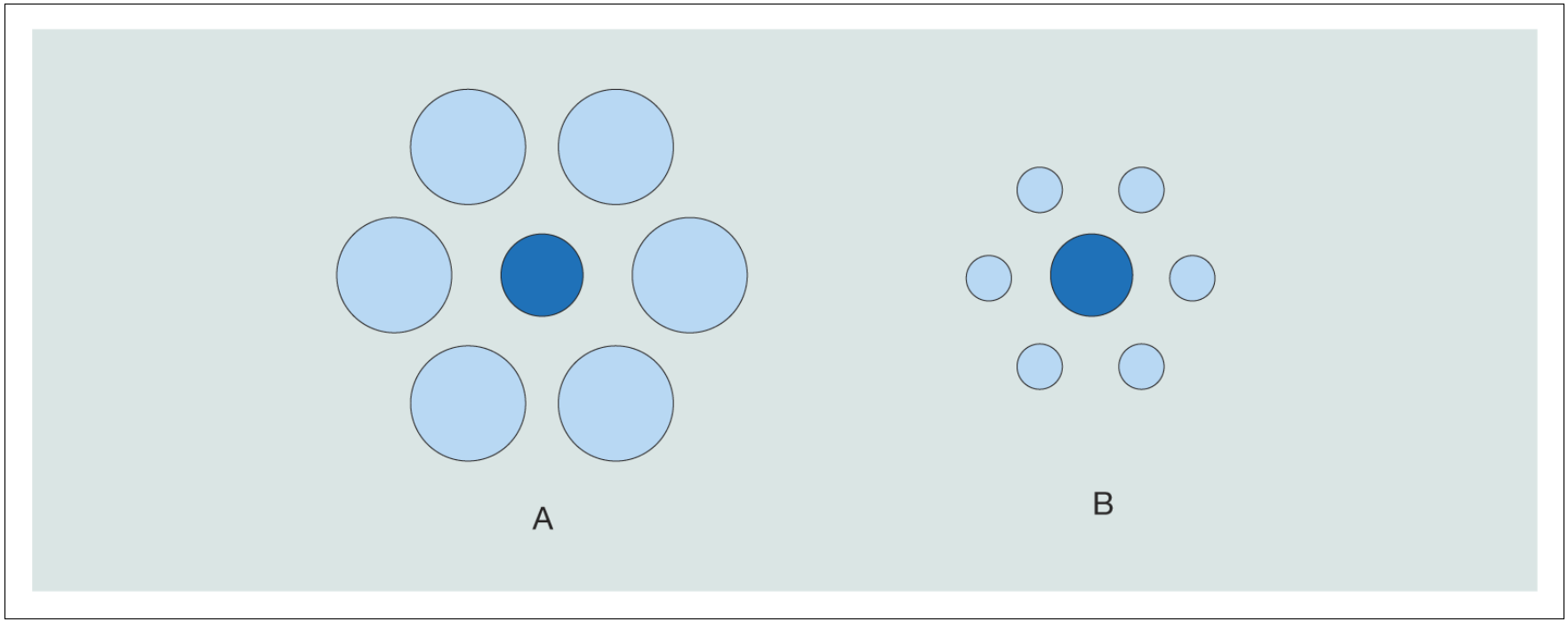


Figure 6.9

Perceptual illusion 2

BLUE	GREY	YELLOW	MAUVE
BLACK	ORANGE	GREEN	RED
WHITE	PURPLE	BLUE	BROWN

Figure 6.10

Perceiving **other people**

The process of perception and the selection of stimuli can influence a manager's relationships with other staff. For example:

- Grouping – the way in which a manager may think of a group of staff.
- Figure and ground – a manager may notice a new recruit and set that person apart from the rest because of particular characteristics such as appearance.
- Closure – the degree to which unanimity is perceived.

Managers' perceptions

- A manager's perception of the workforce will influence attitudes in dealing with people and the style of managerial behaviour adopted.

- A manager's approach to work and others is likely to be conditioned by predispositions about people, human nature and work.

- The perception of people's performance can be affected by the organisation of stimuli.

Cycle of perception and behaviour

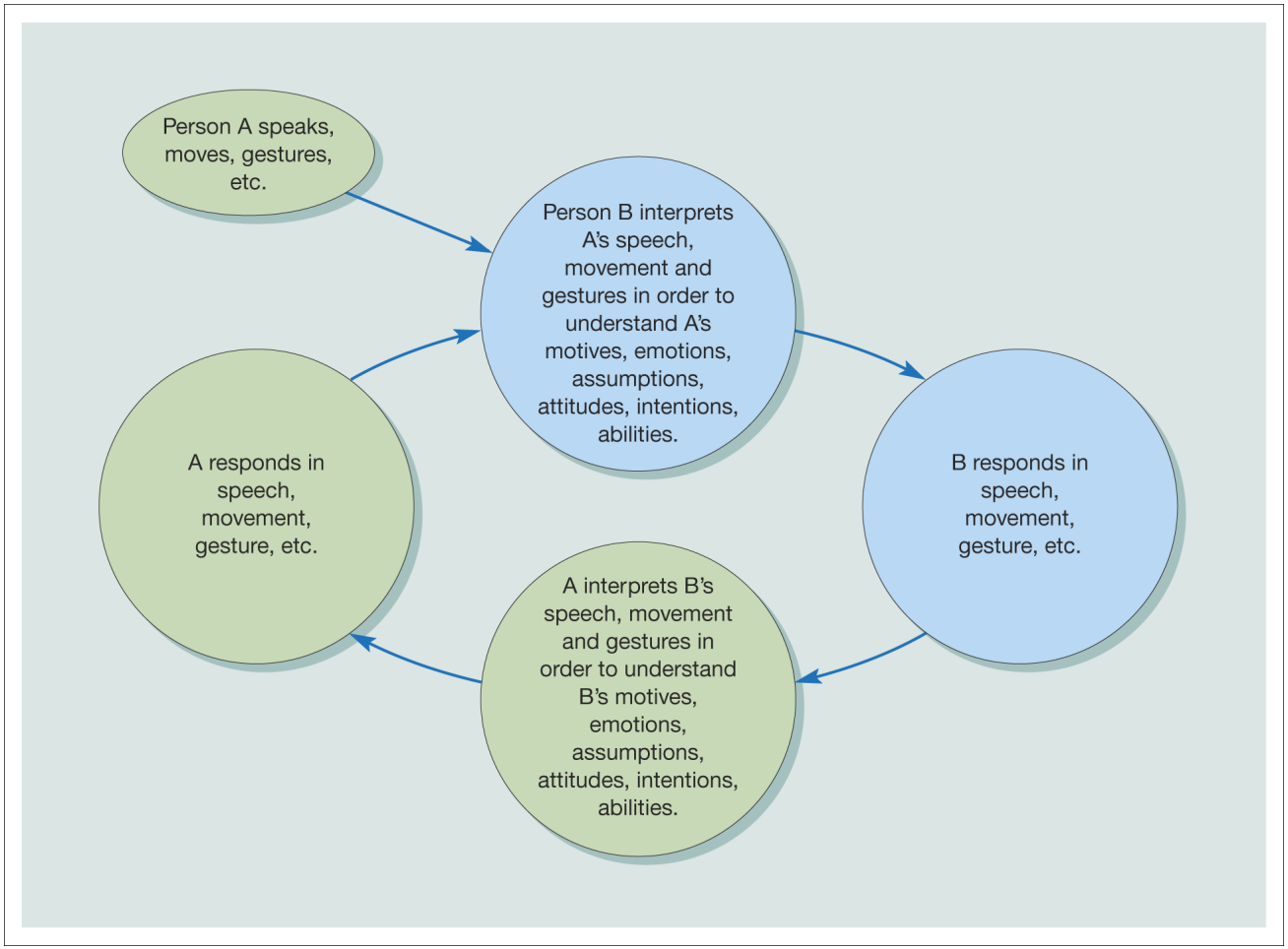
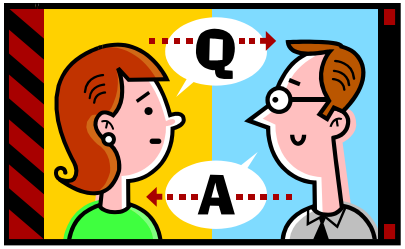


Figure 6.12 Cycle of perception and behaviour

Source: From Guirdham, M., *Interactive Behaviour at Work*, Third Edition, Financial Times Prentice Hall (2002), p. 162. Reproduced with permission from Pearson Education Ltd.

Interpersonal communications



Communication and perception are linked

Four ‘rules of engagement’:

1. The framework for communication is determined by expectations and perceptions – personal ‘history’
2. Expectations and perceptions can be reinforced by prestige, atmosphere, environment and desire.
3. Communication can register effectively only when it builds on what the audience already knows.
4. The brain filters out most of the information it receives, leaving what it considers important.

Transactional analysis: the **three ego states**

- **Child**
  - behaviour that demonstrates the feelings we remember as a child: fun, play and emotion
- **Adult**
  - behaviour which concerns our thought processes and the processing of facts and information: rationality and reasonableness
- **Parent**
  - behaviour which concerns the attitudes, feelings, and behaviour incorporated from external sources, primarily our parents: sense of right and wrong

Preferred Ego States: Child/Adult/Parent

1. Continually advising and criticising others	Parent
2. Analysing, dealing only with facts, distrusting own feelings	Adult
3. Constantly clowning around or being consumed with anger	Child

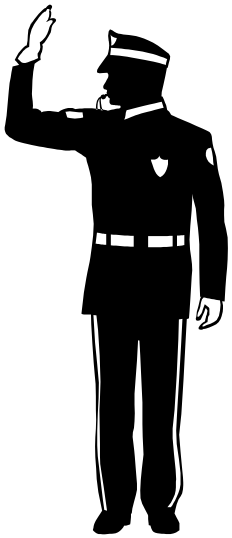
Activity 3: **How many ‘F’s?**

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS

Selecting information

- Verbal: what is said

- Non verbal: other signals including
  - Bodily contact
  - Proximity to others
  - Posture
  - Head nods
  - Facial expression
  - Gestures
  - Direction of gazes, etc.



Non-verbal communication and body language

'.. In our face-to-face communication with other people the messages about our feelings and attitudes come only 7 per cent from the words we use, 38 per cent from our voice and 55 per cent from body language, including facial expressions.

Significantly, when body language such as gestures and tone of voice conflicts with the words, greater emphasis is likely to be placed on the non-verbal message.'

Mehrabian

Body language

- Actions are more cogent than speech and humans rely heavily on body language to convey their true feelings and meanings.

- Whilst body language may be a guide to personality, errors can arise if too much is inferred from a single message.

Attribution theory (Heider)

Behaviour is determined by a combination of perceived internal and external forces:

- Internal forces

  e.g. personal attributes such as ability, skills, amount of effort and fatigue

- External forces

  e.g. organisational rules and policies, the manner of superiors, the weather, etc.

Implications of attribution theory

'Employees with an internal control orientation are more likely to believe that they can influence their level of performance through their own abilities, skills or efforts.

Employees with an external control orientation are more likely to believe that their level of performance is determined by external factors beyond their influence.'

Perceptual distortions and **errors**

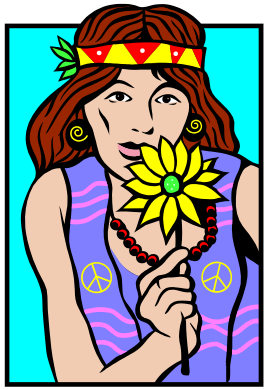
- The accuracy of judgements made about other people are influenced by:
  - The nature of the relationship
  - The amount of information available
  - The nature and extent of the interaction

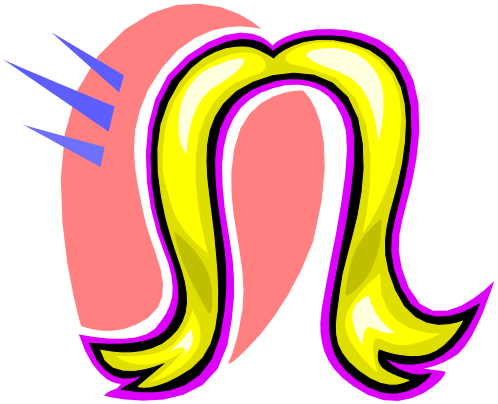
http://youtu.be/27XAhBu4XjE

http://youtu.be/_SsccRkLLzU

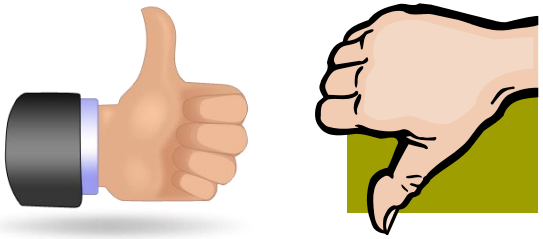
- What causes perceptual distortion?

Activity 4: ‘**All…….are…..**’





Stereotyping



- The tendency to ascribe positive or negative characteristics to others on the basis of general categorisations and perceived similarities.

- A means of simplifying the process of perception and making judgements of other people, instead of dealing with a range of complex and alternative stimuli.

Common stereotypes

May be based on:

- Nationality
- Occupation
- Age
- Physical attributes
- Education
- Social status
- Politics
- Race
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Religious belief

Summary: **Perception**

- People behave according to how <u>they</u> see the world, not reality
- Previous experiences can affect our perception
- It affects how we organise and interpret the world around us
- Internal and external factors
- Can affect staff/manager relations at work
- Communication and perception are interlinked

Remember the story of the Three Little Pigs?...

Perceptions matter!

http://gu.com/p/35zdg

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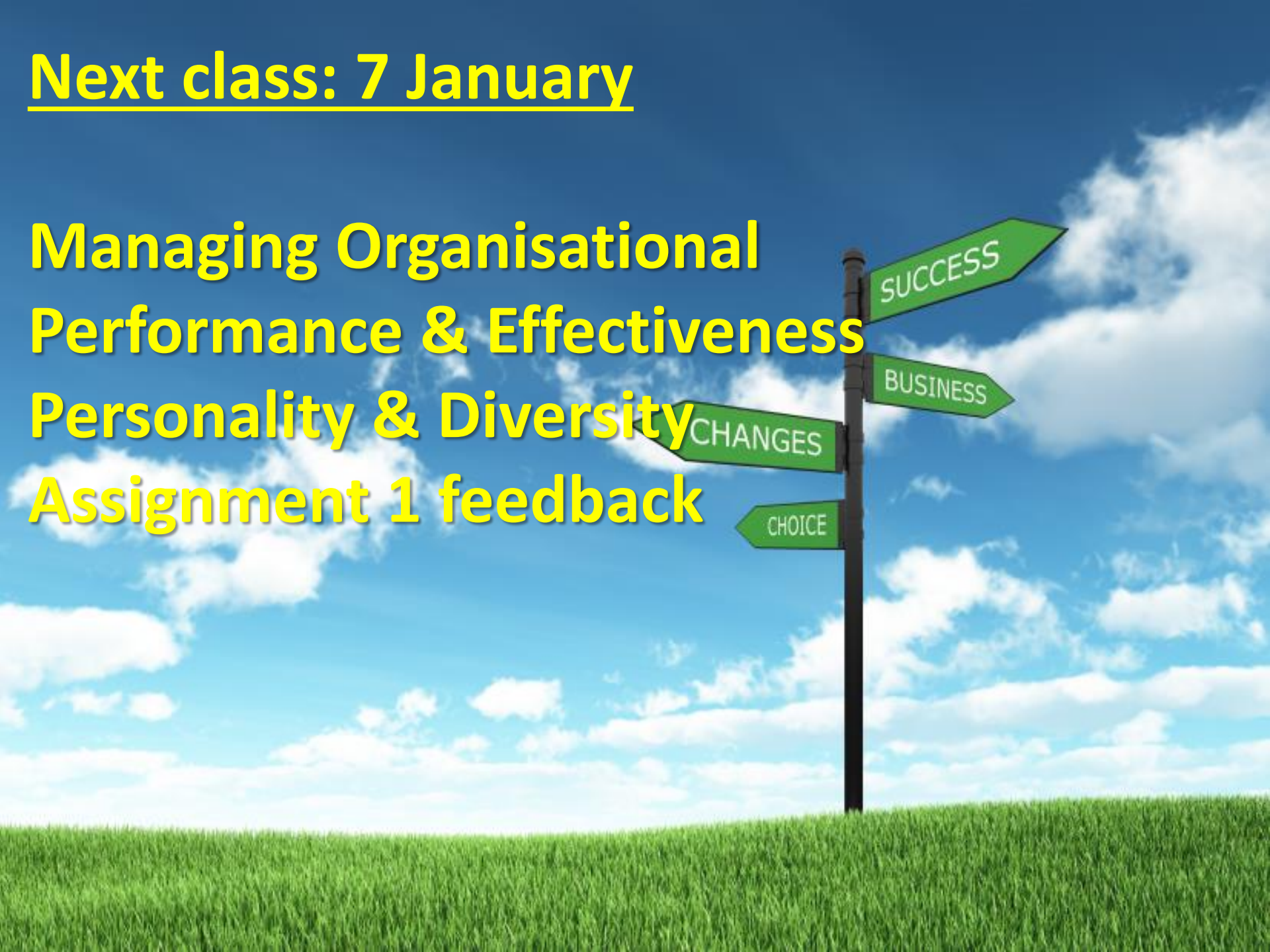
Next class: 7 January

Managing Organisational Performance & Effectiveness

Personality & Diversity

Assignment 1 feedback