



Factors that Affect Perception and Interpretation

How aware are you?

How did you come to your interpretation? - What factors came into play for you?

Did these factors cloud or colour your perceptions while you were listening to the other person, and thus colour your interpretation of what was said?

Your perceptions are affected by:

- your past experience
- your ideals
- your concept of self
- your obligations (“shoulds” and “oughts”)
- concern about what others may think or expect of you in this situation
- your sentiments
- your lifestyle
- your objectives - what you are trying to achieve

Attempting to determine what affects our perceptions is useful because it heightens our level of self-awareness. It is important to determine and assess our own involvement in any situation so that we can recognize and counteract our biases and thus be able to truly listen to the other person.

