



Perception Activity

By performing the Perception Activity, you can clearly understand how others experience you and what your reputation is. After figuring that out, you have the opportunity to either challenge their views through your behavior or reinforce them. Here's how:

To start this, select a group of five to ten people. They can be people you work with, family, friends, or a mix. Make sure the group includes those whom you enjoy working with and those who are critical or more difficult for you to be around.

To make it safe, you can make the answers anonymous by using digital tools such as mentimeter, lucidspark, or MURAL. Some people create free surveys, and some create word clouds and flowing grids.

PERCEPTION, RECEPTION & REINFORCEMENT (PRR) WORKSHEET

Here are the questions and what to look for in the answers you receive.

If you had a choice of only two words, what two words would you choose to describe me?

Or . . .

If you had a choice of only two words, what two words would you choose to describe who I should be?

What to look for in the answers

- Positive and negative words
- Did they list a noun, verb, or adjective?
- How would you interpret that word?
- What emotions come to you as you read the words
- Do you want to be that person?
- Do you agree or disagree with the words used? Why?



What am I really good at (my superpower)?

What to look for in the answers.

This is why people come to you and what you are known for.

Ask yourself, do you want to be known by those superpowers, or is there something else you want to be known for instead?

What should I be doing differently?

What to look for in the answers

Take these as suggestions to think about, and then decide for yourself what you choose to do.

Having a growth mindset means understanding where growth areas are. You own the choice to view these as criticism or constructive growth areas.

Note: The purpose of this exercise is not to force others' views on yourself. Its primary goal is to understand and be curious about how others perceive you. While you don't truly have control over their views, since their views are based on their past experiences, you can control the questions you ask. Do you want to be perceived that way? What are you doing to counter perceptions or reinforce them?

Most people enter this conversation with skepticism about the outcome but come away surprised by how much they learned about themselves and the actionable strategies they were able to build to counter or reinforce their reputation at work, at home, and in their communities.

If you have a brain, you have a bias. It's just part of being human. It is always possible that how others view you is really a reflection of their own biases. We can approach their views with the attitude that they should deal with their biases and not force those biases on others. While this is true, it does not lead us anywhere. This exercise is an opportunity for us to be curious about ourselves and understand more deeply how our behaviors and words can either reinforce or counter the reputation we are building.