



## TenStep Supplemental Paper

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### The Right Perception

A manager walking around the office finds one of his employees sitting idle and staring at the white board in front of him. The employee's concentration is not disturbed even when the manager walks past him. Is the employee deep in thought or is he merely killing time? What the manager perceives from this situation depends on how long the manager has known the employee, his past performance reports, his job behavior, his relation with others and his personal life. This clearly illustrates that many times we don't see reality, just what we interpret as reality.

Unlike computers, human beings are unique and complex information processing units. Although there are numerous cognitive processes, perception is the most important of them. It determines a person's behavior within an organization or society. The key to understanding perception is understanding the unique interpretations of a situation.

Perception is the process in which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give a meaning to their environment. For example, a high performing and well-recognized employee may perceive the organization as a great place to work while a high performing and ill-recognized employee may perceive the same organization as an unfair and discriminating organization.

Understanding the complex process of perception is vital for any manager. It has been noted that there is a correlation between the employee's perception and his/her performance. Employees with positive perceptions about the organization perform better than those with negative or neutral perceptions. A positive perception helps

- Shrug off bad news
- Take risks
- Assume personal control and take responsibility
- Set ambitious goals and pursue them

People with negative perceptions are potential flameouts and develop poor work relations, resulting in numerous conflicts.