



Social cognition and perceptions

Chapter 2

Learning Objectives

Examine how heuristic strategies are employed to judge complex information

Describe the role of schemas in guiding our thoughts and actions

Evaluate the imperfections of the social cognition process

Assess the interrelation of affect and cognition

Determine how the five basic nonverbal channels of communication help us judge emotional states

Explain how the process of attribution helps our understanding of others' behavior

Describe why initial information is important in forming perceptions of others

Introduction: judge when incomplete info

What are the chances that your bag will be stolen?

Do you have information on this incident to happen?

A social psychological analysis of how people think about risks illuminates the processes we use to make judgments, even when we have incomplete information about the risk likelihood.



Introduction: decide when complex info

Which job would you choose?

Do we give up hope of making the “correct” decision and just blindly make a selection?

Having lots of options can have a paralyzing effect that results in nonoptimal choices.

Social psychology of human judgment can help us make better sense of large amounts of information. It turns out, when people receive information in a way that highlights the crucial data in an accessible style, the process can be made easier and the choices people actually make for themselves can be improved.



Introduction: how do you make choices

Do you attempt to decide “rationally,” by systematically weighing all the pros and cons?

Do you make a choice based on some simple strategy?



Introduction: how do you make choices

Our thinking about the social world often operates on “automatic”—it occurs quickly and without lots of careful reasoning.

We do sometimes stop and think much more carefully and logically about some issues—controlled way of thinking.



Heuristics: what is it

several rules of thumb we often use to quickly draw inferences about situations we face

how these simple rules operate

the mental frameworks that we use to organize large amounts of information in an efficient manner



Heuristics: what is it

Techniques we use to deal quickly with large amounts of information, especially under conditions of uncertainty where the “correct” answer is difficult to know or would take a great deal of effort to determine.

While many strategies exist for making sense of complex information, one of the most useful tactics involve **heuristics—simple rules for making complex decisions or drawing inferences in a rapid and efficient manner.**

- Representativeness: Judging by Resemblance
- Availability: “If I Can Recall Many Instances, They Must Be Frequent?”
- Anchoring and Adjustment: Where You Begin Makes a Difference
- Status Quo Heuristic: “What Is, Is Good”

Heuristics: Representativeness: Judging by Resemblance

Representativeness heuristic: you make your judgment on the basis of a relatively simple rule: The more an individual seems to resemble or match a given group, the more likely she or he is to belong to that group.

Often such judgements are correct, because belonging to certain groups does affect the behavior and style of persons in them, and because people with certain traits are attracted to particular groups in the first place.

But sometimes, judgments based on representativeness are wrong, mainly for the following reason: Decisions or judgments made on the basis of this rule tend to ignore base rates—the frequency with which given events or categories occur in the total population.

Representativeness heuristics are used when people are asked to judge the likelihood that a particular effect (e.g., either many or a few people die of a disease) was produced by a particular cause (e.g., an unusually infectious bacteria or a standard strain), they are likely to expect the strength of the cause to match its effect.

Heuristics: Representativeness: Judging by Resemblance

What could be her profession-
librarian/physician/teacher/business/dancer?

If you compare her with a prototype—a list of attributes commonly possessed by members of each of these occupations

She is likely to be a librarian; her traits seem closer to those associated with this profession than they do to the traits associated with physicians, dancers, or business executives.



Heuristics: Availability: “If I Can Recall Many Instances, They Must Be Frequent?”

Availability heuristic: another cognitive “rule of thumb” suggesting that the easier it is to bring information to mind, the greater its impact on subsequent judgments or decisions.

The fact that we can bring some types of information to mind quite readily suggests that it may indeed be frequent or important, so it should influence our judgments and decisions.

But relying on availability in making social judgments can also lead to errors. Specifically, it can lead us to overestimate the likelihood of events that are dramatic but rare, because they are easy to bring to mind.

Research suggests that our desires can bias our decision making toward greater risk taking while using the availability heuristic.

Such heuristic depends on the subjective ease with which relevant information comes to mind and the amount of information we can bring to mind.

Heuristics: Availability: “If I Can Recall Many Instances, They Must Be Frequent?”

Do you fear traveling in aeroplanes because of crashes?

If you think chances of accidents are higher in air traveling and that is why you choose trains over aeroplanes



Will you buy lottery tickets when economic condition is poor?

If you take risks in poor economic conditions, which may not be your rational thinking process (as you take high risk in bad economic condition. Need for money is a more dire desire. People tend to overestimate the likelihood that gambling will bring financial success and gambling tends to increase during economic downturns

Heuristics: Anchoring and Adjustment: Where You Begin Makes a Difference

Anchoring and adjustment heuristic: involves the tendency to deal with uncertainty in many situations by using something we do know as a starting point (the “anchor”) and then making adjustments to it.

There are many situations in which our behavior can be subtly affected by an anchor. Now the question is who this anchor is. Anchor source can be i) lenient or harsh, ii) relevant or irrelevant, iii) inexperienced or trained.

Behavior differs in high-anchor and low-anchor situations.

The tendency to make insufficient judgment correction is greater when individuals are less capable of engaging in effortful thought. It appears that our tendency to let initial anchors influence our judgments—in both important and mundane situations—stems, to an important degree, from a tendency to avoid the effortful work involved in making adjustments away from initial anchors.

Heuristics: Anchoring and Adjustment: Where You Begin Makes a Difference

How much did you pay for oranges?

If the fruit seller tells you a rate and you offer less and after some bargaining, you and the seller reach an agreement and you buy oranges



How much will you eat from a full plate and small portion food?

Portion-size effect: food intake were a whopping 77 percent greater in the high-anchor condition compared to the low-anchor condition. The large portion serves as a high anchor that we typically fail to adjust downward, contributing to the obesity epidemic in Western countries.

Heuristics: Status Quo Heuristic: “What Is, Is Good”

Status Quo heuristic: objects and options that are more easily retrieved from memory may be judged in a heuristic fashion as “good.” In fact, these objects and options are often judged as better than ones that are new, are rarely encountered, or represent a change from the status quo.

Most studies (experimental) observed that people tend to prefer ‘old’ to ‘new’, out of habit, as old is known or familiar. Thus, “new” receives closer attention, potential flaws seem more obvious. Likewise, since the “status quo” is less closely scrutinized, flaws may be noticed less.

People do seem to heuristically use the length of time a product or practice has been in existence as a cue to its goodness. Although judgments of all products are unlikely to be biased in favor of age, and occasionally novelty may win, tradition and longevity often do seem to imply heuristically that the “tried and true” is better than the new.

Heuristics: Status Quo Heuristic: “What Is, Is Good”



Which brand of chocolate would you prefer?

If you prefer cadbury, out of habit, as it is an old brand, traditionally you eat this

Social cognition

Social cognition refers to the processes by which people perceive, interpret, and respond to the social world around them.



Schemas: Mental Frameworks for Organizing Social Information

Through past experience, you have built up a mental framework (schemas) containing the essential features of a particular situation.

You have formed other mental frameworks related to doctor's appointments, eating at restaurants, getting a haircut, shopping for groceries, going to the movies, or boarding an airplane.

Social psychologists term these mental frameworks **schemas:** They help us to organize social information, guide our actions, and process information relevant to particular contexts. Since your personal experience in such situations is probably similar to that of others in your culture, everyone in a given society tends to share many basic schemas.

Once schemas are formed, they play a role in determining what we notice about the social world, what information we remember, and how we use and interpret such information. We rely on our schemas because they help us process information efficiently.

Schemas: Mental Frameworks for Organizing Social Information



A schema for dining in a restaurant

- Expecting a server to take your order.
- Waiting for food to be served.
- Anticipating paying the bill at the end of the meal.

Schemas: Mental Frameworks for Organizing Social Information



A schema for a teacher

- Expected to be knowledgeable.
- Expected to guide and educate students.

Schemas: Mental Frameworks for Organizing Social Information



Scarcity Mentality Schema: "Resources are limited, so I must hold onto what I have and avoid taking risks."

- Preference for saving over spending.
- Hesitation to invest in new opportunities, even if they are potentially lucrative.
- Feeling anxiety over economic uncertainties, regardless of actual financial status.

Implications: May lead to lower consumer spending, which could affect broader economic growth.

Schemas: How do schemas influence social thought?

Schemas influence three basic processes of social cognition: attention, encoding, and retrieval.

Attention refers to the information we notice. Information consistent with them is more likely to be noticed and to enter our consciousness.

Encoding refers to the processes we use to store noticed information in memory. the information that becomes the focus of our attention is much more likely to be stored in long-term memory. the information that is consistent with our schemas is encoded. Information that is sharply inconsistent with our schemas—information that does not agree with our expectations in a given situation—may be encoded into a separate memory location and marked with a unique “tag.” Inconsistent information is sometimes so unexpected that it literally seizes our attention and almost forces us to make a mental note of it.

Retrieval refers to how we recover information from memory in order to use it in some manner—for example, in making judgments about other people. People tend to report remembering information that is consistent with schemas more than information that is inconsistent. information inconsistent with schemas might be present in memory as strongly as information consistent with schemas, but people simply report the information that is consistent with their schemas.

Schemas: How do schemas influence social thought?



Schema for classroom (attention, encoding): You expect professors to come to class, to lecture, to answer questions, to give and grade exams. This is **consistent** information.



Inconsistency (retrieval): One of your professors comes to class and performs magic tricks instead of lecturing. When you retrieve schema for classroom, will you remember information that is consistent or inconsistent with your schema?

Schemas: Priming: Which Schema Guides Our Thought?

The stronger and better-developed schemas are, the more likely they will influence our thinking, and especially our memory for social information.

Priming—temporary increases (activated by experience, stimulus or event) in the accessibility of specific schemas, a recent experience activates a schema, which in turn, exerts an effect on our current thinking. Unpriming- when schema is expressed in terms of regular or permanent behavior or thoughts.



How do you like the phone cases?

Schemas: Priming: Which Schema Guides Our Thought?



If you want ice-creams after indulging in fun-loving phone cases, that is priming (effect of phone cases).

Schemas: Persistence: Why Even Discredited Schemas Can Influence Thought and Behavior

Schemas are often resistant to change. They show a strong perseverance effect, remaining unchanged even in the face of contradictory information.

Schemas can sometimes be self-fulfilling: They influence our responses to the social world in ways that make our expectations come true, consistent with the schemas.

Schema: I do not understand economics.

Initial behavior: you avoid understanding theory or practicing exercises, thinking you won't succeed anyway.

Reinforcement of belief: Because of less practice and effort, you perform poorly on tests.

Confirmation of schema/schema persistence: The poor performance strengthens the belief, "*See, I knew I did not understand economics.*"

Automatic and Controlled Processing in Social Thought

Social thought can occur in two distinctly different ways: in a **systematic, logical, and highly effortful** manner known as **controlled processing**, or in a **fast, relatively effortless, and intuitive** manner known as **automatic processing**.

Recent evidence suggests that automatic and controlled processing may often occur together, especially in situations that involve some uncertainty. Recent evidence also indicates that sometimes automatic processing may be superior to careful, conscious thought in terms of making excellent decisions.

Automatic processing can be more beneficial/quicker/more efficient, because:

- Conscious thought has strict limits in terms of the amount of information it can handle. Unconscious, automatic thought has much greater capacity.
- When we think about decisions consciously, we may fail to weight the various dimensions or elements accurately or get confused about which ones are the most important.

Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Our thinking is not simply based on rational self-interest as economists have long assumed. The judgments people make systematically deviate in a number of ways from perfect rationality.

This is true for critical decisions such as choosing a career path or whom to marry, as well as making financial decisions about investment stocks or credit card use. Our actions often reflect overconfidence and optimism. In our efforts to make sense of the social world, we are subject to a wide range of tendencies that, together, can lead us into serious error.

Different ways in which our social thought departs from rationality:

- **Our Powerful Tendency to Be Overly Optimistic**
- **Situation-Specific Sources of Error in Social Cognition: Counterfactual Thinking and Magical Thinking**



Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Our Powerful Tendency to Be Overly Optimistic



Optimistic bias—a powerful predisposition to overlook risks and expect things to turn out well. Research findings indicate that most people believe they are more likely than others to experience positive events, and less likely to experience negative events. Bias seems to occur not just for specific tasks or situations, but for projections of our entire future as well. Since our thinking is dominated by these positive thoughts, we make highly optimistic predictions about the future.



Overconfidence bias-greater confidence in our beliefs or judgments than is justified. People who are least competent in a domain are often the most likely to be overconfident of their judgments in that domain. One critical reason that we may be overly confident of our judgments and actions in all these cases is because we often lack essential information and relevant feedback. Overconfidence often stems from errors of omission.

Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Is optimism good? (Case study: Sweeny and Shepperd, 2010)

1. Study Overview

- **Objective:** Investigate the impact of optimism on emotions before and after receiving exam grades.
- **Participants:** Psychology students estimating their exam grades.
- **Emotional State Measurement:** Conducted before and after receiving actual grades.

2. Findings Before Receiving Grades

- **Optimism's Effect:** Optimistic students reported more positive emotions before learning their grades.

3. Findings After Receiving Grades

- **Impact of Overestimation:**
 - Optimistic students who overestimated their grades felt much worse than realists or pessimists after learning their actual scores.
 - Negative emotions were heightened when optimism was disconfirmed.

Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Is optimism good? (Case study: Sweeny and Shepperd, 2010)

4. Recovery of Emotional State

- **Short-lived Negative Impact:**
 - Negative emotions dissipated within 24 hours.

5. Key Insights

- **Optimism boosts positive emotions about future outcomes.**
- **Disconfirmed optimism can lead to temporary emotional downturns.**
- **Emotional recovery is quick, suggesting optimism has a net positive effect overall.**



Sources of Error in Social Cognition

When Optimism Affects Our Ability to Plan Effectively

Optimism at work is the **planning fallacy**—our tendency to believe that we can get more done in a given period of time than we actually can, or that a given job will take less time than it really will.

Why do we (repeatedly) fall prey to this particular kind of optimism? **People focus primarily on the future and how they will perform the task. This, in turn, prevents them from looking backward in time and remembering how long similar tasks took them in the past.** One important “reality check” that might help them avoid being overly optimistic is removed.

Motivation to complete a task, when predicting, individuals often guess that what will happen is what they want to happen. In cases where they are strongly motivated to complete a task, people make overly optimistic predictions about when they will attain this desired state of affairs.

Both powerful and powerless people seriously underestimated how long it would take them to complete a complex word processing task, Those who thought of themselves in a **powerful position underestimated how long it would take them to complete the task more than those thinking of themselves as powerless.**

Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Situation-Specific Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Counterfactual Thinking: Imagining “What Might Have Been”

Scenario 1: Someone who left work at the normal time and was injured in an automobile accident.

Scenario 2: Someone left work early to run an errand and was injured in an automobile accident.

Will you feel the same kind of sympathy for both individuals?

Would that make a difference in the sympathy you would feel?

Research indicates the answer is yes—emotional responses differ depending on how easy it is to mentally undo the circumstances that preceded the event.



Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Situation-Specific Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Counterfactual thoughts seem to occur automatically in many situations.

Recent research has revealed that **belief in free will**, which is the opposite of determinism, encourages counterfactual thinking. This suggests that counterfactual thinking—imagining what might have happened instead of what did—can help people learn from mistakes and plan for the future. Believing that people have the power to act differently (i.e., believing in free will) facilitates this form of social thought.

If individuals imagine **upward counterfactuals**—comparing their current outcomes with more favorable ones—the result may be strong feelings of dissatisfaction. If individuals compare their current outcomes with less favorable ones—“it might have been worse”—they may experience positive feelings.

Engaging in counterfactual thought can strongly influence our current moods and our willingness to gamble on obtaining alternative outcomes in the future.

Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Situation-Specific Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Magical Thinking, Terror Management, and Belief in the Supernatural

Magical thinking assumes that one's thoughts can influence the physical world in a manner not governed by the laws of physics.

Shape of the cake has nothing to do with its taste. This aspect of magical thinking illustrates the law of similarity—the perception of the cakes is affected because they have properties resembling other disgusting objects.



Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Situation-Specific Sources of Error in Social Cognition

Magical Thinking, Terror Management, and Belief in the Supernatural

Terror management—efforts to come to terms with the certainty of death and its unsettling implications. One kind of thinking that helps with terror management is the belief that supernatural powers outside our understanding and control can influence our lives. Research indicates that **when we are reminded of our own mortality, beliefs in the supernatural are strengthened.**



Nonverbal Communications: An Unspoken Language

Temporary states exert important effects on people's behavior and social thought, recognizing and understanding these conditions is often very useful.

Sometimes, this is a relatively easy task—we ask others how they are feeling or what kind of mood they are in, and they tell us. At other times, however, people are unwilling to reveal their inner feelings.



Which salesman do you think is revealing their inner feeling and showing more liking than they actually feel?

Nonverbal Communications: An Unspoken Language

In situations when it is inappropriate or impossible to ask others how they are feeling, we can pay careful attention to nonverbal cues provided by changes in their facial expressions, eye contact, posture, body movements, and other expressive actions.

In fact, such behavior is relatively irrepressible—difficult to control—so that even when others try to conceal their inner feelings from us, those emotions often “leak out” in many ways through nonverbal cues.

Information conveyed by cues other than the content of spoken language, as well as our efforts to interpret it, is often described by the term nonverbal communication.

Basic Channels of Nonverbal Communication:

Facial Expressions: Clues to Others' Emotions

Eye Contact as A Nonverbal Cue

Body Language: Gestures, Posture, and Movements

Touching: What it Tells Us About People

Nonverbal Communications: An Unspoken Language

Facial Expressions: Clues to Others' Emotions

From a very early age, five different basic emotions are clearly represented on the human face: anger, fear, happiness, sadness, and disgust.

Emotions occur in many combinations, for example, joy together with sorrow and fear combined with anger. In addition, each of these reactions can vary greatly in strength. There may be only a small number of basic facial expressions, but the number of variations on these themes is immense.

Happiness is indeed accurately recognized across cultures most of the time. Sadness and disgust are considerably less accurately recognized, although they are still correctly identified at above-chance levels. Fear is least likely to be accurately recognized, partly because it is often confused with surprise.

Numerous studies have clearly shown that people are a great deal more accurate in recognizing the facial expressions of members of their own national group than facial expressions of members of another national group. Cultural differences also exist with respect to the precise meaning of various facial expressions, but unlike spoken languages, they do not seem to require as much in the way of translation.

Nonverbal Communications: An Unspoken Language

Eye Contact as A Nonverbal Cue

Ancient poets often described the eyes as “windows to the soul.” In one important sense, they were correct: We often learn much about others’ feelings from their eyes.

For example, we interpret a high level of gazing from another person as a sign of liking or friendliness. In contrast, if others avoid eye contact with us, we may conclude they are unfriendly, they don’t like us, or they are simply shy. If another person gazes at us continuously and maintains eye contact regardless of what we do, she or he can be said to be staring. A stare is often interpreted as a sign of anger or hostility.



Nonverbal Communications: An Unspoken Language

Body Language: Gestures, Posture, and Movements

As you were remembering, did you change your posture or move your hands, arms, or legs as your thoughts shifted from the first event memory to the second? There is a good chance that you did, because our current moods or emotions are often reflected in the positions, postures, and movements of our bodies. Together, these nonverbal behaviors are termed body language.

Body language often reveals others' emotional states. Large numbers of movements— especially ones in which one part of the body does something to another part (touching, rubbing, scratching)—suggest emotional arousal. **The greater the frequency of such behavior, the higher is the level of arousal or nervousness. “Fidgeting” is also interpreted as a sign of lying.**

Gestures/emblems—body movements that carry specific meanings in a given culture. The OK sign means different things in different countries: “money” in Japan; “zero” in France; and in many other countries, such as Brazil, an offensive gesture symbolizing a body orifice.



Nonverbal Communications: An Unspoken Language

Touching: What it Tells Us About People

Touch likely indicates friendliness toward me and perhaps appreciation for my courteous treatment of them. But touching does not always reflect these kinds of feelings. In fact, the meaning of a touch depends on various factors: who does the touching (friend or stranger, male or female); the nature of the physical contact (brief or prolonged, gentle or rough, area of the body touched); and the context in which the touching takes place (business or social setting, doctor's office).

Depending on the combination of these factors, touch can suggest friendliness, affection, sexual interest, dominance, caring, or aggression. Despite such complexities, existing evidence indicates that **when touching is considered appropriate, it often elicits positive reactions in the person being touched.**



How do you meet and greet people?

Attribution

We often want to know why someone says or does certain things, and further, what kind of person they really are—what are their traits, motives, and goals?

Social psychologists believe that our interest in such questions stems, in large part, from our basic desire to understand cause-and-effect relationships in the social world. We want to know how others have acted—that's something we can readily observe. We also want to understand why, because that knowledge can help us understand them better and also help us predict their future actions.

The process through which we seek such information and draw inferences is known as attribution.

This process not only concerns our efforts to understand the causes behind others' behaviors, on some occasions, we also use it to understand the causes behind our own behavior.

Attribution

Using Others' Behavior as a Guide to Their Lasting Traits: First, we are likely to consider behavior as corresponding a person's traits when the **behavior seems freely chosen**. In contrast, if behavior appears to be somehow forced on the person in question, we tend to see it as less indicative of that person's traits. Second, we pay careful attention to **actions that show noncommon effects**—conditions that can be caused by one specific factor, but not by others. Third, we pay more attention to others' actions that are **low in social desirability**, than to actions that are high on this dimension.

Scenario (freely chosen):

An employee decides to work late hours every evening, even though their boss does not require overtime and other colleagues leave on time.

Freely Chosen Behavior:

The decision to stay late is freely chosen because it is not influenced by external pressures or obligations, such as company policies or managerial expectations.

Attribution Implication:

Observers are likely to attribute the behavior to internal factors, such as the employee's work ethic, ambition, or dedication, rather than external constraints. This is because the action was made voluntarily, reflecting personal motives or characteristics.

Attribution

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Scenario (noncommon effect):

You are deciding between two job offers:

1. **Job A:** High salary, long commute, flexible work hours, and a prestigious company.
2. **Job B:** Moderate salary, short commute, fixed work hours, and a lesser-known company.

You choose Job A. What is the noncommon factor?

Explanation in Attribution Theory:

Observers attribute your choice to the noncommon effect—the prestige of the company—because it differentiates Job A from Job B and aligns with your likely values or priorities.

Attribution

Using Others' Behavior as a Guide to Their Lasting Traits: First, we are likely to consider behavior as corresponding a person's traits when the **behavior seems freely chosen**. In contrast, if behavior appears to be somehow forced on the person in question, we tend to see it as less indicative of that person's traits. Second, we pay careful attention to **actions that show noncommon effects**—conditions that can be caused by one specific factor, but not by others. Third, we pay more attention to others' actions that are **low in social desirability**, than to actions that are high on this dimension.

Scenario (low social desirability):

A student openly admits in class that they did not prepare for the exam and failed because they spent the entire weekend playing video games.

Low Social Desirability:

The behavior (admitting to procrastination and failure) is low in social desirability because most people would try to present themselves in a positive light, such as making excuses or downplaying their lack of preparation.

Attribution Implication:

Observers are likely to attribute the student's behavior to their internal characteristics (e.g., honesty, lack of motivation, or irresponsibility) rather than external factors (e.g., the difficulty of the exam). This is because low social desirability behaviors are often seen as genuine and not influenced by societal pressure to conform.

Impression and management

Impression formation—how we develop our views of others—is an important aspect of social perception. This fact raises several critical questions: What, exactly, are first impressions? How are they formed—and how quickly? Are they accurate?

We don't form impressions of people by just adding up all the traits we notice about them. Instead, we see these traits as connected to each other, combining them into a complete and dynamic picture of the person, rather than thinking of each trait on its own. Solomon Asch's theory suggests that the traits we observe in others are integrated into a unified whole, rather than seen as isolated features.

Example

You meet a person who is **intelligent**, **confident**, and **arrogant**.

- **Adding Traits Individually:**

If you consider each trait separately, you might think, "They are intelligent, which is a good thing; confident, which is also positive; but arrogant, which is bad."

- **Perceiving Traits as a Whole:**

When you view these traits together, the arrogance might be interpreted as stemming from their confidence and intelligence. Instead of seeing the arrogance as purely negative, you might view it as part of a "strong personality."

This shows how we combine traits into a bigger picture, influencing the overall impression of the person.

Impression and management

Impression management—Social psychologists use the term impression management or self-presentation to describe these efforts to make a good impression on others. The research results on this process suggest it is well worth our effort: people who engage in impression management successfully often gain important advantages in many situations.

Tactics for “Looking Good” to Others: Although we use many different techniques for boosting our images, most of these tactics fall into two major categories: **self-enhancement (efforts to increase our appeal to others)** and **other-enhancement (efforts to make the target person feel good in various ways)**.

Self-enhancement: Physical appearance relates to the attractiveness and appeal of the individual, while professional appearance relates to personal grooming, appropriate dress, and personal hygiene.

Forms of **other-enhancement** include flattering others, expressing agreement with them, doing favors for others, and asking for their advice.

Growing evidence, much of it from practical real-life situations, indicates that impression management tactics do not always work. Up to a point, efforts to “put our best foot forward” do result in positive first impressions. But if others perceive we are trying to fool them, they may react negatively. Excessive use of these tactics will likely produce negative rather than positive results.

Class task



You have 1 min to choose one recycling poster for your classrooms.
Also write reasons why you make the choice.