

Sensing the World... https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1E12E0504&list=PL12E0504&index=1&feature=player_embedded

Sensation is referred to as being **bottom-up processing** or the detection of environmental stimuli from our senses up to the brain.

Perception refers to **top-down processing** or the process by which we select, organize and interpret our sensations.

Basic Principles:

Absolute Threshold: refers to the lowest amount of stimulus needed to notice it **50%** of the time.

Signal Detection Theory: allows us to predict when we will notice a weak stimulus (signal). It takes into consideration that the detection of a stimulus also depends on your state of arousal, expectations, experiences, and motivation.

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Subliminal Stimulation: refers to a stimulus that is below your absolute threshold in that you detect **it less than 50%** of the time. For instance, a speck of dust that falls on your face is subliminal to you because you cannot see it with your naked eye.

***Research shows that subliminal advertisements (Drink Coke, eat popcorn etc.), do have an affect on you but don't persuade you.**

<http://www.squidoo.com/visual-examples-of-subliminal-messages>

Difference Threshold (just noticeable difference or jnd): the lowest difference you can detect between two stimuli **50%** of the time.

For example, if you are able to detect a difference in the weight of two objects that are 10 lbs and 10.5 lbs but only 50% of the time, then this 0.5 lb difference is described as your difference threshold. Someone who is well trained musically will have a lower difference threshold than someone who is not; the musician is better able to detect slight differences in tone.

This difference increases with the magnitude of the stimulus. For example, you will be able to tell the difference between a 10 lb weight and a 15 lb weight but you will not notice a difference between a 110 lb weight and a 115 lb weight even though both sets differ by the same 5 lbs.

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Weber's Law: states that two stimuli must differ in proportion, not in absolute amount, for a person to detect it.

Sensory Adaptation: is one's lowered sensitivity due to constant exposure from a stimulus. For example, when you go into a classroom you may notice an odor...but this only lasts for a little while because after constant exposure to a stimulus, our nerve cells fire less frequently.

Selective Attention: is the idea that at any moment focus on only a few aspects of our experience/stimuli to process

Cocktail Party effect: is our ability to focus on one voice among many

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkn3wRy69Bk>

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