

Critical Failures in Perception Lead to Critical Failures in Performance



Everything we do in this world begins with perception.

*If there is a breakdown within perception there will
always be a breakdown in performance*



For many of us, it is easy to take the world we see and experience for granted. We consistently find ourselves on the same page as others, and are able to share our experiences with them without any real difficulty. However, when we do come across people who do not see and experience the world as we do, we tend to find it difficult to understand why their worldview seems so skewed and out of kilter with our own, and why they cannot perform at the same level as we do.

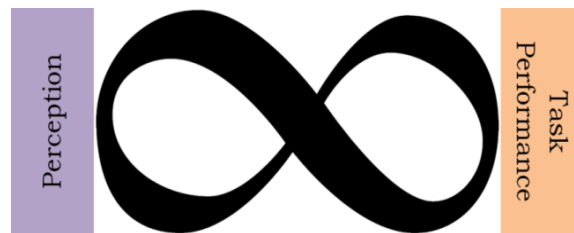
But what most of us do not realise is that we are only ever seeing and experiencing the surface or veneer of life, and that we are completely oblivious to a rather extensive and profound process ticking along underneath, behind the scenes. It will take a marked change in perspective for any of us to ever become aware of, and to enter into, this hidden world; and when we add to all of this by realising that we are all trained from a very early age to analyse and interpret our experience intellectually with our mind, rather than experiencing life directly, it shouldn't be surprising that the understanding most of us have or how we do what we do, is all very limited.

The fundamental nature of our worldview is found in our experience, not in our mind, and every bit



of it arises as a consequence of perception – the processing and integration of sensory information. There is no other way for us to receive information about our world, except by way of our senses and our perception of this information; and every action we take, we take subsequent to, and as a consequence of, perception.

At the core of all performance is the reciprocal dynamic of perception and performance



Perception is the means, by which we see and experience the world and, it is the way by which we make sense of the world.

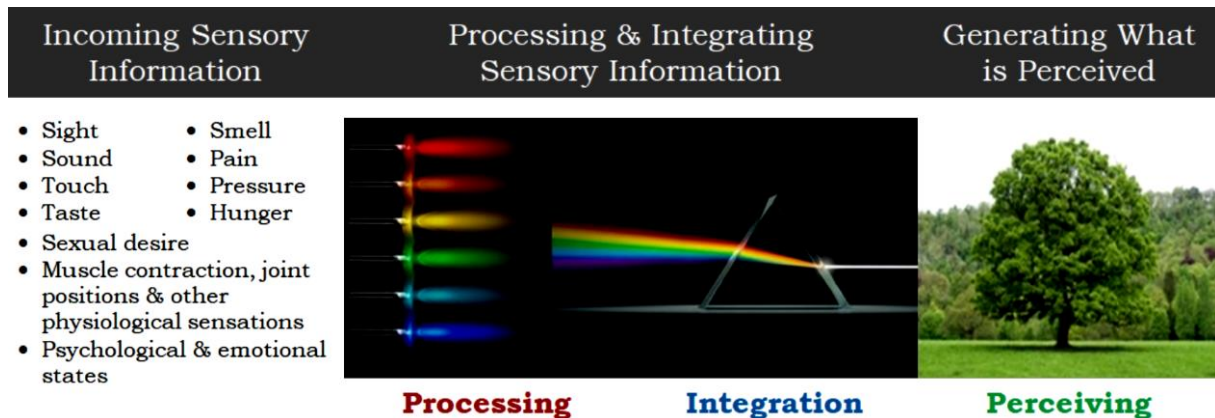
In order to perceive, we must be able to link or associate pieces of sensory information with each other. Doing this requires a very fundamental capacity to form inter-relationships, which in turn, allows patterns of information to coalesce out of what would otherwise be a field of undifferentiated sensory information, or sensory noise.

The same core skills, abilities and processes, which allow us to perceive, also allow us to generate patterns of performance, we are just utilising them in a reciprocal way in order to do this. For example, while perception is all about recognising patterns, performance is all about constructing patterns, hence we can talk about the necessity of the core ability to recognise and construct patterns, in order to be fully functional.¹

Perception and performance exist as a reciprocal dynamic where each aspect influences and alters the other ie: performance alters what is perceived as soon as any action or activity is initiated, and perception alters performance because performance is based on what is perceived. However, we also need to be aware that performance is something we to perceive and perception is something we are performing.

¹ It's important to understand that while pattern recognition and construction is a core skill required in order to be functional, there is still more to performance than just this. We need to get into the habit of asking, "But how do we do that?" until there is no further need to ask the question, because the answer is already self-apparent.

And so, it is only by connecting the dots between pieces of sensory information that the patterns of information coalesce and emerge, from which our worldview is constructed; and, because we receive sensory information from a multitude of different sources, we are able to experience life as a deep and rich dynamic, and in a multi-dimensional way.



However, for the person who struggles, their reality can be anywhere from a little to a whole lot different from our own experience, and here is why.

Our perceptual performance is the means by which we process and integrate (perceive) vast amounts of sensory information, cumulating in the expression or generation of our worldview. However, if our capacity to receive and process sensory information is in anyway compromised or limited, we will not be able to process the same volumes of sensory information, and there will be corresponding limitations within what we perceive. And, because performance is so intimately related to perception, what is missing from what is being perceived, will also be missing from within performance. When we observe someone struggling to perform everyday tasks, we are seeing the consequence of this, primarily in the quality of their task performance and the quality of work (outcomes) they are generating.

However, there is a further consequence to this breakdown in sensory processing. The information that is not processed remains in the central nervous system as undifferentiated sensory information or sensory noise. This is experienced as sensory overload and anyone who struggles is in some degree of overload.

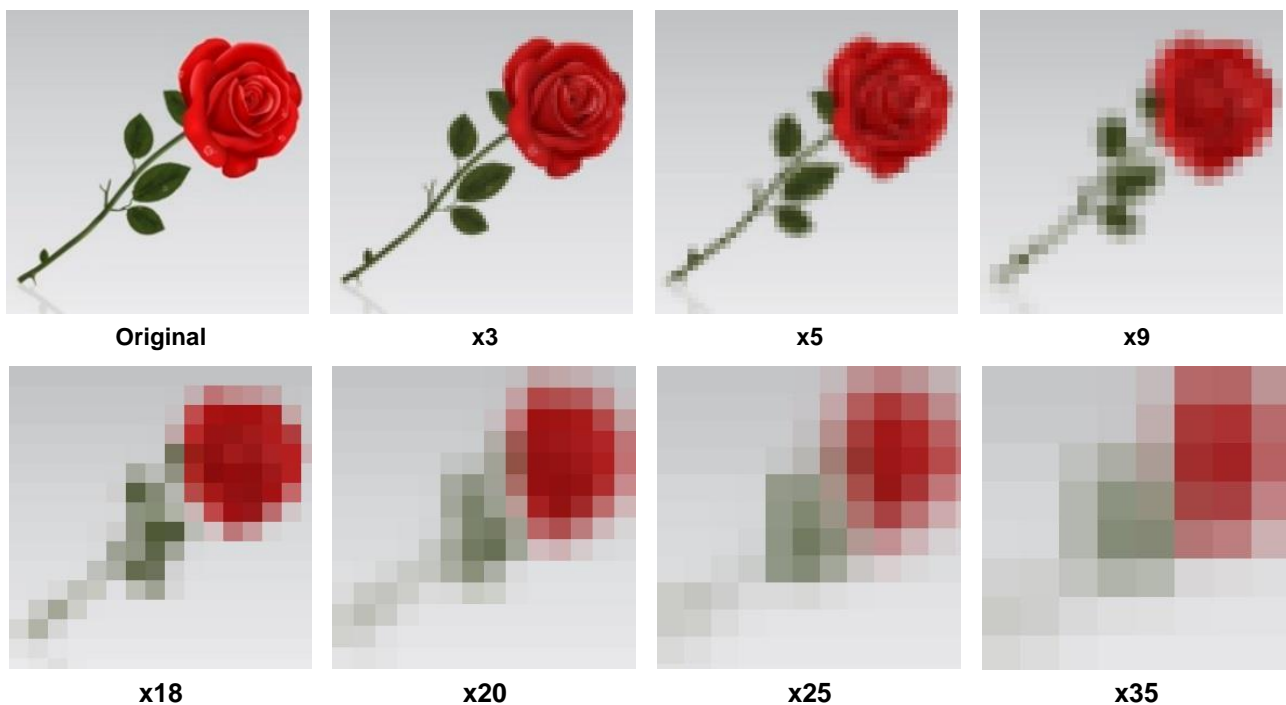
Ultimately, anyone who struggles in the performance of everyday tasks does so because they have a breakdown in their perceptual performance, specifically their visual perceptual performance.² When we understand the function of visual perceptual performance and apply this to what we are

² This is because of the priorities that exist within perceptual performance, where visual perceptual performance has to have the priority over all other areas of perceptual performance, from age 3 – 3½ onwards, in order for any of us to be fully functional.

observing in a person's task performance, behaviour and demeanour of the person, we realise we are observing various functional indicators of visual perceptual performance, or pointers which relate directly back to where the breakdown is likely to be occurring within their visual perceptual performance.³

Ultimately, our functional performance exists in a chain of performance - what we observe at the level of visual perceptual performance, relates directly back to neuro-cognitive issues, and to issues within the structure and function of the brain. However, when we understand task performance from the perspective of visual perceptual performance, not only does everything make so much more sense, we also realise that most of what we took to be real and actual on the level of neuro-cognitive performance, was only ever an appearance.

To demonstrate how limitations in the capacity to receive and process sensory information impact on what we perceive, I have produced a series of images of a rose, and I have pixelated them to varying degrees. We can see how the image loses definition and becomes increasingly less refined as information is removed from it.



The original image of the rose has drops of water on the petals, however, by image x5, we can no longer perceive them, allowing us to see how the subtleties of the image are steadily lost as information is removed.

³ It's important to note that it is not possible to determine the full extent of the breakdown in performance, or what that breakdown comprises of by only observing someone performing everyday tasks. There is simply too much information contained within our worldview and it obscures what is happening at these deeper levels, from view. We will need to undertake a visual perceptual evaluation in order to determine the true extent of this breakdown, and that person will need a therapy that targets visual perceptual performance, in order to resolve their struggle. It is because of the failure to understand this that those contemporary interventions have such limited value in addressing these disorders.

This is what is happening for the child struggling to understand highly refined tasks, such as reading or maths, for example. Information is missing from what they are perceiving and they are not seeing or experiencing the same thing that we are. Now, while we may have been lead to believe that this is an issue of everyone 'learning differently,' such ideas are only ever an example of misinterpreting the child's performance, because we are observing it from a limited and/or inappropriate perspective. As soon as we shift or change our perspective and see the reality of the child's performance for what it is, we experience one of those 'Ah-ha" moments as everything becomes startlingly clear for us.

Ultimately, anyone who struggles with performing everyday tasks, regardless of history, diagnosis or whatever we may have come to believe, has a visual perceptual deficit, and if we do not correct this, but persist in attempting to have them practice the very things they have already demonstrated they cannot do, we will maintain them in their dysfunction, as well as inadvertently training them into dysfunctional modes of task performance.

When we look at human performance from this more subtle and refined perspective, we are putting performance under a metaphorical microscope. This allows us to see exactly where their issues are arising from, and correct them; and, because we are doing this are a very deep level within perception and performance, change typically happens very quickly and in remarkably transformative ways.

The Visual Perceptual Therapy is a new generation of therapy, a true 21st century therapy, allowing anyone who has neuro-cognitive issues to quickly, effectively and permanently improve upon their performance in some truly remarkable ways. Neuro-cognitive issues underpin things such as:

- childhood struggles in school and beyond
- Continued struggles with literacy and numeracy, etc into adulthood
- Struggles associated with stroke and traumatic brain injury
- General struggles with performing everyday tasks and understanding life in general

If you would like to know more about the Visual Perceptual Therapy, and how struggles with everyday tasks can be corrected, you can visit the website www.visualperceptual.com or contact me via info@visualperceptual.com

The Visual Perceptual Therapy is available all around the world, via Skype, meaning that it doesn't matter where in the world you are, you can have a face to face conversation with me, or work with me from your own home.

Natoya Rose
Occupational Therapist

*With that, I would like to welcome you to my world,
the world of visual perceptual performance*

