

All human beings have mindsets – they are ‘rules for life’ such as knowing the Green Cross Code to help us cross the road safely. Mindsets help us to get through life; for instance, we know the format when we go to a self service petrol station: you park at a pump, choose which fuel you want, press keys for payment options etc.

However, sometimes our mindsets actually get in the way of our effectiveness in people interactions. We make judgments based on past experience which may be less objective than we need it to be. There are 3 main areas which tap into previous ‘mindsets’ or rules about life which can affect the appraisal interview:

The Halo Effect:

- There is something you admire about this person and the interview is slanted towards this:
- Their appearance, physical attractiveness
- One strongly positive attribute they have
- Their opinions or interests match yours (known as the Narcissus effect – we fall in love with ourselves)
- They performed as a star in a project critical to you
- Etc., etc, etc.



The Horns effect: (also known as negativity effect)

- This is where all our prejudices are evoked; the appraisee is deemed to have a tough time from early on into the interview.
- Any of the above list for halo effect can apply.



Stereotyping:

This is where we can generalise our mindsets or ‘secondary’ mindsets (of others) to a wide population:

- Football fans are...
- Women are...
- Men are...
- The English are...
- Etc, etc, etc.

These can be negative or positive.



All 3 are dangerous and may lead to a subjective, harmful appraisal or performance review. Think about it:

- **The halo effect** – I will receive poor quality constructive feedback so what chance of me developing myself?
- **The horns effect** – The feedback may be biased towards my failings, or even be directed towards my personality and I may end up feeling de-motivated, demoralised or depressed.
- **Stereotyping** is dangerous as we can make huge decisions about a person because of race, gender, beliefs, hobbies. Can we REALLY say all golfers are...?

An Office Angels survey found that a poorly managed appraisal review can lead to staff looking for alternative employment. 25% of respondents looked for another job within 2 weeks of the review whilst 40% did so within a month of a poor review. It is worth taking the time to step back from the facts you have and sum up a whole review period, good and bad.