Constructive perceptual positions

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<th>Constructive motives</th>
<th>Unconstructive motives</th>
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**First position — concern for self:** Understanding and stating your own position. Your attention is on your own feelings, needs and goals, to the neglect of the other person. You are aware of your own concerns but relatively blind to the concerns of the other person. Physically and psychologically you are in the same place.

Win/Win — to express your own position clearly in a way that encourages useful discussion. You speak to inform more than to persuade.

Win/Lose, or at least to make sure that if there is a winner it will be you. You speak to win, and to persuade more than to inform.

**Second position — concern for the other:** Understanding the other person’s position. Your attention is on the other person’s feelings, needs and goals, and the effect of what you say and do on that person. You are more aware of (what you think are) their concerns than of your own. Psychologically you are where they are.

To understand deeply what it is like for the other person in this situation — to tune in to their concerns, expressed or not expressed.

Not to upset the other person — to placate, to avoid conflict, to avoid giving the other person any reason to act against you.

**Third position — concern for the interaction:** Managing the interaction. Your attention is on the interaction between you and the other person. You are a disinterested observer, aware of the nature of the exchange between you and the other person. Psychologically you are a “fly on the wall”.

To understand the dynamics of the interaction, so that you can improve it for both of you if necessary.

To remain disengaged or uninvolved. This reduces the danger that you will become upset or embarrassed or the like.

**Fourth position — concern for the organisation (or community etc.):** Managing the context. Your attention is on the consequences for the organisation of the interaction, and the influences on the interaction of the organisation. Psychologically this is the “helicopter view”, taking in the interaction in its organisational context.

To match the needs of individual and organisation. To find ways of meeting the needs of the organisation, yourself, and the other person.

To find ways of meeting the needs of the organisation, or seem to do so, at whatever cost to the other person and yourself.