Perception Checking

Perception checking is a good tool to help you understand others accurately instead of jumping to conclusions or assuming that your first interpretation is the correct one. Using this strategy can be a way of reducing defensiveness in the other person since you are not attacking them, you are merely asking for clarification. Another additional benefit is that it can preserve the face of both parties and prevent a fight over a misunderstanding.

The assignment is to complete a perception check in your real life. Perception checking involves three steps 1. A description of the behavior that you noticed, 2. At least two possible interpretations of the behavior, 3. A request for clarification.

Example:
"You said you really liked the job I did." (behavior) "On the other hand, there was something about your voice which made me think that you may not like it." (first interpretation) "Maybe it’s just my imagination though." (Second interpretation) "What did you really think about the job?" (request for clarification)

Example:
"When you stomped out of the room and slammed the door" (behavior), "I wasn’t sure if you were mad at me" (first interpretation) “or just in a hurry” (second interpretation) “What’s up?” (request for clarification)

Perception checking Paper Directions:
I want you to try it out on someone; ideally, I’d like you to try it on more than one person, in more than one situation. Then I want you to address the following questions in your 1/2 page paper. What were the situation(s) where you used perception checking? How can you use perception checking effectively in your life? What aspects of perception checking are the most helpful? Which are the least helpful? What did you learn as you went through the process?