**Video Title**: The Halo Effect: How Attractiveness Flows Using the Psychology of Attraction

**Video URL:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2h6HeqO-U9c>

**Running Time/Source:** 5:36, Practical Psychology/YouTube

**Close Caption Available:** Yes

The halo effect is described briefly on page 62 of the textbook as a mental process of people. The halo effect is a psychological bias where we give a positive or negative weight based on how people, brands, or things are associated with another quality or trait. The concept was first recognized by pioneering psychologist Thorndike in 1920 in his study of soldiers. The presenter packs an enormous amount of information about the halo effect into the video. Several of the key points are described next.

A major influence of the halo effect is to judge people by their appearance. A physically attractive person is often judged to have high intelligence. Our first image of a person can influence the perception of that individual’s other traits and behaviors.

The halo effect is also regarded as a cognitive bias that involves making judgments based on appearance. One characteristic of a person influences our judgment of other characteristics of a person, both positively and negatively. Childhood fairytales use the halo effect in the sense that heroes and heroines are depicted as physically attractive, whereas villains are often depicted as ugly.

Job applicants who are attractive are likely to have a better chance of landing a job. We often judge organizations and brands by their external image. Employees might also be judged based on an outstanding trait, such as being dedicated, prompting a favorable performance evaluation. Celebrities are hired to build an image of a brand. Physically attractive people might be less frequently accused of committing a crime.

Being perceived as physically attractive can also lead to negative attributions such as being narcissistic and superficial. Politicians are often judged based on their physical appearance. Evaluations of professors can also be influenced by the halo effect. Student performance might also be judged based on the halo effect.

The presenter advises to avoid judging people based on a first impression of their appearance. She also reminds us that people who do not conform to conventional standards of physical attractiveness might have many good personal qualities. The presenter also advises that you can use the halo effect to your advantage in attracting other people for dating purposes.

*Questions for Thought and Discussion*

1. How might the halo effect relate to the current emphasis on diversity and inclusion?

2. Aren’t most managers and professional people smart enough not to be fooled by the halo effect?

3. Identify any aspect of the halo effect you can think of that might influence your judgment about a person.

4. Which characteristic about you would you emphasize in order to have an advantage in a job search?

5. Should the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission attempt to outlaw the halo effect when hiring job candidates, or evaluating the performance of present employees?