

## Sleight Of Mouth

Part of the function of this Communicating Excellence web page is to make NLP , Hypnotherapy and Coaching resources freely available for your learning and continued development. Free resources are of course really valuable but there is no substitute for experience.

If you choose to attend either our Newcastle upon Tyne NLP Practitioner beginning September or our Hypnotherapy Diploma you will get the experiential learning of many reframing processes that you can use in all contexts of your life now, back to Sleight Of Mouth.

In the same way you have been learning about the structure of subjective experience *before* you learned NLP or hypnotherapy, you will have already learned about '*sleight of mouth*' or **reframing**. and *you already know how to* and *how* this works - even if you are not fully aware of the structure consciously. This is an exemplification of some patterns Robert Dilts coded from what Richard Bandler was doing.

I was introduced and taught Sleight Of Mouth (SOM) as some 15 coded interventions. SOM is simply re-framing. This is my recollection of the patterns Ian introduced me to which I recall come all the way from a Connie Ray and Steve Andreas training in the nineties.

First here is a list in no particular order of the labels and then you can continue with the examples of the patterns while your teaching yourself the meaning to the labels.

### SOM Labels

1. prior cause
2. chunking up/down/sideways and 'logical level'
3. change the frame size
4. redefine
5. consequence
6. counter example
7. another outcome
8. reality strategy
9. intention
10. model of the world
11. switch referential index
12. apply to self
13. hierarchy of criteria
14. meta frame
15. metaphor

Lets begin with making use of an operating belief and this is a **model** that classifies all problems ( all enablings too ) as either *complex-equivalences* ( CEq) or *cause-effects* (CEf). If you 'act as if' this model is true then all SOM acts to redefine or re-frame or simply soften up the implied cause-effects and / or complex-equivalents.

Do keep in mind 'how' you might use your tonality when delivering the responses; Its **both** what you say and how you say it.

## SOM Examples

Here is the form of the 'problem' and possible SOM interventions.

**"some problem"**

**"som application 1", "som application 2", "som application 3"**

The intervention may deal with the 'whole' problem in one go or it may deal with aspects of the problem. It is your job to determine where this happens. Remember the *structure* of the problem in this model is CEF or CEQ, by changing just one aspect of a part, the *relationship* within the *whole must change at some level*.

**"Smiling in that way me means he doesn't like me".**

This is a complex equivalence statement. Here 'smiling' MEANS 'not like' and this can be addressed like this.

1. Address 'smiling'. **"That's not smiling that's just stretching his face"**
2. Address 'not like'. **"The way he's looking at you - he thinks your OK"**
3. Address it all. **"No my friend, that means he fancies you!"**

## 1. Prior Cause

Address / explore a perceived cause ( what came before ) of the 'problem'

**"I can't learn very easily"**

**"Yes, you don't seem in the right mood yet"**

**"What makes you perceive it in that particular way"**

**"You seem to have very easily learnt to say things like that "**

## 2. Chunking

Occurs in time and or space.

Differences ( chunk down ) / commonalities (chunk up) /  
additional examples (chunk sideways)

**"Feeling this way stops me having fun"**

**"But having fun is a type of feeling"** - chunk up

**"What exactly are you feeling?"** - chunk down

**"Then touch something that makes you laugh"** - chunk sideways

**"Sure, not at this exact instant in time"** - chunk down

**"Thats just your perception"** - chunk up

### 3. Change the Frame Size

Explore a smaller or larger part / aspect of the original 'problem'

*"being fat means nobody loves me"*

*"Who are you comparing yourself against?"*

*"Are you seriously claiming to think that no one has ever or will ever love you?"*

*"Your ears are skinny"*

*"What do you mean when you say love"*

### 4. Redefine

To offer 'another' meaning to all or some of the parts of the 'problem'

*"Arguing makes me have headaches"*

*"Are you saying differing opinions aren't always particularly comfortable for you?"*

*"Arguing means you feel strongly about it"*

*"That head tension can be a real bummer"*

### 5. Consequence

what 'may' happen over time resulting from the 'problem'

*"My problems stopped when I met you"*

*"Muaha Ha ha ha thats what you think!!"*

*"Maybe your life is less unpredictable now"*

*"You used to have fun figuring things out"*

*"Your not as adventurous as you used to be"*

### 6. Counter Example

Provide an exception to the current predicament

*"I cant live in a dirty room it drives me mad"*

*"Your room is clean compared to Sally's"*

*"We both know you are quite sane"*

*"Your sane enough to live in filth"*

*"There is many a philosopher lived in a cave"*

### 7. Another Outcome

Explore other possible outcomes

*"It looks like that very expensive course is really good"*

*"Its a fast track, the person that runs it puts money well before people"*

*"Its practice that will get you what you want, not throwing money"*

*"You could do 3 quality courses for that money,wouldn't that be great?"*

*"You pay a fortune for a certificate but what is it you really want?"*

## 8. Reality Strategy

Question the basis for this 'reality'

*"Its too hard to be successful"*

*"How do you know that?"*

*"That's a glib statement, How is it hard?"*

*"How are you evaluating success?"*

*"How come?"*

## 9. Intention

explore the positive intention ( or purpose ) of the behaviour

*"I cant seem to find my form today"*

*"Is there something more important on your mind today?"*

*"Wow! What could be the purpose of that?"*

*"So what's that about then?"*

## 10. Model of the World

Forge the persons filters which are currently limiting them

*"Children should do what they are told"*

*"Seems you are too maternal to realise they are adults"*

*"Do you still play as much as them?"*

*"Even if it really bad advice?"*

*"Have you tried just asking?"*

*"Yes your right they are having much too much fun"*

*"They do most of the time"*

*"Your just set in you ways Grumblenose"*

## 11. Switch Referential Index

Change the reference to another person

*"Everybody thinks I am wrong"*

*"I dont think you are wrong"*

*"What do you think?"*

*"Do you think you are wrong?"*

*"You will be surprised that Sandy thinks your right too"*

## 12. Apply to Self

Make the comment / sentence directly apply to only the speaker

*"This job is too big to complete"*

*"You are too small to finish this"*

*"Ha! No problem for me, its easy"*

*"It clearly much too big for you thats what you mean"*

*"Yes you seem to have taken on way to much for yourself there"*

### 13. Hierarchy of Criteria

Considering the relative or relational importance

*"No matter how hard I try I am never successful"*

*"Which is more important, moaning about it or getting on and doing it?"*

*"Trying for success and succeeding are two different things"*

*"So what will success mean to you, what is more important than success?"*

*"Then clearly your trying has nothing to do with your succeeding!"*

*"What is your criteria for success?"*

### 14. Meta-Frame

Think bigger and / or abstract picture

*"This project is not going to be completed within the required time frame!"*

*"The learning from this one will make the next one run smoother and faster"*

*"You don't know what you say is incorrect until the time frame expires"*

*"With an attitude like that you are probably right"*

*"Where can the most efficiencies be made right now?"*

*"Don't you know 80% is good enough"*

### 15. Metaphor

A story that encompasses or parallels the problem and / or solution

*"This customer is a real difficult nasty one"*

*"I recall once being phoned by a sales person, they were very pushy and I thought rather unpleasant. As a customer you can tell when someone is having a bad day or has less than pleasant and genuine thought towards the customer."*

*"Once I had had a really bad day, not like stubbing your toe or anything like that, this was like wearing flip-flops and standing in dog shit. Anyway I was in a foul mood, really upset about something and I had to then go to the bank to get some thing done. When I spoke to the teller they actually looked at me and asked with what sounded like genuine compassion - you appear to be a little upset, can I help. That made a lot of difference to me I tell you."*

*"One of the weird and deep things I heard once was I think from a Deepak Chopra tale about choosing how you respond, it is something like this. If someone pays you a complement you can choose to be flattered and if someone insults you you can choose to be hurt - BUT its still a choice"*

## Hints and Tips

In addition to having learned how to use the patterns you might like to consider the following hints and tips...

- Like the meta model and many other interventions, each specific 'labelled' application or intervention can often be described by more than one label at the same time - A really useful exercise is to work through the SOM labels and categorise them. For example 'ALL the SOM patterns are 'redefinitions'', changing the frame size can be an example of 'lateral chunking' ...
- SOM, like provocative therapy is a content imposition model. This means you are inventing content ( from your model of the world ) and imposing it on / in / about your client in order to affect change. How could you use the SOM patterns in a content freeway?
- By knowing when you can apply a slight of mouth pattern you implicitly have identified a Cef or CEq. Nice.
- Find somewhere where you have a current limitation and write it out. Continue the change process by applying all of the SOM patterns to that statement you made.

kind regards  
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