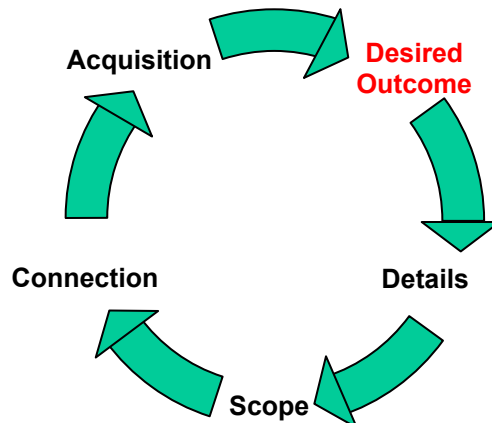


A MINI MODEL FOR MODELLING

When people decide to undertake a serious modelling project, it seems that for many of them, they enter into a quagmire of doubt and confusion, assailed by the belief that this will be really difficult, it will be fraught with complexity and that it will prove to be bigger than them, and that their inadequacy will out.

If this description matches your experience, then relax and shout hurrah, since this initial response matches that of many of the great modellers. What then happens is that the call, or pull of the subject persuades the modeller to carry on, and so the journey into the unknown begins. Happily many of us have experienced the fruits of their labours.

THE MODELLING MODEL



Previous articles have addressed some of the aspects involved in the modelling process. This article offers yet another angle, at a different level of thinking, to assist adventuring modellers on your way. It takes John McWhirter's model of Detail, Scope, Connection and combines it with other aspects of the Acquisition process. Hopefully it defuses complexity and incorporates existing understanding, to shed light and infuse confidence.

The starting and finishing point is the Desired Outcome. In between, the model covers the details gathered, the patterns emerging, the meaning generated, and then the process of converting the understanding into a tangible activity or process to enable another to acquire and attain that desired outcome.

DIFFERENT MODELLING RELATIONSHIPS

Traditionally, the end product of a modelling enterprise is the production of something which another can acquire. Even just last month, John Grinder reiterated his belief that this was 'proper' modelling and anything else should be regarded as an additional subset. I would suggest that Grinder has become somewhat stuck in his thinking since experience would suggest otherwise.

Modelling is the process by which we can identify the structure or organisation of another's model of their world. The systemic relationship between the modeller, the exemplar and acquirer can take on different shapes. At least three are offered below.

- Product Modelling
Exemplar → **Modeller** → **Acquirer**
This is where the information goes from Exemplar through the Modeller and out to the Acquirer.
- Therapy
Exemplar → Acquirer
This is where the information generated by the Exemplar so that they can make sense of their own model of the world and then identify and make the necessary adjustments arising from this awareness.
- Self Modelling
Modeller → Exemplar → Acquirer
This is where the modeller uses themselves as the source of information and in the light of what's revealed understands what needs to be done next.

Suffice to say for this article and for our Master Practitioner application, the Product Modelling process is adopted, because this way all the components in the process can be covered.

DESIRED OUTCOME

You need to know what it is you want to identify and replicate. A previous article has covered this process in much greater depth. Overall, you need to consider if the topic is something that will primarily be beneficial for yourself, and one which others can benefit from it as well, or if it is intended first and foremost as a benefit for others. For example modelling effective networking may be of personal benefit for a modeller starting up in business, whilst modelling effective prescribing practices may have significant benefits for patients and the NHS as a whole.

To help you decide, you may want to consider developing experience of a Belief or a series of beliefs which support particular behaviour. Or you may want to isolate the ability of attaining a particular State. Or more traditionally, you may have identified a Skill and its associated behaviours as your target outcome. In each of these, the Thinking, Being or Doing of the behaviour, you will gain a direct associated experience of the desired outcome. Conversely you may seek to attain an Understanding of the process or experience. Here you will gain knowledge about the process from a dissociated position.

It is worth mentioning that many modellers stop at the Understanding point and never devise an acquisition method. This means they remain dissociated from the process, because they haven't given themselves the opportunity to gain a real reference experience.

You need to know which stage in the process you want to focus on, and also the bite sized that you are embarking upon. Small is beautiful. You can always string them together to create a much more magnificent whole later on.

Whatever you decide, without fail, you need to have A CLEAR VAK DESCRIPTION of the desired outcome, both associated and dissociated, from your first position perspective and from viewing another with this outcome. This is your evidence of success. Attainment of this outcome will be your exit trigger of your TOTE.

DETAILS

This is your gathering of information stage. You have identified your exemplars. They may be known to you, they may emerge through articles or film, books or anecdote. Whatever the source, you are compiling information around the activity of interest.

You will have gathered at least three examples of the activity, either from the same exemplar, or from three different exemplars. If you don't, you won't be able to start to detect patterns and you run the risk of generalising from one event. Here's a thought from John McWhirter. Avoid seeking out the excellent and go for the very good Exemplars in your chosen field. The excellent usually have had to sacrifice something along the way to achieve such standards. It may be much more ecological for your system and that of your future acquirers to go for a model that is less extreme.

Just notice that there will be piles of information that you are consciously gathering – the newer you are to the process the more extraneous the information. Getting sucked into the topic is such a killer for precision and succinctness! Believing that you need to develop a strong bond with the Exemplar does tend to seduce you into social niceties and deflect you from your forensic purpose. And of course you know you need to guard against believing that the Exemplar knows what he or she does. Trust the evidence that you are actually seeing, hearing, picking up, before you trust their words.

Then there is all the information that you are absorbing unconsciously. This is particularly fruitful when you have entered the enquiry with pre-set filters and a preconceived idea of what you might find. Whilst you are looking for those, your unconscious mind is picking up all the rest – you hope! This will only be of use if you believe it to be and if you call upon it..

Finally know that most of your information will end up on the cutting room floor.

SCOPING

You've got sheets and sheets of paper. You may well have your recorder or MP3 stuffed full of soundbites and coughs. You may even have splashed out on a video. Whatever your storage system, the time has now come to make sense of all you've gathered.

If you are unfortunate, you will have already decided what is significant. This means that you have run the risk of deleting essential data, which was dancing under your very nose. In extreme cases, you will be left with a very thin amount of material to work on. Just hope that your hunch was inspired and that your data generates the very behaviours you were wanting – naturally without a huge shoe horn to help them on their way.

If you are a more confident modeller, then you will just love this phase. It is liked the maestro flexing his fingers just before they are about to plunge into an all consuming opus. This is when you select your sieve of your filter and shake your details through it. Notice what drops through and what stays put. A good modeller repeats this process for different filters. It can be delightfully surprising to discover just what emerges. A poor modeller is reluctant to dismantle their conclusions, no matter how premature or snatched they are. An indifferent modeller will only apply her favourite ones and discard the others.

However there is also the bespoke modeller, who has already decided against reinventing the wheel and has adopted tried and tested models derived by 'elders and betters'. There is much to recommend this. David Gordon, Robert Dilts, David Groves aka James Lawley and Penny Tompkins, John McWhirter have spent much of their life devising and honing their models, It does however reduce the thrill of the chase!

A suggested list of filters is offered below. As NLPers, we are blessed with these fantastic insights and give thanks to the modellers who have gone before us. And guess what, you may just notice something that hasn't been registered before. WOW what a thought!

Suggestions for Scoping Filters

- Meta programmes
- Beliefs
- Metaphors
- Meta model patterns
- States
- Submodalities
- Sequences
- Processes
- Pattern systems
- C -> E
- Strategies
- TOTE

Once you have applied your filters, you will begin to start noticing regular occurrences, repeating sequences, common systems emerging. You are hitting paydirt and bedrock here. You need to make sure that these occurrences happen at least three times, even though your waters already tell you that you are right.

CONNECTION

This is the dangerous phase. This is where you put meaning onto your discoveries. This is dangerous since once allocated it is much harder to dismantle and attribute new meaning. In this phase you begin to evaluate the patterns you are noticing and rigorously test them both with yourself and with others. You are checking for what's missing, what works, when it works and when it doesn't, what else is needed, and the all important question – does it fit, does it feel right?

At this point you are tasting the sauce. You've bought all the ingredients, followed the recipe, and hopefully applied the cooking skills required. Are you now achieving the taste you were expecting?

So much depends here on your congruence signals. This is my personal belief, perhaps shared with David Gordon. His process of 'stepping' in' is the same as trying on the data to find out if it fits and feels right. Any anomalies beg returning to the exemplar for more information.

This is also the stage when you let go of your allegiance to your exemplars. You are now in charge you're your Model and its emerging form. Your exemplars have merely been purveyors of information. You and your system are now in charge. You can add any bits you like. You can reinterpret what you've found. You can combine other models that you know of. You can do anything you like, provided the outcome generates the outcome you were looking for.

I can hear the chorus of outrage from those 'truth huggers' who still cling onto the belief that there is only one perception and that is the right one. I sympathise and acknowledge their desire to honour their relationship with their exemplars. I also suggest that this relationship will get in the way of devising an effective model. As David G would say – at this stage you owe your allegiance to the model.

ACQUISITION

Well if you have got this far, you have distilled all that information into a very simple model with few components – probably no more than seven – which delivers the insight and reference experiences that you were seeking. Now is the time to NLPise it – to pimp it with NLP spin. This is not mandatory of course. Teaching has been around long before NLP to great effect. But, looking at the methods below, notice that NLP offers the special opportunity to gain a neurological description of the experience as well as a cognitive and dissociated sensory description. Just consider how you have been taught in the past. Remember how you learnt your NLP. Everything, yes everything, started life as a model, and came alive through the methodology selected by the modeller and copied or adapted by his followers.

Table of Examples of Acquisition Methods

Descriptive	Illustrative	Physical
Stories Metaphors Questions	Photos Videos Drawings	Spatial Anchors Anchoring Submodalities
Lists Instructions Descriptions	Diagrams Frameworks	Interim Examples

The fun comes in when you take such standard fare even further, and customise it so that the acquirer can experience it through all modalities. Have a look at the listing below you'll recognise all the familiar components to be found collectively across most of the recognised NLP techniques. Those of you familiar with New Code NLP and Intuitive Modelling, will recognise the value of establishing a diagram or framework and then just stepping in to it, accompanied by some targeted questions. You know the surprising information that can be revealed in the process. (That's how this month's exercise was developed.)

Listing of NLP Components

- Time
 - Past present future
- Multiple Perspectives
 - 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc, Meta
 - Mentors
 - Association/dissociation
- Submodalities
- Spatial Anchors
- Anchors
- Stacking
- Collapsing
- Parts
- Neuro Logical Levels
- Presuppositions
- Specific Resources
- Specific States

Now notice how our parent modellers have offered us the ability to acquire Beliefs, States and Skills have been offered within the NLP Repertoire. This may well give you some ideas for your own emergent technique.

Examples of Learning Methodologies

Thinking	Being	Doing	Knowing About
BELIEF	STATE	SKILL	UNDERSTANDING
Reframing SWISH Meta Mirror Reimprinting FADS	Music/Poetry Images SCORE Anchoring Change Personal History NLL Alignment	Strategies Coaching DANCE PMDS	Reading Listening Testing

So you have now devised the vehicle to convey your model to another, so that they can access the desired outcome, effectively, efficiently and elegantly (to use John McWhirter's evaluation criteria.) It's up to you to determine just how to deliver this beauty. It may be in a handout format, as part of a demonstration, or through personal example.

It is essential to remember that this acquirer is not an empty vessel waiting for this experience to transform their lives. They have their own neurology and anything you offer will need to mingle and coalesce with what's already there. So you will not get an exact replication. You will get an approximation. The question for you to decide, is the approximation close enough? Is it within an acceptable range?

If not, this is interesting information. If it is a one-off occurrence then it may be down to your methodology. Go for a different representation modality. If it is more widespread, then you may choose to go back to the Connections drawing board to form different conclusions and so modify your model. If you find sufficient numbers 'not getting it' then you may have to go as far back as the Scoping page. If however, you find that nobody gets what you intended, but all seem to get something else similarly, then you have stumbled upon serendipity and through a well formed mistake discovered something that works, even though you're not immediately sure why. Such are the joys of modelling.

DESIRED STATE REVISITED

Well we have come full circle. You have got in or around what you were looking for. You have survived the journey and learnt so much on the way – about yourself, about perception and reality, about your ability to think and explore and about the wonderful nature that is neurology.

So you can choose to rest on your laurels and be a deserved one-hit wonder. Or you may realise that you now have the bug, and you are already scanning events to reveal the next area of your interest.

Whatever you do, rest assured that you leave the world potentially a better place as a result of your efforts.

POST SCRIPT

Just to prove these points, the model offered as a diagram at the start of this article is now offered to you as an exercise, so that you not only gain Understanding about modelling through reading this article, you also gain a visceral somatic wisdom through stepping into it and guiding yourself through it. I would be delighted to hear of the additional and possibly unexpected insights that you gained as a result.

Fran Burgess
31 October 2005