

Hierarchy of Ideas

THE MODEL

Chunking Up

Agreement



"What is this an Example of?"

"For What Purpose...?"

"What is your intention...?"

In Mediation, chunk up to get agreement.
Chunk-up until you get a Nominalization.

The Structure of Intuition: The ability to chunk-up to find connections & relationships, and then to chunk back down & relate to the current situation. It's rare to find a large chunker who sorts for information -- they are usually small chunkers.

"What are examples of this?"

"What specifically...?"

-- any Meta Model Question



Details & Distinctions

Chunking Down

AD Type

In Trance

Big Picture

Abstract—Milton Model

The Structure of Overwhelm: Too Big Chunks

Existence



Movement



Transportation



Buses -- Boats -- Cars -- Planes -- Trains

Classes & Categories

Parts

BMW

Eg Wheels

X4

Hub Caps

Petrol

Lug Nuts

The Structure of Nit-Picking: Chunking Down and Mismatching

Specific — Meta Model

Details

Sensor

Lateral Chunking – you need to ask 2 questions

- a) What is this an example of?
- b) What is another example of this?

Precision Questioning

As a Sales Champion your job is clearly discover and define what outcomes your client is looking to achieve from utilizing your service. By asking precise questions, it gives you a golden opportunity to uncover specifically what your client's desired results are. Holding these in your mind will be useful later in the sales process when it comes to linking their requirements with the benefits of your service.

Outcome Questions:

“What do you want?”

“What is your outcome?”

“For what purpose?”

“What will that do for you?”

“What will that accomplish?”

“What will that allow you to do?”

“What do you want from a?”

“What are you looking for in a?”

Evidence Questions:

“What will you see, hear and feel when you have.....?”

“How will you know when you have?”

The Hierarchy of ideas is a linguistic tool that allows the speaker to traverse the realms of abstract to specific easily and effortlessly.

Let's get the ideas of Richard P. Feynman before we move into the NLP use

of the Hierarchy of ideas.

Hierarchy of Ideas

THE MODEL

Chunking Up

Agreement



"What is this an Example of?"

"For What Purpose...?"

"What is your intention...?"

Chunking up involves lifting an idea to a higher more general level. E.g. instead of thinking 'sheep and cows' you can chunk up conceptually to "farm animals", then further up to "animals". Chunking up further, you arrive at "living things"

Chunking down, instead of talking of a dog, you might consider a particular dog, or a part of a dog (paw) or something which dogs do (bark).
Chunking sideways (laterally) you might go to cats, cows, kangaroos or other animals etc... they all from a lower chunk level

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"What specifically...?"

-- any Meta Model Question

Details & Distinctions

Chunking Down

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Abstract—Milton Model

The Structure of Overwhelm: Too Big Chunks

Living Things

Animals

Plants

Farm Animals

Leaf

Stalk

Sheep -- Cow

Food -- Pasta

Classes & Categories

Cow

Food

Beef

Pasta

Roast Beef

Spaghetti

The Structure of Nit-Picking: Chunking Down and Mismatching

Specific — Meta Model

Details

Sensor

Depending on your desired outcome or response, you may want to chunk up to get the “**big picture**”. Other times you may want to chunk down to get the “**specifics**” or more details. Just as words can reflect our sensory preference, it may also **reflect our chunk preference** i.e. some people don’t like details and are big picture people... while others may be of the opinion that “big picture people” are “dreamers” so to get ahead in life/business/career for example you must “be specific” in your everyday communication.

In negotiation or selling you will need flexibility within the whole spectrum, from vague to specific, big chunk to small chunk. For example in negotiation, by chunking up you will more likely gain agreement, even if its only that both parties want a mutual outcome, or that both parties agree to a fair negotiation, or that all stand to gain by finding agreement, or that we all want to settle the matter as soon as possible.

Then by chunking down, you may isolate any obstacles to agreement, and the particular issue that needs addressing. This may hinge on a single clause in a contract, or it might turn out to involve, when isolated, a single minor concession. You may also need to chunk down when a plan or agreement needs implementing, as generalities will not suffice at this stage.

Laterally, you might compare with another deal you have done, or an *example* of a particular issue under consideration. You may need to use all three approaches and each has their own language.

To chunk up... you could ask, “What does that exemplify?” or “What purpose does that have”? Again see how far you can chunk up any word or concept.

To chunk down... you could ask, “What’s an example of that”? Keep repeating the question and see how far you can go.

To go laterally... you could ask “And **another** example of that”? or “How many can you think of”?

By exploring the issue within the heirachy of ideas – the big picture - the significant details – you will access more ideas and insights. Here is an example of how chunking might apply in business:

- I’m sure we both want to conclude a mutually profitable deal [up]
- Lets spend some time on that retention clause [down]
- This formula worked well on the Qld project a couple of years ago [lateral]
- OK, can you spell out the remaining sticking points [down]
- We both want to get away for the weekend [up]
- How did you arrive at the price \$3,500 [down]
- That’s the way we have always worked with our suppliers [lateral]
- We both want this to go well [up]
- It seems we just have to agree on the scheduling, then a couple of minor things [down]
- What if we brought the second installment forward in exchange for 15% discount [down]
- There is nothing either of us can do about the interest rate [up] but what if we can cut part of the management fee? [down]
- What if we get Jack to manage personally? [down]
- I’m sure we could start by the 20th if that will help your people [down]

So chunking up can take the attention off a difficult but minor issue and regain consensus. Chunking down can focus on the relevant insignificance of the items left to negotiate. Whenever you risk losing rapport, chunking one way or the other will tend to restore the other party to a more consensual state of mind. Bear in mind also that we each tend to have a preferred approach – an eye for detail, or a broad brush approach – so you can direct the chunking to match the other parties.

Turning words into Outcomes - You can recall now we discussed earlier the presupposition “The Map is not the territory”. That means we each construct different meanings or representations about the world we live in based on our filtering system.

Searching for meaning – Lets look at a simple statement “ Lisa is a very intelligent child”. In order to know the meaning of this we need to know specifically the meaning of the word “intelligent”. So in the dictionary you might find intelligent referred to as wisdom, capacity, comprehension, understanding, intellect and so on... but you might also find words like news, information, and report and quickly realize this means “intelligence”... so you can safely ignore those references.

But the other words present a problem. E.g. *comprehension*... you would need to check the meaning of this word as well.. or *understand* and *know*... check the meaning of those as well. We finding the words understanding and know its not surprising to find you have come back to words like *intelligible* which means he have come back to where we started from... correct? A final check on the word *know* takes us into *belief* (and not sure if that covers Lisa’s description, but cant say for certain now), and *friendship* and *association* which presumably relate to knowing someone such as a colleague.

Well now, so much for using the word “intelligence” precisely, by understanding its dictionary definition! But just about any abstract word will throw up the same problem when we try to tie it down to a specific meaning. At best we can get back to where we started or worst, finish up going around in circles. This highlight the limitation of symbols (or words) in conveying thoughts and ideas.

So based on a few statements made we know that Lisa can use multiplication, she has a bronze meddle in swimming and she can cook an omelet for example. With this basic information we can understand her better. We can then “*choose*” to call her intelligent or whatever label we want. However, in practice, we can never convey the full meaning lodged in the “deep structure” – the neural networks of a human brain.

In coaching we need enough information or communication to give us meaning. But what we don’t need is too much information to get us bogged down too much in deep structure.

Now that you have some background on the Heirachy of Ideas and the power language, take it away and let it integrate... we will cove this in more detail during your NLP Practitioner training

From Richard P. Feynman, The Character of Physical Law, quoted in God and the New Physics, p224:

We have a way of discussing the world . . . at various hierarchies, or levels. For example, at one end we have the fundamental laws of physics. Then we invent other terms for concepts which are approximate, which have, we believe, their ultimate explanation in terms of the fundamental laws.

Let's take for instance, "heat".

*Heat is supposed to be jiggling, and the word for a 'hot' thing is just the word for **a mass of atoms which are jiggling**. But for a while, if we are talking about heat, we sometimes forget about the atoms jiggling – just as when we talk about the **glacier** we do not always think of the hexagonal ice and the snowflakes which originally fell. Another example of the same thing is a **salt crystal**. Looked at fundamentally it is a lot of protons, neutrons, and electrons; but we have this concept "salt crystal", which carries a whole pattern already of fundamental interactions. An idea like pressure is the same.*

Now if we go higher up from this, in another level we have properties of substances – like "refractive index", how light is bent when it goes through something; or "surface tension", the fact that water tends to pull itself together, both of which are described by numbers. I remind you that we have got to go through several laws down to find out that it is the pull of the atoms, and so on. But we still say "surface tension", and do not always worry, when discussing surface tension, about the inner workings.

On, up in the hierarchy. With the water we have waves, and we have a thing like a storm, the word "storm" which represents an enormous mass of phenomena, or a "sun spot", or "star", which is an accumulation of things. And it is not worth while always to think of it way back. In fact we cannot, because the higher up we go the more steps we have in between, each one of which is a little weak.