



The PAM Series ©

Practical Aid Memoirs for the workplace

PAM 7 'Interaction'



'Advanced coaching skills'

1st Edition

Communication Training Improvements



'Happiness is neither virtue nor pleasure, nor this thing nor that but simply growth.

We are happy when we are growing' WB Yeats

PAM 1 'Communication'

PAM 2 'Training'

PAM 3 'Improvement'

PAM 4 'Logistics'

PAM 5 'The Food Safety Miscellany'

PAM 6 'Projects'

PAM 7 'Interaction'



Foreward

Practical Aide Memoirs are just that, practical. The **PAMs** are intended as a reference to assist with decision-making, planning and action. The resultant action is intended to improve the workplace performance of individuals and teams, lifting the performance of the company, sustainably. The PAMs are about creating an environment of success; they provide sufficient information to allow the reader to easily digest the content and put it into practice at the workplace.

PAM 1 'Communication' is about laying the foundations. PAM 1 starts with the individual, then places the individual within and around the team. Throughout PAM 1 there is an emphasis on communication skills, an orientation towards objectives and outcomes, and reflective practice.

PAM 2 'Training' puts the framework in place. The PAM establishes and maintains the learning environment and sets in place a culture of personal and professional development.

PAM 3 'Improvements' builds on PAMs 1 and 2 and is all about creating an environment of Continuous Improvement. This PAM remains practical due to the principle of being 'applied'; easy to grasp and transferable into the workplace.

PAM 4 'Logistics' provides a practical guide to logistics. The PAM has been put together to act as a springboard to a review of logistics and planning for the optimisation of operations.

PAM 5 'The Food Safety Miscellany' is a tour of topics relevant to the food production environment and is meant to serve as a point of reference. PAM 5 is a handy guide to have at the workplace in support of training and development.

PAM 6 'Projects' is derived from an established, well-known framework and is presented as a series of templates that can be adapted for use at the workplace. The approach offers a structured, flexible, and product-based approach to project management.

PAM 7 'Interaction' takes PAM 1 further and is a focus on advanced communication and coaching; the PAM is based on how information is transferred and processed.

Combined, the PAMs represent a **Systems Approach** to workplace improvements.

David Browne



Contents

Introduction	6
PAM 7 Objectives	6
Key topics covered	6
Representational Systems- VAKOG	7
Representational systems in communication and learning	8
Cross-modality learning and flexibility	9
Visual representational system (V)	10
Auditory representational system (A)	11
Kinaesthetic representational system (K)	12
Olfactory representational system (O)	13
Gustatory representational system (G)	14
Activity 'Representational Systems'	15
Meta Programmes- Filters	16
Significance of Meta Programmes	17
Key Benefits of understanding Meta Programmes	17
Types of Meta Programmes	18
Applications of Meta Programmes	26
Meta Model- Language	28
Deletions	29
Distortions	30
Generalisations	31
Application of the Meta Model at the workplace	32
Deletions (Summary)	35
Distortions (Summary)	36
Generalisations (Summary)	37
Perceptual Positioning- 1,2,3	
Challenges and benefits	
First Position (Self)	
Second Position (Other)	
Third Position (Observer)	
First Position (Receiving)	
Perceptual Positions- illustration	
Activity 'Perceptual Positioning in practice'	
POWER Outcomes	



Positive Outcome

Ownership

Well-formedness

Ecology

Real

Setting Outcomes

Combining the Elements

Power Outcomes- Guide

Coaching

Characteristics of coaching

Types of coaching

The coaching process

Activity 'The coaching approach'

Advanced coaching skills

Anchoring

Self-limiting beliefs

The MACE Framework: Factors affecting performance:

Filters of perception

Mental Rehearsal

Rapport Skills

The map is not the territory

Understanding the concept

Applications at the workplace



Introduction

Welcome to PAM 7 'Interaction', a practical guide about **Advanced Communication Techniques**. This PAM is designed to delve into key communication topics that will enhance understanding and application of advanced communication. The PAM provides a comprehensive toolkit of techniques that can be applied in various contexts to achieve those goals.

PAM 7 Objectives

- Understand and apply PAM 7 tools to improve communication efficacy
- Learn and practice coaching techniques to support and develop others

Key topics covered

- **Representational Systems- VAKOG**
How senses and language provide a window to perception.
- **Meta Programmes- Filters**
The filters we use to help us interpret and respond.
- **Meta Model- Language**
The structure of language and processing of information.
- **Perceptual Positioning- 1,2,3**
The ability to view situations from different perspectives.
- **POWER Outcomes**
The practice of being Outcomes orientated.
- **Coaching.** The principles of coaching and empowering others.
- **Advanced coaching skills.** A set of practical skills.



Representational Systems- VAKOG

Welcome to PAM 7 'Interaction'

The PAM is made up of a series of coaching topics.

This Practical Aide Memoir can be used for **your own development** and for **coaching**.

We will be exploring **Representational Systems** and how it is expressed through VAKOG

VAKOG stands for 'Visual' 'Auditory' 'Kinaesthetic' 'Olfactory' 'Gustatory'



Representational systems

These refer to **the ways in which individuals process, store, and retrieve information based on their sensory experiences**. In Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), these systems are categorised into five primary modalities: Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic, Olfactory, and Gustatory, collectively known as VAKOG.

Everyone typically has a preferred or dominant representational system that influences how they perceive and interact with the world. Understanding VAKOG can enhance communication, learning, and personal development by aligning approaches with an individual's sensory preferences.

The VAKOG model offers valuable insights into how individuals process sensory information. **By understanding and identifying dominant representational systems**—visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory, and gustatory—**we can tailor communication, learning, and personal development strategies** to match everyone's sensory preferences. Whether enhancing learning outcomes, improving workplace interactions, or deepening personal relationships, aligning with representational systems allows for more effective and meaningful connections.





Representational systems in communication and learning



Sensory modality

Understanding the **dominant representational system of an individual can greatly improve communication, teaching, and interpersonal relationships**. When people communicate using their preferred sensory modality, they tend to **understand, retain, and engage** with information more effectively.

For instance, if someone has a visual preference, using imagery or visual metaphors can enhance their understanding. Conversely, if someone is more kinaesthetic, encouraging them to engage physically with material, through movement or touch, may yield better results. Recognising these preferences allows for more tailored, effective communication and learning strategies.





Cross-modality learning and flexibility

The comic strip consists of four panels. Panel 1: A man says, "If you think back to your previous learning experiences...". Panel 2: A sad face says, "...the least enjoyable would probably be the times you were out of your comfort zone...". Panel 3: A happy face says, "...the most enjoyable times were probably those that appealed to your preferences...". Panel 4: The man says, "Remaining flexible provides you with the greatest range of learning opportunities."



Cross-modality

While individuals may have a dominant representational system, people generally use all five modalities to varying degrees depending on the situation. **Cross-modality learning, where different sensory inputs are combined, can strengthen understanding and retention.** For example, someone might learn best by seeing a diagram (visual) while listening to an explanation (auditory) and writing notes (kinaesthetic). This multimodal approach can help engage multiple senses, making the information more memorable and reinforcing learning.







Moreover, coaching or teaching can aim to develop flexibility in representational systems. **Encouraging individuals to engage with less dominant modalities helps them expand their learning and communication capabilities.** For instance, a visual learner might benefit from practicing auditory skills, enhancing their overall adaptability in different contexts.





Visual representational system (V)

Characteristics of visual learners

 <p>I use phrases like 'I see what you mean,' 'That looks good to me,' or 'Let's look at the big picture.'</p>	 <p>He often remembers details by visualising.</p>	 <p>He can be sensitive to the aesthetics of his environment.</p>
 <p>He can be neat and organised, as visual structure and order helps him focus.</p>	 <p>He prefers diagrams, charts, and written materials.</p>	 <p>He presents information in a structured way.</p>





Visual

The visual system involves **processing information through images, colours, shapes, and spatial awareness**. People who are visually oriented tend to think in pictures. They often use **visual language**, describing their thoughts or experiences in terms of what they 'see' in their mind's eye.

When solving problems or recalling memories, they might visualise scenarios or create mental images to help them process information.

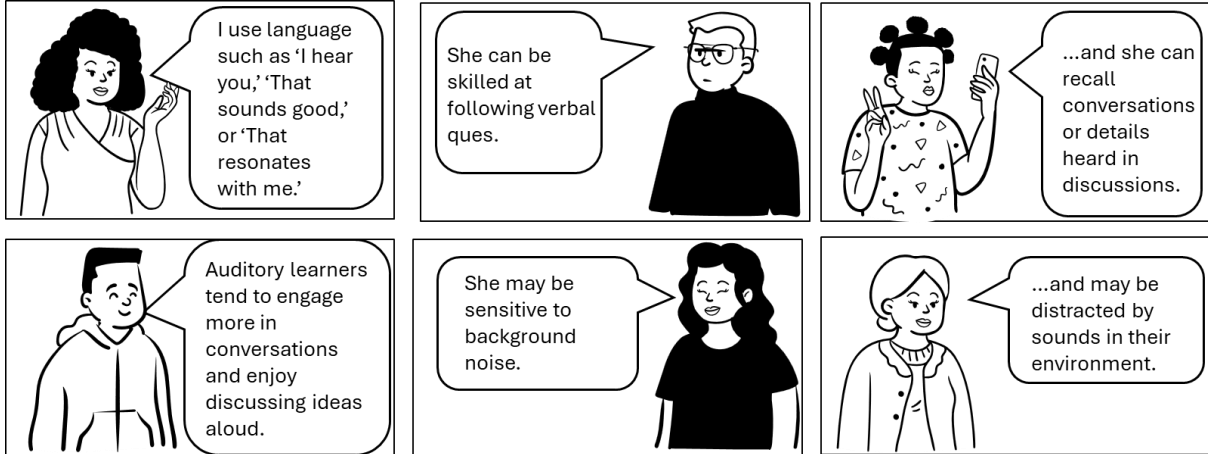
Communication tips

 <p>When communicating with a visually oriented person, it helps to use descriptive language that paints a clear picture.</p>	 <p>Providing written notes, diagrams, and visual aids can support understanding and engagement.</p>
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Auditory representational system (A)

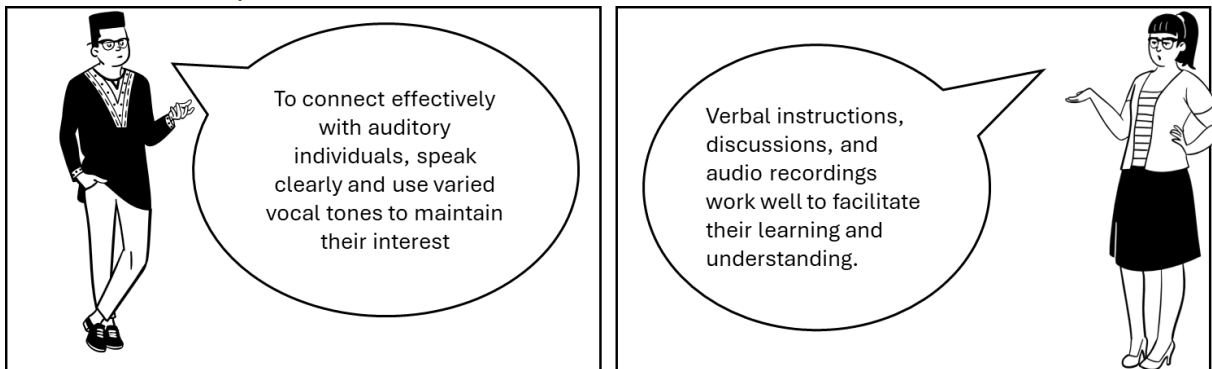
Characteristics of auditory learners



Auditory

The auditory system **focuses on processing information through sound**. Auditory individuals think in terms of what they hear, and **their memories are often associated with sounds, words, or conversations**. They may prefer verbal explanations and **often have an acute awareness of tone, rhythm, and voice pitch** in communication.





Communication tips





Kinaesthetic representational system (K)

Characteristics of kinaesthetic learners

 <p>I use phrases like 'I feel that this is right,' 'That idea doesn't sit well with me,' or 'I need to get a grip on this.'</p>	 <p>...Kinaesthetic learners are often tactile.</p>	 <p>...She enjoys physical activities such as sports, crafts, or working with tools.</p>
 <p>She is highly in tune with her emotions and may express their feelings physically, such as through gestures or body language.</p>	 <p>She may struggle with sitting still, or lack of activity.</p>	 <p>...And she often need to move around to focus</p>

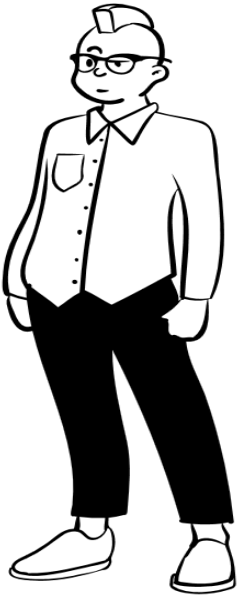


Kinaesthetic

The kinaesthetic system relates to bodily sensations, touch, and movement. Kinaesthetic individuals process information based on how it feels, both physically and emotionally. They are more attuned to textures, movements, and the physical interaction with their environment. They may learn best through hands-on activities or when they can physically engage with the material.

Communication tips




Kinaesthetic individuals respond well to action-based approaches, such as role-playing, hands-on tasks, or physical demonstrations.





Olfactory representational system (O)

Characteristics of olfactory learners

 <p>I use language like 'This smells fishy to me,'</p>	 <p>He will say things like 'I have a nose for this,' or 'Something about this situation stinks.'</p>	 <p>Olfactory learners may have strong scent-related memories...</p>
 <p>...where particular smells evoke vivid recollections or emotions....</p>	 <p>His decision-making can be influenced by their sensory impressions of the environment....</p>	 <p>...especially in relation to scents.</p>



Olfactory

The olfactory system involves processing information through smell. Though less dominant than visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic systems in most people, olfactory representation plays a crucial role in memory and emotional associations. Specific scents can trigger strong memories or emotions, and for some individuals, their environment's smell significantly impacts their perception of experiences.

Communication tips

When working with olfactory individuals, creating a pleasant and familiar scent environment can enhance their mood and productivity.







While this system is less commonly dominant, ensuring the surroundings are free from distracting odours can create a more conducive space for concentration and comfort.





Gustatory representational system (G)

Characteristics of gustatory learners

 <p>I use phrases like 'This idea is hard to digest.'</p>	 <p>Or she will say things like, 'That leaves me with a bad taste.'</p>	 <p>Or 'I'm hungry for success.'</p>
 <p>Gustatory learners may relate strongly to food-related experiences...</p>	 <p>...and can connect memories or ideas to the sensations of taste and texture.</p>	 <p>They often seek sensory satisfaction through taste and may enjoy trying new foods or culinary experiences.</p>



Gustatory

The gustatory system involves the processing of information through taste. Like the olfactory system, it is less frequently a dominant representational system but is still a powerful modality, particularly in the context of food, memories, and emotions. Taste can evoke strong memories and emotional reactions, and for some, the flavours and textures of food are integral to how they relate to the world.

Communication tips

For gustatory individuals, discussing flavours, textures, and experiences related to food may resonate more strongly. In creative or marketing fields, linking ideas to taste or culinary experiences can help engage these individuals more effectively.





Activity 'Representational Systems'



Representational Systems- VAKOG

Consider your own preference and how learning opportunities can be improved. Also, consider the learning opportunity of others:



Meta Programmes- Filters

Meta Programmes are **mental filters or patterns that determine how we process and respond to information**. These **cognitive and behavioural patterns** influence our perceptions, decisions, motivations, and actions by **shaping how we filter, prioritise, and organise the immense amount of sensory data we receive from the world around us**.

Understanding and recognising Meta Programmes is a critical aspect of effective communication because it allows individuals to better understand themselves and others, **improve communication, and enhance mutual development**.

While everyone processes information differently, Meta Programmes help identify the unique ways individuals operate in various contexts. By becoming aware of these patterns, we can modify or optimise them to create more effective and empowering behaviours.



Meta Programmes offer powerful insights into the ways individuals process information, make decisions, and engage with the world. These **unconscious filters** shape our perceptions and actions, influencing everything from motivation and communication to learning and relationships.

By aligning your approach with the Meta Programmes of others, you can create more effective and meaningful interactions, leading to improved outcomes. Of course, there are other inputs that will affect how successful any communication is. You cannot force someone to engage in a mutually beneficial way. However, **even a 'less successful' communication with someone can provide useful insights** into their current state.





Significance of Meta Programmes

Meta Programmes can be thought of as **unconscious mental ‘software’ that filters and organises information, determining how we experience and interpret our world.** These filters are not static; they can change depending on the context. For example, between work and our personal life. Meta Programmes are also **influenced by personal experiences, and external influences.**

By identifying these internal filters, we **gain insight into how we and others make decisions, process information, and engage with the world.**

Key Benefits of understanding Meta Programmes

Enhanced self-awareness: Recognising your Meta Programmes enables you to understand how you approach tasks, make decisions, and interact with others. This self-awareness can lead to personal growth and improved problem-solving abilities.

Improved communication: Understanding the Meta Programmes of others allows for more tailored and effective communication. You can adjust your communication style to match the listener’s Meta Programmes, fostering better understanding and rapport.

Behavioural flexibility: By becoming aware of your own Meta Programmes, you gain the flexibility to adjust them, enabling you to respond more effectively in different situations.

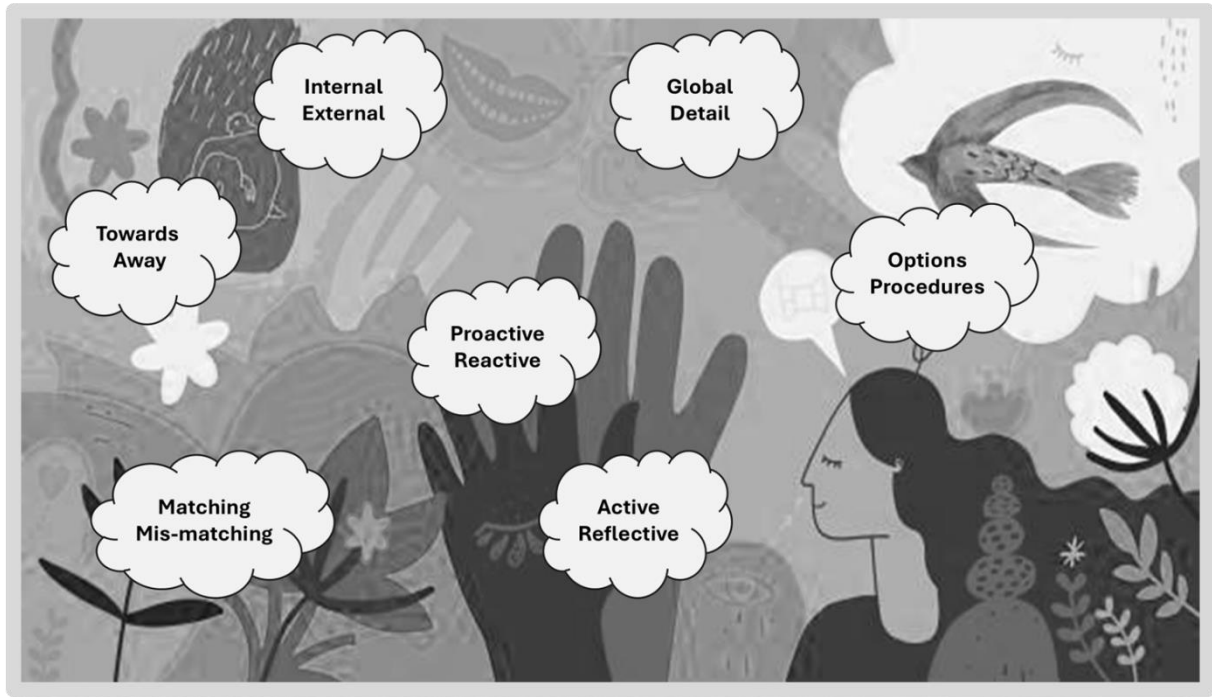
Better leadership and team dynamics: Leaders who understand the Meta Programmes of their team members can assign tasks that align with individual strengths and preferences, resulting in higher performance and satisfaction.





Types of Meta Programmes

Meta Programmes can be classified into various types, **each representing different aspects of thought processes, decision-making, and motivation.**



Meta Programmes

Meta Programmes are **mental filters or patterns that determine how we process and respond to information.**

They are unconscious mental 'software' that **filters and organises information, determining how we experience and interpret our world.**


Meta Programmes offer powerful insights into **the ways individuals process information, make decisions, and engage with the world.**



Meta Programmes provide **insights into the reliance of teams and individuals and their orientation for change.**



Active and Reflective

This metaprogramme **determines whether individuals prefer to act quickly and get involved (Active) or take time to think things through (Reflective).**


<p>Active: These people like to dive in and engage right away. They often prefer hands-on approaches and learn by doing. They might say, 'Let's jump in and figure it out as we go.'</p>	<p>Reflective: Reflective individuals prefer to think things over before acting. They may say, 'I need some time to reflect on this' or 'I want to analyse the situation before proceeding.'</p>
	<p>Notes:</p>



	<p>Action- Active and Reflective</p> 
<p>This metaprogramme is essential for understanding how individuals approach learning, decision-making, and problem-solving.</p>	



Global and Detail

This metaprogramme **describes whether an individual prefers to focus on the Global (Big Picture) or the Details (Specific).**


<p>Global: These individuals focus on the broad overview and like to understand the overall context or purpose of something before getting into details. They might say, 'I want to understand the main concept before diving into specifics.'</p>	<p>Detail: People who are detail-oriented prefer to work with specifics and may need a step-by-step approach before understanding the whole picture. They may say, 'I need to know the details to make sense of this situation.'</p>
	<p>Notes:</p>



	<p>Communication- Global and Detail</p> 
<p>Understanding this metaprogramme is crucial in communication, particularly when explaining ideas or concepts. Global thinkers might get frustrated with too many details, while detail-oriented individuals may feel lost without enough specific information.</p>	



Internal and External

This metaprogramme relates to **how individuals evaluate their success and make decisions**, either based on internal criteria (self-assessment) or external criteria (input from others).


<p>Internal criteria: Individuals with an internal frame of reference make decisions based on their own feelings, judgments, and experiences. They do not rely heavily on external opinions or validation. They might say, 'I know I'm doing a good job because I feel confident about my work.'</p>	<p>External criteria: People with an external frame of reference seek feedback and validation from others to assess their performance. They tend to look for approval or guidance from external sources, such as mentors or authorities. A person with this orientation might say, 'I know I'm doing well because my boss said so.'</p>
	<p>Notes:</p>

	<p>Criteria- Internal and External</p> 
<p>Knowing this metaprogramme helps in understanding peoples' terms of reference- how individuals make decisions and how they prefer to receive feedback.</p>	



Options and Procedures

This metaprogramme relates to **how individuals prefer to function when faced with tasks or decisions**—whether they prefer having options or following a specific procedure.

<p>Options: People who favour options enjoy exploring different possibilities and tend to resist rigid structures or routines. They value freedom and flexibility, saying things like, 'I like to keep my options open' or 'Let's consider all the possibilities.'</p>	<p>Procedures: Those who favour procedures prefer following clear, step-by-step processes and tend to thrive in structured environments. They might say, 'What's the process for doing this?' or 'I need clear instructions to move forward.'</p>
	<p>Notes:</p>



Function- Options and Procedures



This metaprogramme is particularly useful in work environments, as it helps assign tasks in ways that align with individuals' preferences for structure or flexibility.



Proactive and Reactive

This metaprogramme focuses on **how individuals approach situations**—whether they are proactive (initiating action) or reactive (responding to stimuli).

Proactive: These individuals take the initiative and are action oriented. They do not wait for instructions and prefer to be in control of their environment. They might say, 'Let's get started now' or 'I prefer to take the lead.'

Reactive: Reactive individuals wait for things to happen before responding. They might prefer to evaluate the situation first or wait for instructions before acting. They may say, 'I'll wait and see what happens' or 'I prefer to respond to the situation rather than take the lead.'



Notes:



Approach- Proactive and Reactive

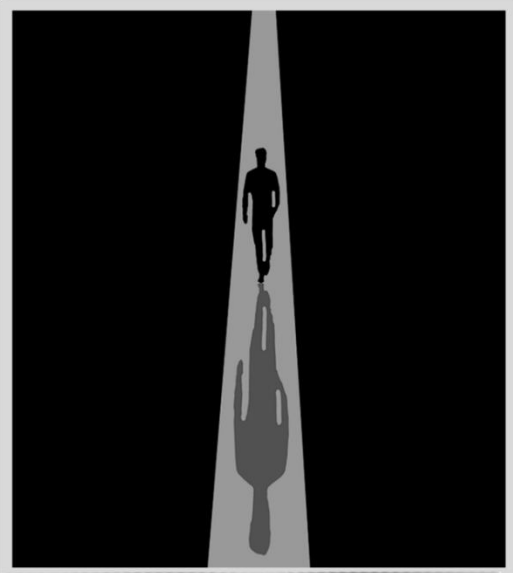




Knowing whether someone is proactive or reactive can help in understanding how they prefer to manage time, take responsibility, and make decisions.



Toward and Away

This metaprogramme **determines whether a person is motivated by moving toward a goal** (desiring positive outcomes) **or away from negative consequences** (avoiding pain or discomfort).


<p>Toward: Individuals with this orientation focus on what they want to achieve. They are motivated by setting goals, envisioning future success, and working towards their aspirations. For instance, someone might say, 'I want to become more financially independent,' or 'I'm looking forward to a promotion.'</p>	<p>Away From: These individuals focus on what they want to avoid. They are driven by fear, risk, or discomfort, and their actions are oriented toward preventing negative outcomes. For example, someone might say, 'I don't want to be stuck in debt,' or 'I want to avoid getting fired.'</p>
	<p>Notes:</p>



	<h3>Motivation- Toward and Away</h3> 
<p>Understanding this metaprogramme can help motivate individuals more effectively, depending on whether they are more driven by the desire for positive outcomes or the need to avoid undesirable situations.</p>	



Matching and Mismatching

This metaprogramme refers **to how individuals look for similarities (matching) or differences (mismatching) when comparing information.**

<p>Matching: These individuals focus on what is the same between two pieces of information or situations. They often say, 'That's similar to...' or 'This fits with what we already know.'</p>	<p>Mismatching: Mismatching individuals look for differences and often play the 'devil's advocate' role. They might say, 'That's different from...' or 'What's wrong with this picture?'</p>
	<p>Notes:</p>

	<p>Information- Matching and Mismatching</p> 
<p>Understanding whether someone matches or mismatches can affect how they respond to suggestions, agreements, change and problem-solving situations.</p>	



Applications of Meta Programmes

Personal development and self-awareness

Understanding your own Meta Programmes can be transformative for personal growth. By recognising patterns in how you process information, make decisions, and respond to challenges, **you can adapt your behaviour to be more effective in achieving your goals**. For example, if you recognise that you have a strong 'away from' motivation, you can consciously incorporate more 'toward' strategies to create a more balanced approach to goal setting.

Improving communication

Meta Programmes are vital for enhancing communication between individuals. When you know someone's Meta Programmes, **you can frame your messages in ways that resonate with them**. For instance, if someone is detail-oriented, you can provide specific information rather than generalities. If they are more global in their thinking, presenting the big picture before diving into details may be more effective. In sales and marketing, understanding the Meta Programmes of your target audience can significantly improve results. For example, a person with a 'toward' motivation will respond better to messages about the benefits they will gain, while a person with an 'away from' orientation might be more persuaded by highlighting what they can avoid (e.g., risk or loss).

Leadership and team management

Leaders can use Meta Programmes to **better understand their team members' motivations, decision-making processes, and working styles**. For example, someone with a procedural preference may thrive in tasks with clear guidelines, while an options-oriented individual might excel in a creative role that allows for exploration and innovation. By assigning tasks based on Metaprogramme preferences, leaders can boost team morale, engagement, and productivity.

Coaching

In coaching, identifying a learner's Meta Programmes can **help coaches create more tailored and effective interventions**. For example, if a learner tends to mismatch (focus on differences), a coach might work to balance this by encouraging them to explore similarities and common ground in relationships or decision-making.



Activity 'Meta Programmes and personal experiences'



Reflective practice

Thinking about past experiences:

How were you influenced by your preferred Meta Programmes? (For good or bad)

What options did you have?

Thinking about someone you may be communicating with now or in the future:

How are you likely to be influenced by your preferred Meta Programmes?

How is the person you will be communicating with be influenced by their Meta Programmes (as you perceive them to be).

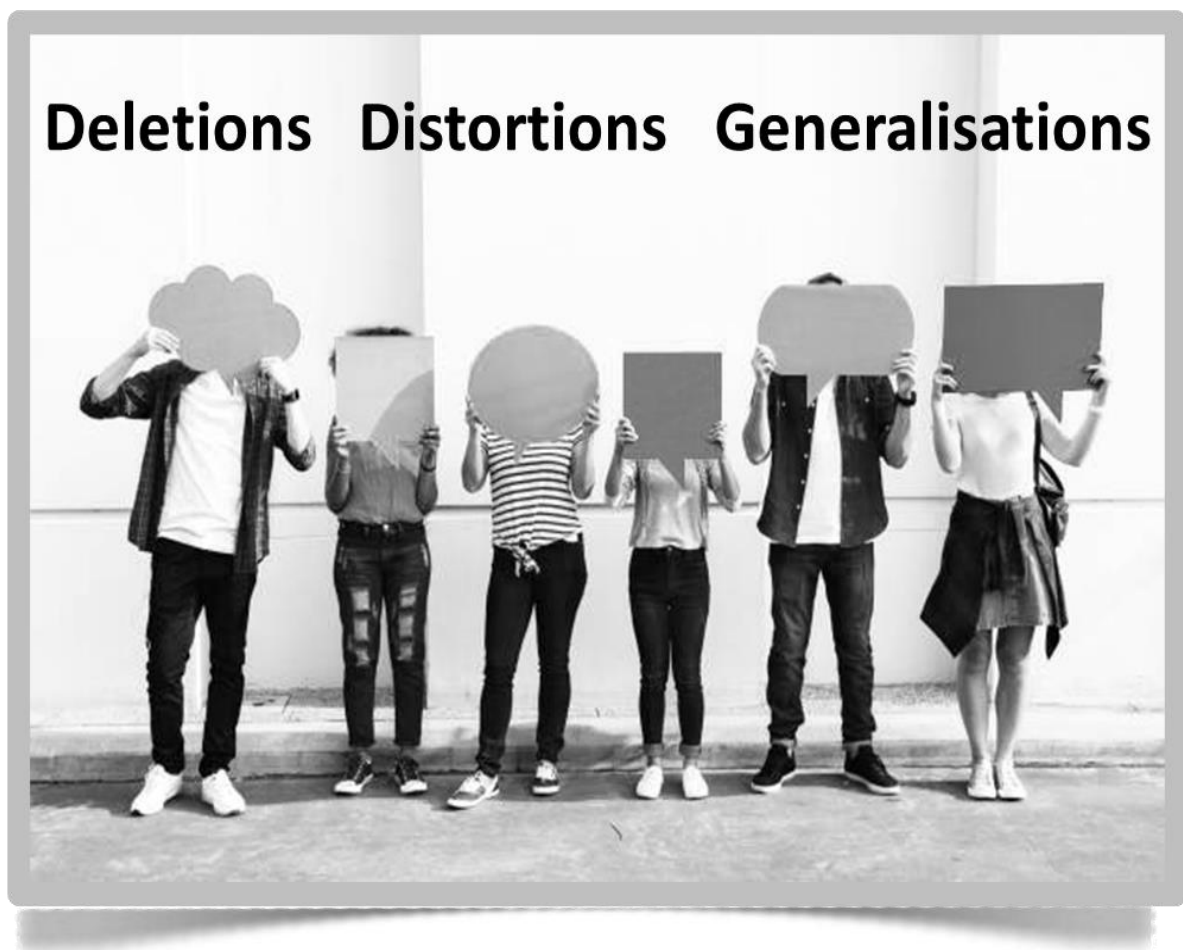
What options do you have?



Meta Model- Language

The Meta Model is a **tool used to identify and address language patterns that limit or distort our understanding of reality**. It helps to **clarify vague or incomplete statements**, challenging and expanding them to **uncover deeper meanings and insights**.

The model focuses on three main language patterns:





Deletions

Deletions occur **when certain information is omitted from a statement, making it incomplete or unclear**. This can happen **consciously or unconsciously**, often **leading to misunderstandings or assumptions**. Examples of deletions in speech include:

- **Vague nouns:** 'They said it's impossible.'
- **Vague verbs:** 'He failed.'
- **Vague comparisons:** 'This is better.'

To respond effectively to Deletions, ask clarifying questions that prompt the other person to provide more specific information, such as:

- 'They said it's impossible.' - '*Who specifically said it was impossible?*'
- 'He failed.' - '*How specifically did he fail?*'
- 'This is better.' - '*What is better, than what or who?*'





Distortions

Distortions involve altering the meaning of a statement, often in a way that changes the perceived reality. These can lead to incorrect conclusions or exaggerated perceptions. Examples of distortions include:

- **Mind reading:** 'She doesn't like me.'
- **Cause and effect:** 'He makes me angry.'
-
- **Complex equivalence:** 'Being late means you're irresponsible.'

To address distortions, challenge the assumptions and ask questions that encourage the speaker to re-evaluate their statements:

- 'She doesn't like me.' - *'How do you know she doesn't like you?'*
- 'He makes me angry.' - *'How does he specifically make you angry?'*
- 'Being late means you're irresponsible.' *'How does being late specifically mean you're irresponsible?'*





Generalisations

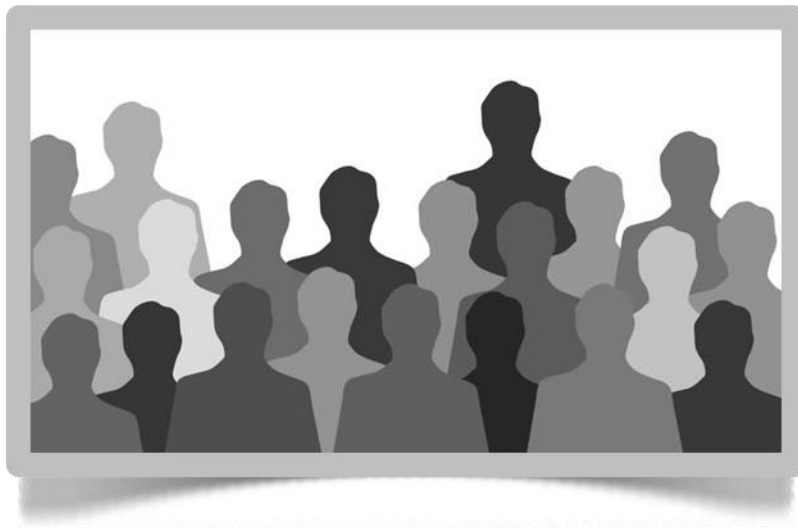
Generalisations occur when **specific experiences or observations are applied broadly, often without considering exceptions or variations**. This can lead to **stereotypes or overly simplistic views**.

Examples of generalisations include:

- 'Everyone at work is stressed.'
- 'I never get any recognition.'
- 'They are always late'

To respond to generalisations, challenge the overgeneralised statements and seek more precise information:

- 'Everyone at work is stressed.' - *'Is everyone really stressed all the time?'*
- 'I never get any recognition.' - *'Is it true that you never get recognition?'*
- 'They are always late' – *'Is everyone late, and all the time?'*





Application of the Meta Model at the workplace

The Meta Model can be a powerful tool in the workplace, **improving communication, problem-solving, and conflict resolution**. Here are some examples of its application, along with its advantages and disadvantages:

Examples

- **Team meetings:** Using the Meta Model to clarify goals, expectations, and responsibilities can prevent misunderstandings and ensure everyone is on the same page. For instance, asking 'What specifically do you need from me?' can help clarify roles in a project.
- **Conflict resolution:** The Meta Model can help identify the root causes of conflicts by challenging vague or distorted perceptions. For instance, asking, 'How specifically did their actions upset you?' can lead to a deeper understanding and resolution.
- **Performance reviews:** Addressing Distortions and Generalisations can lead to more constructive feedback. For example, instead of saying, 'You never meet deadlines,' a manager could ask, 'Can you provide examples of times when you've met deadlines?'

Of course, it all depends upon **integrity and trust**.





Disadvantages and advantages of the Meta Model

Disadvantages:

- Can be time-consuming, requiring patience and persistence
- May be perceived as intrusive or confrontational if not used skilfully
- Requires practice and familiarity with the model to be effective

Advantages:

- Encourages more precise and thoughtful conversations
- Facilitates conflict resolution by uncovering underlying issues
- Helps identify and address limiting beliefs and assumptions
- Improves clarity and understanding in communication





Weaknesses and strengths

Weaknesses:

- Can be seen as overly analytical or critical
- May be challenging to apply consistently in fast-paced environments
- Requires ongoing learning and practice to master

Strengths:

- Encourages self-awareness and personal growth
- Enhances critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- Promotes open and honest communication





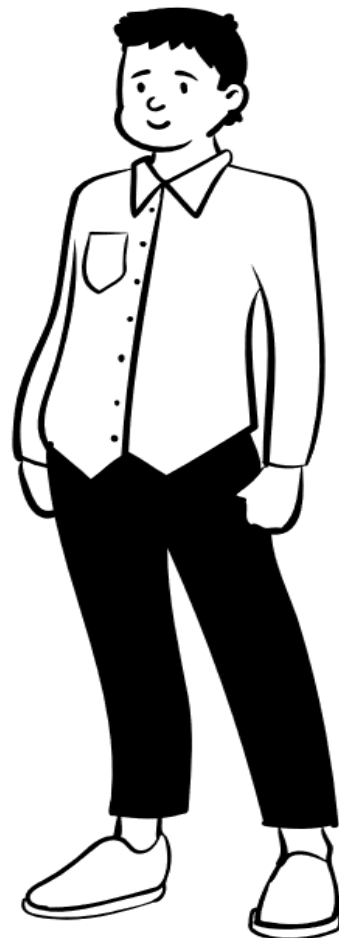
Deletions (Summary)

The vague What's
'What specifically?'

The vague Who's
'Who specifically?'

The vague verbs
'How specifically?'

The vague comparisons
'Less or more, better or worse, than what or who?'





Distortions (Summary)

The 'X' means 'Y'

'How does X mean Y?'

The 'Mindreading'

'How do you know?'

'What leads you to believe

The 'Bald assertion'

'Who says?'

'How do you know?'





Generalisations (Summary)

The 'Cant's'

'What is stopping you?'

'What needs to happen for you to be able to?'

The 'Must' and 'Mustn't'

'What would happen if you did or didn't?'

'What wouldn't happen if you did or didn't?'

The 'Always' and 'Nevers'

'What always?'

'Has there not been one occasion on which you have?'

