Generating Settlements

Through Lateral Thinking Techniques
Vertical Thinking vs. Lateral Thinking

- Complementary Processes - VT is concerned with proving or developing concept patterns and LT is concerned with restructuring such patterns (insight) and proving new ones (creativity).
- VT - one selects the most promising (best) approach to a problem
- LT - one goes on generating as many approaches as one can even after one has found a promising one (generating different approaches for the sake of generating them)
Generation of Alternatives

• Set a Quota for Generating Alternatives with the parties to generate different approaches rather than stopping at a promising approach.

• Example Activity- How would you divide a square into four equal pieces? Can you think of more than 3 ways to do so?

• How would you divide up a square of cardboard to give an L shape with the same area as the square with no more than two cuts.
Generating Alternatives Cont’d

• Problem Solving- generating ways of stating the problem vs. generating alternative approaches to the problem

• Example- Enough low cost housing
Challenging Assumptions

• A general agreement about an assumption does not guarantee it is correct. It is historical continuity that maintains most assumptions—not a repeated assessment of their validity.

• Example- Assumption that a mother was the better primary custodial parent because of natural maternal instinct in dissolution proceedings

• Activity- The Why Game
Innovation-Suspending Judgment

• Assumption- being right is enough

• Design Process technique- Emphasize different ways of looking at things to escape from cliché concepts. Suspend critical evaluation to develop a generative frame of mind in which flexibility and variety can be used with confidence
Why PO

• Logical Thinking is selection and is brought about by the processes of acceptance and rejection. “No” and “Not” are judgment devices to reject certain arrangements of information.

• Lateral Thinking – rearrangement of information to escape the rigid patterns established by experience to create new patterns through the language tool of “PO”
NO vs PO as language tools

• NO – a) judgment device
  b) Works within the framework of reason
  c) Weakens arrangements that are based on experience

• PO- a) anti-judgment device
  • b) pre-reason construction device
  • c) generates connections that have nothing to do with experience
Functions of PO

• 1) Creating new arrangements of information
• PO does not have an addition function provided by “and”
• PO does not have an identity function as provided by “is”
• PO does not have an alternative function as provided by “or”
• Use PO to bring about a provocative arrangement of information without saying anything at all about it
Functions of PO cont’d

1) Juxtaposition - Hold two unrelated things together in order to allow them or their associations to interact. No connection or relationship at all is implied between the two things.

• Example: computers PO omelettes

2) Introduction of a random word to problem under discussion

• Example: How to Use Study Time PO Raisin

• Example: Holiday visitation schedule PO fruit tree
3) Disconnected jumps- Create with the use of PO to alert a lateral rather than a vertical sequential step

So in the previous discussion about study time to make a jump you would say “Po time spent studying is time spent not doing other things”

Example: PO children holiday visitation is ___________________.

4) Doubt- PO can be used to move a discussion that gets blocked by the impossibility of proving a certain point by one of the parties. This use of PO is similar to the use of “if” and “suppose” but does not carry weight as a language tool
5) Being wrong- PO is an escort that switches attention from why something is wrong to how it may be useful, i.e. “I know this is wrong but I am going to put things this way in order to see where it leads me”

PO why not have the parents rotate visitation at the child’s home

6) Holding function- PO can protect an idea from judgment. It can be used by the person offering the idea or by anyone else to hold off on evaluation

7) Construction- Use PO to add something to the problem or change it in some other way. Purpose is NOT to rephrase it or put it in a better way but to alter it and see what happens
Example- Lawyer was tasked with dividing up 11 horses among 3 sons so that one of them got half, another got a quarter and the third son got one sixth of the horses.
Example Cont’d

• Lawyer lends his horse to the sons and then divides the 12 horses up, giving the first son 6, second son 3 and third 2. Then takes his own horse back again.

• Example- Discussion of the efficiency of police in dealing with crime one might say “PO why not employ one-armed policemen?”
Second Function

• 2) Challenging old arrangements of information- use of PO frees one from the fixity of established ideas, labels, divisions, categories and classifications.

• PO does not attack an idea or require justification- looks to generate different ways of looking at a situation. PO can be used as a focusing device to challenge clichés and arrangements of concepts that support them.

• “It is the function of education to train the mind and to pass on to it the knowledge of the ages”. PO, train the mind or PO the knowledge of ages or PO train.
• Alternatives- Use PO as a demand to generate alternatives since it is a device that works outside of reason. Makes it clear to the parties that they are alternative arrangements and not necessarily better or justified ones.

• Antiarrogance- PO challenges the arrogance of any absolute statement or judgment or point of view. PO implies that one may be right but that party is starting from perceptions that are arbitrary since they were derived from their own individual experience or the general experience of a particular “culture”.
• Counteracting NO- NO tends to be a permanent label and deters examination to see whether there are sufficient reasons for maintaining the label

• PO implies: Let us cover up that NO label for the moment and proceed as if it was not there. The NO label may no longer be justified or it may be still valid but information that can be useful elsewhere may be gained

• Example- You cannot live if your heart stops. “PO you can live if your heart stops”
• Diversion- PO can be used as a special sort of NO but without the judgment or permanence of NO to allow for exploration of alternative pathways to the natural pattern of development. Can be used as an excuse for choosing a line of thought that is not the most obvious or the best in the minds of the participants.

• PO can be used to relax the rigidity of a particular way of looking at things and can reduce emotional overreaction by the parties. PO acts to lessen the fierce necessity of a particular point of view.
How to Use PO?

• 1) PO as interjection- “The purpose of sport is to encourage the competitive spirit and the will to win” PO!
• 2) PO as preface- can be used before a sentence or a phrase or a word that it is meant to qualify. “An organization can only function efficiently if all of its members are punctual in attendance. PO function efficiently
• 3) PO as juxtaposition- computer PO omelette
• 4) PO in place of NO or not- Wednesday is PO a holiday
Explaining PO

• 1) Challenge Function- PO means you may very well be right but let’s try and look at it in another way
• 2) Provocative function- PO means I am just saying that to see what it sets off in your mind, to see whether that way of putting things can stimulate any new ideas
• 3) Anti-arrogance function- PO means don’t be so arrogant, so dogmatic. Don’t have a closed mind
• 4) Overreaction- PO means “Let’s cool it.” There is no point in getting upset about this.
Responses to PO

- Respond to PO by trying to generate alternatives as a joint effort not by irritation or by defending the original way of putting things. Resist saying “How else could it be put-how would you put it”
- The provocative use of PO is to provide a stimulus which is to be used cooperatively by both parties rather than sit back and imply “Go ahead and show that this suggestion is useful”
- PO as protection to superior indifference- “If you want to keep entertaining that idea, then I shall just wait until you are through” PO is not part of the antagonism of an argument
• PO may be a relaxation-When a situation becomes intense through the development of rigid views and possibly overreactions by the parties, one can respond with PO (with a mental shrug and smile) to relax the rigidity of the situation.

• PO may be used ambiguously- May not be clear how a party is using PO or what concept is being challenged. In these cases, one can simply ask the person using PO to be more specific or to agree that they really want to use it in a general way.
Participant Activities

• 1) Generation of Alternatives
• 2) Provocation
• 3) Protection and Rescue
Citations/Acknowledgements

- Materials for this presentation have been gathered from the following resources