

Modelling consequences (and how to offer a client the opportunity to expand their model)

Consequences follow regardless - from change and from no-change:

What happens if do?	What happens if don't?
What doesn't happen if do?	What doesn't happen if don't?

1. The kind of consequences:

Known and spoken about
Known but ignored
Unknown but knowable
Unknown and unknowable

Facilitator can:

Raise profile of the consequence*
Uncover/reveal consequence**
Bring in (introduce) *given* consequences***
? ****

* Consequences can also be *over-valued* (i.e. feared out-of-proportion to their likelihood)

** [Self-deception](#) avoids taking into account potential long-term consequences (in the moment)

*** e.g. We sent a client who didn't think his behaviour was illegal the specific law of his country of residence and the standard sentence if convicted (He said, "Now I know I'm skating on thin ice.")

**** These consequences cannot be predicted specifically (Taleb calls large impact ones *Black Swans*) but in general their negative impact can be reduced or even become positive (Taleb's definition of *Antifragility*).

2. How are consequences being measured or assessed:

Irreversible with high negative impact	will break a <i>Fragile</i> system
Reversible after negative impact	will require a <i>Robust/Resilient</i> system
Grow and learn from any variability	will require an <i>Antifragile</i> system
Perceiver	From who's perspective?
Form (scale)	To what degree?
Time	In what time frame?
Space	Where?
Level	At what level?
	Who/what else could be affected?
	Which could have the most impact?
	What about longer/shorter timeframes?
	What other contexts could be impacted?
	What other parts/larger systems are involved?

3. *Where* and *when* consequences have, and do not have, an influence on your decision? [this is key]

Where is the knowing of consequences *when* the decision to act is taken?
How is knowledge of consequences not available at the time of the decision?
What needs to happen for consequences to be taken into account *when* the decision to act is taken?

4. *How* (logic and sequence) their model of consequences works (in relation to the rest of the system)

If something like what is happening has happened several times before, we assume the *conditions* for the pattern will repeat and manifest in some form in the client's life in the future. Therefore, when we have the opportunity we work at two levels:

—> (2) How to handle future examples of the pattern (in different contexts).
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Current Issue. —> (1) How to handle current reality.

We look for ways the client can anticipate potential future difficulties so they can learn from them now. Not necessarily to avoid them but to identify/create resources so they can respond appropriately if they happen (and to learn from the unexpected stuff they never thought about).

See: James Lawley, [Antifragility, Black Swans and Befriending Uncertainty](#), Clean Conference 2013
James Lawley [Robustness and Fragility - a 4-part series](#), 2011