

Imaginary Transcript 1

This imaginary transcript is included to provide a quick sample of a possible Meta Model questioning session as most of the examples given in the text are short and don't demonstrate the chaining effect of the Meta Model where one question leads to another.

T Tester

MM Meta Modeller (Test Manager)

T "You know, the development manager hates testers."

MM "Really? Who says?" (Tackle the lost performative)

T "well, me, I say it, he hates testers"

MM "how do you know?" (Tackle the mind reading)

T "well because he never turns up for meetings with us and never has a good word to say about what we do"

MM "ah, so he gets lost constantly and swears all the time as though he has Tourettes. Do you even know what he looks like?" (Tackle the generalisation in a provocative way)

T "ok, so he turns up for some meetings but he always cancels meetings with testers to go through the test design documents because he just hates testers"

MM "so if he turned up for those meetings that would mean that he liked testers?" (Tackle complex equivalence)

T "well, probably not, there is a whole bunch of things that he doesn't do"

MM "what specifically?" (Tackle deletion)

T "well..."

(Then we get a list of specific tasks that seem to be causing problems with the Test Team/Development manager relationship, which as a test manager we can try, and deal with)

MM "maybe he doesn't do those things for the development team either."

T "nah, he must do, he's the development manager"

MM "How do you know? Maybe he doesn't meet anyone, maybe he hates everyone?" (Tackle the model operator)

T "ha, maybe, but we still need all these things doing..."

MM "OK, we can deal with that."

The questioning could continue, but the manager has enough information to help his staff out and has helped reduce the level of generalization that was affecting the relationship between this tester and the development manager.

An inexperienced tester (IT), on leaving a walkthrough meeting for a requirements document, meets a more experienced tester (MET):

MET: "How did the meeting go?"
IT: "Great, it is a good document."
MET: "Good, can I have a look?"
IT: "Sure."

<Sounds of pages turning quickly>

MET *[Sound of a finger stabbing paper]:*
"I'm not sure what this means, can you explain it?"
IT: "erm, not really, I guess, that the system will *process* the file"
MET: "*process* it how specifically?"
IT: "I don't know"
MET: "How are you going to test that the system *can process* the file?"
IT: "ehm, I don't know."
MET: "You might want to find out what that really means"
IT: "Good Idea"

<Sounds of running footsteps >

MET: *[slightly louder]*
"Do you think there might be any more statements like that in the document?"
IT: *[voice starts in the distance and grows nearer]*
"Hmmm, I'll have a look, but I'm not sure I know how to spot them."
MET: "I use the NLP Meta Model to help me identify ambiguity, let me show you how it works"