

## The Map is not the Territory



Like me you've probably used the London Underground and referenced the famous tube map to get you from A to B. On other occasions you may have been walking down the streets of London and been surprised at how close some stations are together and how far others are apart!

A map is only a representation of reality. It is only a map, not the territory. However how many times in our own lives do we see things guided by our 'map of the world'? For example sometimes we can only see a problem as a big obstacle but when viewed on someone else's 'map' it seems quite small and insignificant?

Our map of reality is only our internal representation, our perception and may be very different from other people's maps.



Using a different map of the same area can cause confusion. The above ground and below ground maps of London have to leave out so much detail that trying to come to a composite idea of a location can be difficult. Equally, do we sometimes misconnect with people because we are looking at the same thing guided by different maps?

Maybe before assuming the person we are dealing with is using the same map as us, we should check the map they are using?

There are billions of bits of data bombarding us every day. As we only have a limited capacity to take in data, by necessity we filter out much of what is around us based on our personality, beliefs and values. This filtering process means everyone's map is different, as everyone will filter differently.

The nice thing with maps though is that, as they are only a representation, they can be redrawn. For example your map may suggest that 'nobody cares' because all the times someone did care has been filtered out. By finding out what has been deleted, distorted or generalised the map can be redrawn - maybe you could ask the question "Nobody?" or "Has there ever been a time when somebody did care?" Or maybe your map of the world requires everything to be planned and orderly whereas maybe there is merit, at times, in keeping things flexible, opportunistic and spontaneous?

Over the next few days practice heightening your awareness of your own and others' maps of the world and see what happens when you modify your map of the world.

Food for thought?

*Who do you know who would like this tip? Help them and us by forwarding the tip on. Thank-you.*

Sign up for your own copy of the newsletter at <http://www.signup.to/signup.php?fid=1103&pid=868>

---

For more tips go to [www.iridiumconsulting.co.uk/links.html](http://www.iridiumconsulting.co.uk/links.html)