



November 2010



Steve Cohen



The Millionaires' Magician

The Making of Better People - Verbal Judo - Part III



performing magic for the rich and famous requires more than skill at magic. It requires finesse with interpersonal communications skills. *The Millionaires' Magician*, Steve Cohen had a decade-long track record of success in that area. When asked for his secrets of success, Steve doesn't put forth information on how to do a magic trick. His response resulted in a valuable little book, *Win the Crowd*. Its subtitle—Unlock the Secrets of Influence, Charisma, and Showmanship. Steve has chosen practical skills he uses to accomplish those invaluable skills. As with all such things, from public speaking to judo, it isn't so much about what's new as it is about utilization of what's tried and true. Here's a little secret from T. C. (me); it isn't always about what's new as it is about learning from people who are successfully applying what's old.

One of Steve's verbal strategies is using "The Layered Command". In magic, it is very important that audience assistants follow instructions. It cannot seem as if it's important, just simple and normal. Quoting Steve Cohen, "If I were to command you to stand up, you would probably say 'no', or ask why. It is natural to resist a direct command.

"In the same vein, if I were to command you, hold this card so everyone can see it, you may feel uncomfortable agreeing. Why voluntarily be thrust into the spotlight?"

Steve goes on to say that if he combines the two commands, he is absolutely certain of compliance. When the two commands are linked with "and" — [Command] *and* [Command], the listener is overwhelmed. Just as the inclination to resist the first command begins to take effect, the second command confounds, and the path of least resistance is to simply comply. Cohen makes an important, judo-related, point; the listener does not work this out verbally / logically / cerebrally. It just happens.

"Call me in an hour and let me know your decision." "Come over here and give me a hug." Take out the trash and be sure to lock the gate." "Click here and check out our web site."

In judo, you cannot resist in two directions at once, and if the techniques are properly timed, you cannot alter one response in time to effectively create another. This can work on a very subtle level, as does the verbal judo. For example:

O-soto-gari (right) - Make your first move a slight tweak of both wrists to uke's right front right corner, combined with a small accompaniment of a head turn, some pull from your shoulders; **AND** then shift the motion to the right rear to create the true kuzushi. This is subtle beyond endeavoring to do *harai goshi* to *osoto gari*.

I'll tell you a secret: This works with every throw you can think of. If you watch videos of champions demonstrating how the practice step-ins for their favorite throws, you will often see this hand action at the onset of each *uchi-komi* move. Rarely will you hear about it. [It's a secret.] You have to work it out for yourself and put it into your practice regimen. If you want people saying, "How the heck did you throw me?", do this.

Whenever you can, before you ask someone to do something for you, see if you can find a way to create a layered command, and add some "judo magic" to your interpersonal skills.



The *Judo Compass* is conceived, written and sent by Tom Crone. www.northstarjudo.com

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