

NEW, UPDATED EDITION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER

# S.U.M.O.

(SHUT UP, MOVE ON®)



THE STRAIGHT-TALKING GUIDE  
TO SUCCEEDING IN LIFE

**PAUL MCGEE**

Author of the bestselling *Self-Confidence*



## What people say about Paul McGee's SUMO presentations and workshops...

*'I've absolutely no doubt that your approach can help build resilience and enhance the quality of people's lives. The clarity and simplicity of your explanations are accessible to everyone, and I know many patients who would benefit from adopting this approach.*

*You use SUMO as a way of having a legitimate and life-enhancing conversation with ourselves, forcing us to reflect and aim for what really matters.'*

**Dr Phil Hammond**  
**GP, journalist, and broadcaster**

*'You inspired the audience with your SUMO techniques. You were practical, motivational, and entertaining.'*

**Miles Standish**  
**Managing Director, UK Life and Pensions,**  
**Towry Law Group**

*'The feedback has been unbelievable! Delegates were using some of the seven questions during the conference. Lots of fun, but at the same time, lots of learning.'*

**Philip Turner**  
**Operations Director, NHS**

*'Your day in the store made a big difference. The average score of how people felt able to cope with change moved from 71% to 94%; a great move, especially starting from a reasonable base. Your SUMO ideas are frequently used.'*

**Paul Sanders**  
**Store Manager, Marks & Spencer**

*'In our twenty years of running conferences, Paul McGee is the only speaker we have ever invited back. That alone explains the benefit we feel we have gained from hearing Paul's SUMO philosophy.'*

**Doug Perkins, Dame Mary Perkins CBE**  
**Founders of SpecSavers**

*'I would have no hesitation in recommending Paul McGee and his SUMO philosophy to any organization who wants to engage a large number of staff in a way that provides excellent value for money compared to more conventional ways of training.'*

*The overwhelming feedback has been that the sessions were inspiring, thought provoking, humorous, but above all practical in helping my staff make a positive difference.'*

**Julie Spence**  
**Chief Constable, Cambridgeshire Police**

*'I saw Paul present at an international conference. He uniquely addresses one of the biggest barriers to personal and business development... our own minds. The SUMO philosophy was a unanimous hit. Very, very powerful stuff!'*

**Simon Newton-Smith**  
**General Manager, Virgin Atlantic, Southern Africa**

## **What people say about Paul McGee's SUMO book...**

*'The SUMO approach is powerful, simple and effective. Anyone who reads it is sure to look at themselves and the world differently as a result.'*

**Octavius Black and Sebastian Bailey**  
**Co-founder of The Mind Gym**

*'Don't be deceived by this book's simple approach. Beneath the surface it's packed with wisdom and insights communicated in a practical, humourous, and inspirational way. Make sure you read it.'*

**Haydn Roberts**  
**Head of Player Care and Support,**  
**Manchester City Football Club**

*'We live in a complex world. Paul McGee's messages stand out because they're clear, simple, and above all they work. We have a short time on this planet and we need to make the most of it. SUMO shows you how. By applying these ideas I believe you can make a BIG difference in every area of your life, personally and professionally.'*

**Marie Mosely**  
**Business Psychologist**

*'Paul's SUMO principles are essential life tools, nothing less. I refer to his seven questions on an almost daily basis.*

*They have been massively useful for dealing with issues both personally and professionally. Paul, I cannot thank you enough.'*

**David Thomas**

**International speaker, author, and  
memory world record holder**

*'SUMO is a brilliant book, packed with simple, inspirational, and innovative ideas that can be applied to any aspect of your life, whether it be personal, business, or recreational. Paul's knowledge, enthusiasm, and ability to clearly explain these methods is unsurpassed. I heartily recommend this excellent read.'*

**Professor Damian Hughes**

**Sports Psychology Consultant to Great Britain,  
England, and Warrington Wolves Rugby League**

*'I can honestly say no other book has had such a profound effect on my life. I have had all my family and friends read it, and it has become my mission in life to spread the principles to everyone I meet. If only everyone read SUMO the world would be a better place.'*

**Kevin Wickson**

**Service Director, PESL**

*'The one thing that stands out in the book is how Paul addresses the steps to success with clarity and ease, in the most simple language. I will recommend the book to people I know, because like me they will appreciate the practical wisdom.'*

**Sudakshin Susarla**  
**Chennai, India**

*'I started the book on a flight to France and have just finished it on a train from London.*

*I did more than enjoy it... I loved it.*

*I have read many of these books, and spent many a motorway mile listening to Steven Covey and others, but was all too often left a little cynical.*

*I think including the personal stuff was brave but brilliant.*

*It would be all too easy to preach the gospel and not document the journey.*

*Finally here was a book written for someone like me by someone like me.'*

**Stuart Brown**  
**Managing Director, Ten Alps Publishing**





# SUMO

## (Shut Up, Move On)

The straight talking guide to  
succeeding in life

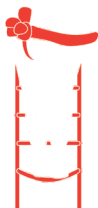
10th Anniversary Edition

By Paul McGee

Illustrations by Fiona Osborne

**SHUT  
UP**

**MOVE  
ON**



CAPSTONE

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# Dedication

*To Paul 'The Philosopher'  
with deep gratitude and appreciation  
for sharing your friendship, wisdom and laughter.  
From The Sumo Guy*

Proverbs 18:24



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# About the Author



Photo by Andy Preston

PAUL McGEE is an international speaker, a bestselling author and performance coach. He's Managing Director of his own training and education company and also the proud creator of SUMO (Shut Up, Move On®).

Paul's main aim is to help people achieve better results in life, whilst having more fun in the process. He has shared his SUMO message in 40 countries around the globe to date. Paul works with major organizations in both public and private sectors and as a performance coach with Manchester City Football Club. His academic background is in psychology, and his early career was spent working in Human Resources with Unilever.

Originally from Manchester, he enjoys comedy, football and being around people who make him think. An avid lover of sunshine, his aim is to spend more time working and chilling out in Australia.

He is married to Helen and has two children, Matt and Ruth, who are his biggest teachers in life, keep him grounded and remind him not to take himself too seriously.





# Preface to the 10th Anniversary Edition

It was the spring of 2005. I sat at my kitchen table overlooking my garden, making some final changes to the draft of my *SUMO* book. It was the first time I'd worked with my publisher, Capstone, and it was exciting to do so. But no one was fooling themselves. My editor knew he was taking a chance working on such a book. Thirteen publishers had already turned down the opportunity to publish *SUMO*. As one editor put it so directly... 'no one is going to walk into a bookshop and buy a book that's telling them to Shut Up, Move On. A book title has to work from the outset, and Paul, yours just doesn't.'

Despite my passion for what I was writing I had some genuine concerns. Was anyone really going to take seriously a book that encouraged 'Fruity Thinking,' said Hippo Time was OK and that we might want to Ditch Doris Day? I had my doubts, but I chose to allow them to occupy the seats at the back of my mind. The seats at the front were where hope and expectation sat. However, doubt was sometimes encouraged to take centre stage by some well-meaning friends who sensitively asked 'What will you do if it's a flop? How will you cope with the disappointment?' Who needs enemies, eh?

My mentor and best mate Paul Sandham was slightly more encouraging: 'You've got a unique, quirky style bud. It won't be

to everyone's taste, but it will connect with more people than you realize. Just make sure you share your struggles, not just your successes. That's what will make this book different.' So I did.

As you'll discover, I've sought to add some colour and context to what you're about to read. My goal is not just simply to share some ideas, but to highlight how these ideas have helped me overcome some of my own challenges. Ten years on from its first publication, it seems my mate Paul had a point – people connect with stories. People not only read mine, but contacted me to share theirs. You see, I realize that although we may never have met, we do have things in common. Most of us are not celebrities. We're not chased by the paparazzi. Our photos don't appear in magazines. Our weight gain or weight loss is not a source of news for the gossip columns. But we all have our own story – something that is significant to us personally. We're all still of equal importance even if that doesn't equate to equal profile. Ultimately, we're all on a similar journey. It's called life.

We have our dreams. We have our disappointments. We're full of hope. We also get hurt. We fall. We get back up. We press on. We give up. We wake up happy. We wake up sad. We delight in the company of friends and family. We despair when we feel rejected and alone. Life, at times, seems utterly amazing and at other times appears to make no sense. Our relationships are our biggest source of pleasure and also our biggest source of pain. We sometimes savour the special moments but sleepwalk through the majority of them. We feel we're capable of anything but our doubts are our constant companions. We surprise ourselves. We despair of ourselves.

So, we may be from different places, different backgrounds and be different ages, but we still have so much in common. It's what we have in common that seems to connect with the readers of this book. Deep down I sensed it would. How could I be so sure?

Well, I don't just write about the SUMO message. I speak about it too. As I write the preface to this 10th anniversary edition, the number of countries I've shared these ideas in has reached 40. Tens of thousands of people have heard this message. A few have ridiculed both me and my ideas. But most have related to them. My message, I feel humbled to say, has resonated with people across all ages, from all backgrounds and amongst all cultures. Not everyone gets my humour. You'll see why later. But many do connect with some, if not all, of what I'm saying.

Yet, if you're reading this book for the first time, you're reading it in a world that is vastly different from the world of those who first opened these pages back in 2005. What we now take for granted as very much part of our everyday lives was either in its infancy or did not even exist when this book was first published. On Facebook? Me too. But its creator Mark Zuckerberg only developed it in 2004. In 2005 it was only available to college students in the United States. When *SUMO* was first published, it's likely only a few people outside of the US had heard of Facebook. Yet today it has so many users that if Facebook was a country it would be the third largest on the planet behind China and India. In 2005 you called people 'friends' because you actually knew them.

What about Twitter? I love to tweet (@thesumoguy if you want to connect). Back in 2005 no one had heard of it, let alone used it. Why? Twitter wasn't launched until July 2006.

What about YouTube? In 2005 the domain name was secured, but no videos were uploaded until later in the year. It wasn't launched in the UK until my wife's birthday, June 19th 2007. To be fair, I don't think my wife's birthday had much to do with the launch, but I so wished I'd filmed her at our romantic meal out near the monkey enclosure at Chester Zoo that day. If I had, you would have been able to witness for yourself the look of joy on her face as we chilled out with the baboons and gorillas while we ate our cheese and pickle sandwiches and consumed several pork pies. (Yes, you've guessed it, I'm from the north of England.)

The 'financial crisis' was something people remembered happening back in the 1980s and early 1990s. Few, if any, economists back in 2005 were predicting the financial global meltdown that was to take place three years later.

In 2005 you probably also used your watch to tell the time, regretted not having your camera to capture a special moment and simply zoned out when conversations became boring. You see, *SUMO* was first published in a world devoid of iPhones. There were no apps. It was difficult to see photos of what meals your friends had been eating earlier that day. How did we survive? I'm not sure.

Now, a world of immense possibility to enhance both connection and conflict exists because of such technological development and

ideas. It has also multiplied, perhaps a hundredfold, the amount of distractions we now accept as being a normal part of our day-to-day lives. Why reflect when I can tweet? Why converse with the people I'm with when I can connect with 'friends' I've never met? Why engage with my children when I can place headphones on them and sit them in front of an iPad?

If there's one word to sum up the last decade it would not be change. That's too obvious. No, the word would be 'relentless'. A relentless amount of change, happening at a relentless speed where standing still means you're going backwards and staying in the game means not staying in the same place. No human being that's ever walked upon this planet in previous generations has had to deal with the relentless pace of life and change we now take for granted. Life, for many people, is like being on a rollercoaster which never stops and the brakes are no longer working.

This is our current reality, and as such I think the SUMO message is perhaps even more relevant and applicable to life now than it was when it was first published ten years ago. Here's why I think that's the case. If you and I are to maximize our potential and the opportunities that life has for us, there are several factors which I believe will contribute to this. Each one is, to some extent, explored within the SUMO approach. Let me give you a brief overview of what these factors are.

**Reflection.** At the heart of SUMO is the call to get off auto-pilot; to stop and press pause. Our relentlessly fast-paced, busy and distraction-filled world does not encourage this. People now pay thousands of pounds to escape the noise of the world – to find

silence. SUMO, however, will help you to reflect in a very honest and practical way about a number of aspects of your life. Some of these reflections will bring you reassurance, but others may cause you to reconsider your priorities and current behaviour. The SUMO challenge is to live with increased awareness, attention and appreciation.

As the Latin writer Publilius Syrus said, 'Awareness, not age, leads to wisdom.' Reflection gives you the opportunity to become more self-aware.

**Recovery.** The pace of change and the tidal wave of distractions can be exhausting. Not just physically, but, perhaps even more importantly, mentally. Modern technology means we are more accessible than ever before. But this, in turn, means we're finding it increasingly difficult to switch off. I don't know what it's like for women, but I'm increasingly seeing guys on their mobile phones whilst relieving themselves at the urinal. I've eavesdropped on some very interesting conversations whilst taking a comfort break at various service stations throughout the UK.

The reality is our minds are being constantly stimulated. We're not allowing ourselves to press pause and take time out. And despite the mental fatigue that this brings, more and more people are reporting difficulty in sleeping.

I work with a Premiership football team. These elite sportspeople need to be in peak physical and mental condition. And what might surprise some people is the important role recovery time

plays in this. It's built into their training programme. It's not a nice option – it's a necessity.

You might not be an elite sportsperson, but you're about to discover that the SUMO approach encourages us to build recovery time into our own lives.

Perhaps we need to take a lesson from the airlines. In their safety announcements they always state the following: If there's a drop in cabin pressure, put your oxygen mask on first *before* helping others.

**Responsibility.** More than any other animal humans are hugely dependent on others for our survival when we're born. But some people believe they can live their whole lives relying on others to meet their needs. People can develop a sense of entitlement that the world owes them a living, that teachers, employers and governments should take responsibility for our welfare and well-being.

Well, here's the deal. This way of thinking will seriously undermine a person's ability to make the most of their time on this planet. As you'll discover, taking personal responsibility (whilst still being open to support from others) will be the cornerstone to you achieving the life you want.

**Resilience.** We mentioned earlier that life at times can be described as a rollercoaster. It has both ups and downs. However, it's how you deal with the down times, the setbacks, the challenges and disappointments that influences whether such events derail you