



# A Brief Introduction to Neuro-Linguistic Programming

by Dee Shipman

## What is NLP?

- ✧ *Skills for Professional Excellence*
- ✧ *Paths to Personal Development*
- ✧ *Tools for Exceptional Communication*

Several phrases accurately describe NLP...

### **"NLP is about communication."**

One of the principles of NLP is that we are always communicating, and most of our communication is other than words. The question becomes: "What are we communicating?" Is what we intend to convey the same as what the listener understands? If not, how do we recognise the cues and adjust? NLP de-mystifies the communication loops at home and work and gives us practical tools for becoming highly skilled communicators.

### **"NLP is about how language affects us."**

Language affects how we think and respond. The very process of converting experience into language requires that we condense, distort, and summarise how we perceive the world. NLP also provides questions and patterns to make communication more as we intend. NLP teaches us to understand how language affects us through implicit and embedded assumptions. Since advertisers, the media, and politicians use language to convey their messages, learning about

language through NLP can also add awareness and consumer protection for your mind!

### **"NLP is about modelling excellence."**

NLP processes are a result of discovering how experts or excellent leaders do what they do so well and teaching those skills to others. Modelling skills are at the heart of NLP. Learning the specific components of how others do something well will provide you with new options. One example the NLP spelling strategy, is modelled from naturally good spellers and is easily taught to children and adults. Other examples about in education, business, health, sports and personal life as well.

### **"NLP is how we use our brain."**

NLP describes, in very precise terms, the images, sounds, and feelings that make up our inner and outer world. How do we know what we know? How do we do what we do? For example, how do you know that a pleasant memory is pleasant? How do you know when to feel scared or happy at certain times? How do you like or dislike something? How do you learn a subject easily, or not? Sometimes people describe NLP as "software for our brains"

NLP is about how we "code" our experiences. When we understand the specific ways that our brains make distinctions, then it is easier to make changes, to learn, and to communicate effectively.

### **"NLP is the study of internal experience."**

NLP is a tool to understand how an individual makes sense of the

world. NLP studies individuals' experiences: how they perceive the world around them and how their brain makes specific distinctions for them. It does NOT assume that we all do this the same way. In NLP we know that each person has a unique style of learning, perceiving and responding to the world. NLP is inherently respectful of differences.

## How will learning NLP Benefit Me?

NLP is valuable in business, consulting, therapy, management, health professions, sports, parenting, creative pursuits, education, training and development, sales, negotiation, writing--anywhere communicating and excelling are important!

## NLP In Business

Basic NLP skills which improve and enhance communication, rapport building, and goal setting are all immediately applicable to the business world. Specific skills for dealing with people who perceive the world differently than we do will help improve relations with peers, bosses, customers, and new prospects. In addition, many leaders and consultants in business have turned to the creative and innovative aspects of NLP for inspiration in organisational development, total quality management, team building, and strategic planning. NLP principles and skills underlie much of what is taught in negotiation seminars. Presentation skills and public speaking are an integral part of corporate life today. NLP self-management techniques, language patterns, and goal-setting are vital to effective speaking. Many of the attendees

at NLP trainings tell us they have come to learn skills that will help them in their professions.

## NLP in the Helping Professions

Much of the initial modelling in NLP focused on how innovative and effective therapists helped their clients change. Most of their behaviour and language was beyond their conscious awareness; thus, the analysis and modelling of the therapist's techniques produced information of a highly practical nature.

The personal change work processes in NLP are unique in their scope and power. They are guided by precise language patterns and a careful systematic approach for checking the "ecology" or respectfulness of the change upon other areas in a person's life. Many highly trained therapists are finding NLP to be a highly generative and comprehensive framework for personal change. In addition, the dynamic world of NLP is continually refining existing patterns and adding new developments which help people make the changes they want. If you are in a helping profession and are seeking:

- tools for building rapport with a variety of clients,
- understanding the structure of beliefs and identity,
- to add zest to your work and increase your job satisfaction,
- new and effective ways to assist your clients to achieve rapid and lasting change,

NLP has much to offer.

## NLP and Creativity

Artists, writers, and performers find NLP training valuable because NLP offers valuable insight into what inhibits and what enhances the creative spirit. Applications of NLP strategies provide powerful ways to free and stimulate your creativity.

## NLP in Education

NLP's practical applications include understanding how we learn and developing strategies for both students and teachers. Through NLP, teachers and parents gain concrete methods for helping children do well in school. Classroom teachers are incorporating key pieces of the NLP approach into their teaching methods and classroom management.

## NLP for Personal Change

Many people come to NLP for relief from limitations. NLP provides freedom from old habits, fears, limiting beliefs, and gives a structure for new and empowering ways of being in the world. One of the benefits of NLP is more choice: in how you respond, the way you communicate, and how you feel. When you have more options, you can make better decisions. If you have not been living the life that you want, NLP offers you a path to new and satisfying alternatives.

## NLP In Health

The applications of NLP are important both to those in the medical field and to individuals interested in good health.

In today's rapidly changing field of health care, medical professionals need more than technical abilities. They are increasingly called upon to demonstrate strong interpersonal skills and flexibility as well as abilities in the area of negotiation, business management, and conflict resolution. NLP provides these necessary skills for relating effectively and communicating clearly with patients and co-workers.

Medical professionals report that what they learn in NLP training is immediately applicable and valuable in their work.

In addition, leading-edge research in NLP today is focusing on ways

of building and maintaining personal health, engaging the body's ability to heal, and defining the relationship between health and beliefs.

## The Beginnings of NLP

NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) began in the early 1970's when John Grinder, a linguistics professor at the University of California, and Richard Bandler, a student of psychology and mathematics, asked themselves the simple yet fascinating question:

"What is it that makes the difference between somebody who is merely competent and someone who excels at the same skill?"

This question and the answers they found have evolved into a vast body of NLP knowledge that is renowned for its effectiveness in achieving results.

The first people modelled were therapists: Virginia Satir, Milton Erickson, and Fritz Perls. Bandler and Grinder specifically modelled their language, physiology, and mental processes, then identified patterns (rather than theories) which could be precisely defined and explicitly taught. In the years since, many valuable contributions have been added to the field. Rapid Practical and effective NLP applications quickly found a home in business, helping professions, education, health, and personal development.

## The World of NLP

Today there are training centres and universities around the world teaching NLP skills. The comprehensive set of skills is taught as NLP Training, and is usually offered as 4-day Diploma and 18 or more full days of Practitioner training. Early in the program participants learn the important skills of:

- clarifying goals and objectives
- establishing rapport
- developing states of excellence
- changing self-defeating patterns of behaviour

- checking to ensure any desired changes are appropriate for all parts of life
- clear and effective use of language

Some larger training centres offer an advanced training and certification called "Master Practitioner," as well as specialised classes, such as NLP negotiating and conflict resolution skills, NLP presentation skills, and NLP personal growth processes.

The world of NLP is international in scope, especially in the fields of business, creativity, therapy, education, and health. Several journals chronicle new discoveries in NLP. There are hundreds of books with an NLP focus and many new books are published each year.

In addition, there are therapists, counsellors and consultants around the world trained in NLP and offering private sessions for personal change.

## NLP Principles

The principles, often referred to as presuppositions, which form the foundation of NLP have been modelled from key people who consistently produced superb results, as well as from systems theory and natural laws. As well as a set of powerful skills, NLP is a philosophy and an attitude that is useful when your goal is excellence in whatever you do.

A few of the principles are listed below:

**1. If what you are doing is not working, do something else.**  
If you always do what you've always done, you will always get what you've always got.

**2. Choice is better than no choice.**  
The system or person with the most choices or flexibility has the best chance of success, survival, and/or influence.

### **3. The meaning of your communication is the response you get.**

While your intention may be clear to you, it is the other person's interpretation and response that reflects your effectiveness. NLP teaches you the skills and flexibility to ensure that the message you send equals the message they receive.

### **4. There is no failure, only feedback.**

What seemed like failure is usually success that just stopped too soon. With this understanding, we can stop blaming ourselves and others, find solutions, and improve the quality of what we do.

### **5. Anything can be accomplished if the task is broken down into small enough steps or chunks.**

Though a major project can seem overwhelming at first, defining and sequencing the steps can make it more easily achievable.

### **6. We are always communicating.**

Words are only a small part of our total communication. Facial expressions gestures, posture, and voice quality are key components of non-verbal communication. Even when we remain silent, we are communicating. An effective communicator pays attention and responds to what happens both verbally and non verbally in their interactions. When we learn to notice and respond at that level, the quality of our interactions increases dramatically.

### **7. Behind every behaviour is a positive intention.**

By understanding that people have some positive intention for themselves in what they say and do, it's easier to stop getting angry and stuck, start to move forward, and enjoy more flexibility and grace.

## An NLP Sampler

### Changing feelings and behaviour by changing how you think:

In order to gain the most benefit from this exercise, take a couple of minutes to fully participate in this small example of how the structure of your thoughts influences your emotions and behaviours.

First, think of a specific pleasant experience you've had. Focus on the part of the experience that was really pleasant for you. It might be something simple that you do regularly, or it might be a special time or event.

Some people will have a clear image of the experience and some people will have a sense of the experience. Either way is fine. Just enjoy it now.

Next, notice what happens if you bring the experience closer to you. Now make it a bit bigger. Now make the colours even brighter. How do those changes affect your feelings about that memory?

Now, move the images far away. Make the image dim and grey and small. How does that affect the feelings associated with the experience?

In closing, now put the brightness, distance, and colour back the way you like it so that you leave that memory as pleasant as you'd like.

People report that their feelings change when they change the colour, brightness, distance, and size of the images. You can neutralise unpleasant memories just that easily. Most people do not know that they can immediately affect their feelings and behaviour just by adjusting the components of how they think.

**"The real voyage of discovery lies not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes."**

## An NLP Sampler

### An example of how language affects us:

Let's move on to a little bit of the "linguistic" part of NLP.

"Do NOT think of a blue striped elephant."

What did you do in your brain? Most people think of a blue striped elephant, then try (in vain!) to think of something else. In order to make sense of the words, our brains have to recall an experience of the very thing that is being asked NOT to do. This simple understanding has many implications.

For example, telling a child what NOT to do may actually increase the likelihood of the action., "DON'T spill" may result in more spills! In business, "DON'T be late" may increase the likelihood of being late. "Be here five minutes before nine" is clear and easy to understand. Telling someone "DON'T worry" can start them worrying! Instead, let them know what to do, such as: "Enjoy your afternoon!"

## Some Useful NLP Books

- FROGS INTO PRINCES - Richard Bandler & John Grinder
- HEART OF THE MIND - Connirae & Steve Andreas
- INFLUENCING WITH INTEGRITY - Genie Laborde
- INTRODUCING NLP - Sue Knight
- INTRODUCING NLP - Joseph O'Connor & John Seymour
- MANAGE YOURSELF, MANAGE YOUR LIFE - Ian McDermott & Ian Shircore
- NLP: AN INTRODUCTORY GUIDE - Carol Harris
- NLP AND HEALTH - Ian McDermott & Joseph O'Connor
- NLP & RELATIONSHIPS - Robin Prior & Joseph O'Connor

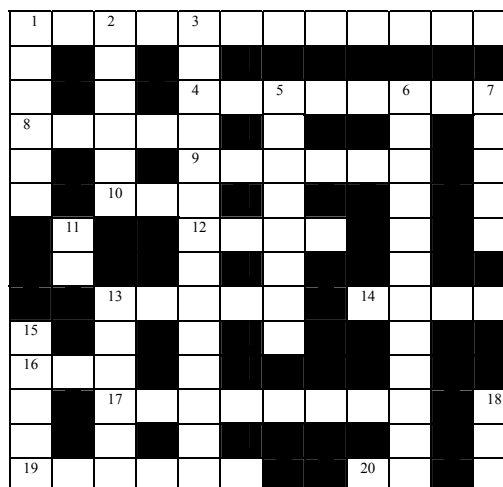
## BUSINESS BOOKS

- FIGURING OUT PEOPLE: Design Engineering With Meta-Programs - Bodenhamer & Hall
- LEADING WITH NLP - Joseph O'Connor
- NLP AT WORK - Sue Knight
- NLP FOR MANAGERS: - Harry Alder
- PRACTICAL NLP FOR MANAGERS - Ian McDermott & Joseph O'Connor
- SUCCESSFUL SELLING WITH NLP - Joseph O'Connor & Robin Prior
- TRAINING WITH NLP - Joseph O'Connor & John Seymour
- UNDERSTANDING NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING IN A WEEK - Mo Shapiro
- WORDS THAT CHANGE MINDS: - Shelle Rose Charvet

## EDUCATION BOOKS

- CLASSROOM MAGIC - Linda Lloyd
- DYNAMIC LEARNING - Robert Dilts & Todd Epstein
- HEALING ADD: - Thom Hartmann
- IN YOUR HANDS - NLP IN ELT - Jane Revell and Suan Norman
- LAZY LEARNING - Diana Beaver
- REDISCOVER THE JOY OF LEARNING: - Don A Blackerby

## RAINBOW CROSSWORD 1



### Clues Across.

1. Map Garret's M.O. to find out what he's like. (12)
4. ( see 1D)
8. Go round one short thoroughfare for A submodalities. (5)
9. Totally out there for the moment. (6)
10. The 6th modality? (1,1,1)
12. The role played by one of your inner team? (4)
13. If you're 13D., this is your big chunk. (5)
14. Trust your unconscious and go with it. (4)
16. Being V back in the past. (3)
17. Where ALL the quantifiers come from? ( 8 )
19. ( see 1D ).
20. Your hostess. ( 1,1 )

### Clues Down.

- 1., 19A, 4A. If the 3D is that he was born in a house with 3 walls you can solve this now or when you will have solved 3D. ( 6,6,8 )
2. And you are you and in this state and you can canter into it. ( 6 )
3. NLP assumes it to be so. ( 14 )
5. No failure , only feedback? But I don't need it! (8 )
6. Species laden with particular requirements The Rainbow Journey can supply. ( 7,5 )
7. The first word? What a nerve! (5 )
11. Your host. ( 1,1 )
13. 56 round America are for this modality. ( 6 )
15. The quickest way to change. ( 5 )
18. What it's all about. ( 1,1,1 )

## SPORTS BOOKS

- SPORTING EXCELLENCE: Optimising Sports Performance Using NLP ~Ted Garratt
- NLP AND SPORTS - Joseph O'Connor
- MASTERSTROKE : Use the Power of Your Mind to Improve Your Golf With Nlp by Harry Alder, Karl Morris
- GOLF: THE MIND GAME - Mackenzie And Denlinger

