Neuro Linguistic Programming

How NLP Can Make Us More Successful
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NLP is the practice of understanding how people organise their thinking, feeling, language and behaviour to produce results.

How it began

In the mid-seventies, John Grinder and Richard Bandler carried out research on modelling the skills of some of the leading masters of communication and personal change. They called what they were doing Neuro-Linguistic Programming.

'Neuro' refers to the neurological processes of seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting, which form the basic building blocks of our experience.

'Linguistic' refers to the ways we use language to represent our experience and communicate with others.

'Programming' refers not to programming, as in computers, but rather to the strategies we use to organise these inner processes to produce results.

How does it work?

NLP identifies and defines how our minds work. By developing a practical understanding of these processes we can learn how to achieve results that often seem magical.

The theory says that we all see, or perceive the world differently. Each of us constructs a model of the world in our heads and this affects the way we behave. Most of our problems as human beings come from perception rather than reality.

In a sales context we may have a problem with the price of our products and services. This may be as a result of negative experiences with some of our customers. The problem is that if we become convinced that the perception is real i.e. we are too expensive, it begins to influence the words we say, our tone of voice and our body language.

The perception becomes a reality, our view is reinforced and the problem becomes worse.

The good news is that we can change some of these negative habits and perceptions.

NLP helps us to understand how people do what they do well. The process is called
modelling.

For example someone who is skilled at influencing others usually does some or all of the following things

- Develops a positive mental attitude. They expect to do well and have high levels of self confidence.

- Interprets, or reads the body language of the person with whom they are communicating.

- Listens effectively and asks relevant questions.

- Matches or mirrors the body language of the other person.

- Matches the tone of voice used by the other person.

- Makes positive eye contact.

- Senses and copies the words used by the other person in conversation.

- Identifies what is important to the other person in how they make decisions.

- Begins at the appropriate stage to lead the conversation in a way the other person finds acceptable.

Successful people who have a natural talent often do these things subconsciously. The good news is that we can learn to reproduce this successful behaviour.

How can salespeople and sales managers use NLP?

Some of the most popular applications of NLP in selling and management are to:

- Learn how to build and enhance relationships with new and existing contacts in such a way that you can understand and appreciate each person's point of view and in so doing build the rapport with which to do effective business.

- Develop the skills of self management that make you look and sound more confident.

- Learn how to recognise your natural strengths and be able to select and draw on the skills that you need to achieve results that you want.

- Achieve more success in the key selling skills; prospecting, booking appointments, building rapport, getting control of meetings, asking more effective questions, listening actively, presenting solutions, dealing with objections, negotiating and closing the sale.

- Find out what you really want to achieve in your business and social life and put together strategies for achieving your goals.

- Build the skills of mentoring so that those who are being mentored have the
modelling skills to be able to get the most from you as their mentor.

• Develop the coaching skills needed for you to be able to appraise your sales people's performance in ways that lead to learning for you, your salespeople and your company.

• Enhance your ability to inspire and motivate those around you with your sense of direction and your capacity to communicate in ways that are compelling.

• Develop the consultancy skills needed to facilitate change.