

# Neuro Linguistic Programming In Business Excellence

NLP is all about human excellence and business excellence. Its evolution as a successful technology dates back to the 70s when Richard Bandler and John Grinder got together to study human excellence. Richard Bandler is a mathematician and a computer programmer and John Grinder a linguist. After studying people who excelled in various fields they christened the findings which evolved into technology of excellence as "Neuro Linguistic Programming". Interestingly the findings were that 95% of our behavior is patterned and thus we deliver more or less the same quality of outcome in similar situations. This technology further evolved and found place in all areas demanding excellence.

As the name suggests NLP is a synthesis that draws on the work of various fields and in particular neuroscience and linguistics. NLP works on identification of limiting patterns and offers ways of enhancing them to work in our favor. Some of the NLP early findings like importance of being in synch with the other person and preferred communication choices of people have found way in conventional management techniques. NLP is a great tool to build congruence in oneself and in the organization for achieving excellence. Congruence essentially means walk what you talk. Its systematic approach through the model of logical levels of change helps identify the layer at which the change is required and take corrective action to bring about congruence.

Neuro in NLP is about our five senses i.e. visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory, and gustatory. All our experiences in the brain are stored in form of these five senses. A change in any of these results in a complete change of experience. The technique is a great tool to effect a change in an experience and is useful for working on phobias. By understanding the predominant sense of any individual you could work out various strategies of influence.

Linguistics is all about the way we communicate. It finds its importance in business, as communication is the currency of business. It is essential to use the right communication patterns which result in acceptance at all levels.

Programming is the way the experiences are coded. A study of this can identify limiting patterns hindering the process of excellence and help modify and enhance to bring about the desired effect.

NLP is thus the software to run our brains. The analogy could be that our brain is a superior computer the only difference is we are not born with a user manual and NLP thus provides you with the same.

NLP is best suited for achieving personal excellence, advertising, business processes, counseling, human resource development, sales and sales strategies, customer care, sports, and many other areas. Infact it can be adapted to any field of excellence in part or whole.

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NLP for some has become a passion in their quest to achieve excellence. The metaphor below aptly describes it:

At first NLP seemed like a glittering starlet;  
then I thought of it as a mysterious, profound magician;  
now it is like a loyal, trustworthy friend,  
that I have no idea how I ever lived without.  
-Gerry Schmidt- NLP trainer

The basics of NLP are its presuppositions. The first two fundamental presuppositions are "THE MAP IS NOT THE TERRITORY" and "EVERY EXPERIENCE HAS A STRUCTURE". Just by reading or studying a person for excellence does not result in the performance. It is important to step into his shoes and take a new meaning. One has to actually take the achievers inner mental map and the structure of the experience. This thus gives rise to the next presupposition "IF ONE PERSON CAN DO SOMETHING ANYONE CAN LEARN TO DO IT". This means that motivation, self-esteem, confidence, decision making, and the other skills can be learnt and are not a function of number of years or capabilities of a few. In business the practice of patterning oneself after a leader of Industry has a name and illustrious history and is often called "mentoring". However when we model someone what we fail to do is understand and model the beliefs and values of the individual or the organization. Once we were to do this we can actually build congruence and not merely repeat a behavior pattern.

Congruence in beliefs and values go a long way in achieving excellence. One can actually relook at the beliefs and values that we hold and acquire a new set to bring about a change in the outcome. This also goes a long way in impacting a personality and the behavior. For instance if "success" and "rejection" are priority values of an achiever, it surely results in a disaster as to succeed one has to go through the tough rejections. Thus rejection should be a value which is not a priority value. Organizations could actually do a study of the value systems of the employees and check for congruence viz. a viz. the values of the organization and effect a change. This actually is a solution for organizations wherein employees demonstrate a totally different behavior, which then becomes the face of the company, and is at times undesirable. Very often training programs do not have a long-term impact since only the behavior changes and not the values and beliefs thus resulting in incongruence.

Understanding the patterns of employees through NLP go a long way in building rapport within the teams and also in terms of defining the right roles. This ultimately results in increased productivity through a climate of trust and understanding. A system to study the pattern of the individuals and understanding their beliefs and values can provide the HR group an altogether different approach for positioning their employees. Sales and customer care services can actually bring about a radical change in the approach of the employees towards its

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customers. You could actually hire people with values in line with the requirement of the job and they could pattern the customers to build a great rapport by talking their language.

Business consulting and reengineering in an organization can be done by checking for congruence within the system in line with its processes and people. I have used NLP as a technology very effectively in restructuring organizations with the right value systems for the right job. Unfortunately restructuring in organizations is associated with a great pain of adaptability and often does not yield the desired results because of incongruence between the system and the people. You could use the programming techniques to model processes of excellence and also have the right people to execute them.

Linguistics can greatly impact the telemarketing and customer care over telephones. How often we get turned off by a language, which our brain just does not register. Consider the statement often made "I appreciate your point of view but....." The word "but" immediately puts the breaks on the further communication, as we know somewhere inside our point of view is not appreciated. Try replacing "but" with "and" and test the impact.

Cigarette advertising is a great case study in NLP. The advertisement activates our three predominant senses by using a great visual, excellent music, and generates a tremendous emotion and when the emotion reaches a peak, the model anchors it by lighting the cigarette at that very moment. A great way to hook the cigarette to the emotion and thus form a habit.

Excellent sales people use these skills unconsciously. A good car sales person is a great example. Check his strategy, first he would take you around the car to create a great visual impact. Start the engine and activate your auditory senses by the smooth engine sound and then take you on a drive to activate your feeling and touch or the kinesthetic parameters.

They use the language patterns so effectively that they at times manage to sell a car which is beyond your budget. Computer sales people use rapport to the hilt while selling. Organizations can actually study these people and plant their strategy into the rest of the sales force and the results can be great.

Though the technology seems to be manipulative enough it has a great potential. At a personal level it can help you shape your destiny by working on your limiting patterns and correcting them.

This technology is an Ocean and the more you explore its depth the more fascinating it is. It clearly brings out a fact there is no failure in life and only learning. Learning helps you take corrective actions..... a path towards excellence. As Gautam Buddha said:

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We are what we think;  
All that we are, arises;  
With our thoughts we make our world.

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