

# NLP

## NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING



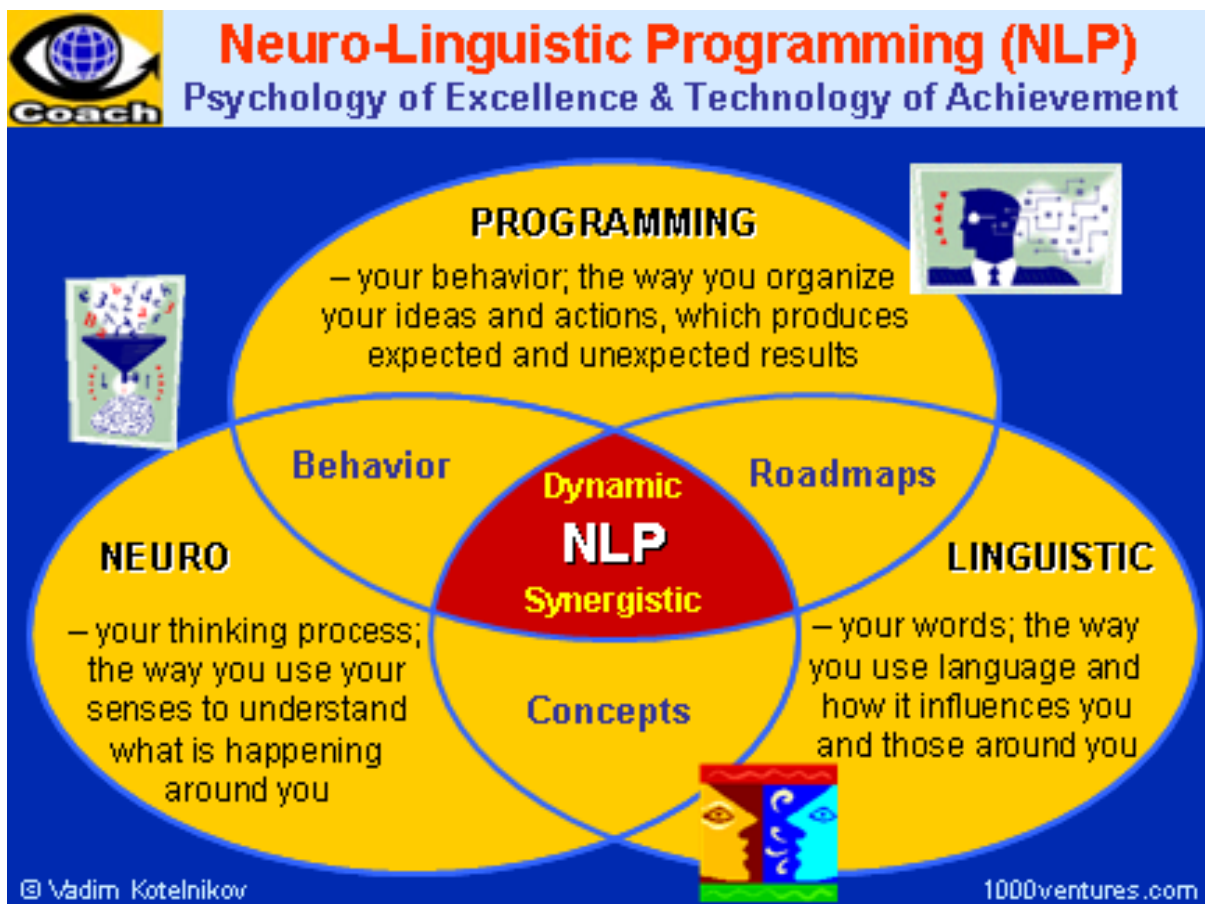
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**Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP)** is an approach to psychotherapy and organizational change based on "a model of interpersonal communication chiefly concerned with the relationship between successful patterns of behaviour and the subjective experiences (esp. patterns of thought) underlying them" and "a system of alternative therapy based on this which seeks to educate people in self-awareness and effective communication, and to change their patterns of mental and emotional behaviour".

The term "Neuro-Linguistic Programming" refers to a stated connection between the neurological processes ("neuro"), language ("linguistic") and behavioral patterns that have been learned through experience ("programming") and can be organized to achieve specific goals in life.

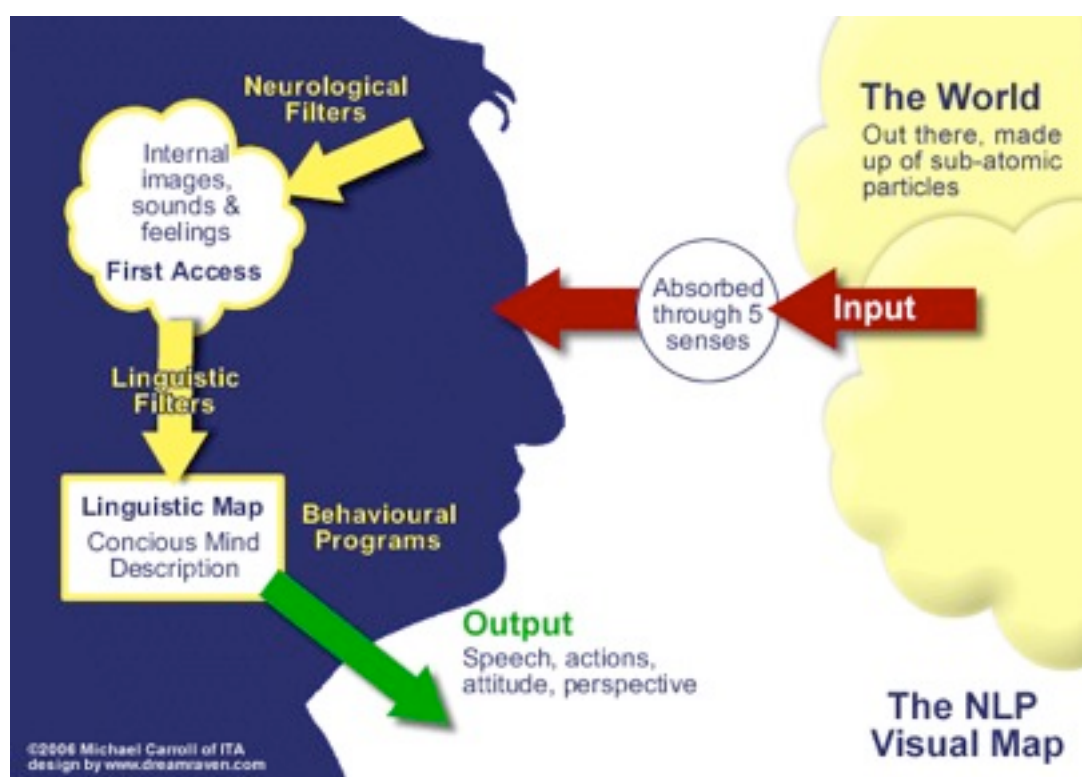
Founders **Richard Bandler** and **John Grinder** say that NLP is capable of addressing problems such as phobias, depression, habit disorders, psychosomatic illness, and learning disorders, and helps people attain fuller and richer lives". Bandler and Grinder claimed that if the effective patterns of behaviour of exceptional people could be modeled then these patterns could be acquired by others.

NLP has been adopted by private therapists, including hypnotherapists, and those who undertake training in NLP and apply it to their practice. It has also been promoted as a "science of excellence", and applied within management training, life coaching, alternative medicine, large group awareness training, and the self-help industry.



NLP originated when Richard Bandler, a student at the University of California, was listening to and selecting portions of taped therapy sessions of the late Gestalt therapist Fritz Perls. Bandler recognized particular word and sentence structures which facilitated the acceptance of Perls' therapeutic suggestions. Bandler took this idea to one of his university lecturers, John Grinder, a linguist. Together they studied Perls's utterances on tape and observed a second therapist, Virginia Satir, to produce what they termed the meta model, a model for gathering information and challenging a client's language and underlying thinking.

The meta model was presented in 1975 in two volumes, *The Structure of Magic I: A Book About Language and Therapy* and *The Structure of Magic II: A Book About Communication and Change*, in which the authors expressed their belief that the therapeutic "magic" as performed in therapy by Perls and Satir, and by performers in any complex human activity, had structure that could be learned by others given the appropriate models. Implicit in the behavior of Perls and Satir was the ability to challenge distortion, generalization and deletion in a client's language.



NLP is a **pragmatic school of thought** - an 'epistemology' - that addresses the many levels involved in being human. NLP is a multi-dimensional process that involves the development of behavioral competence and flexibility, but also involves strategic thinking and an understanding of the mental and cognitive processes behind behavior.

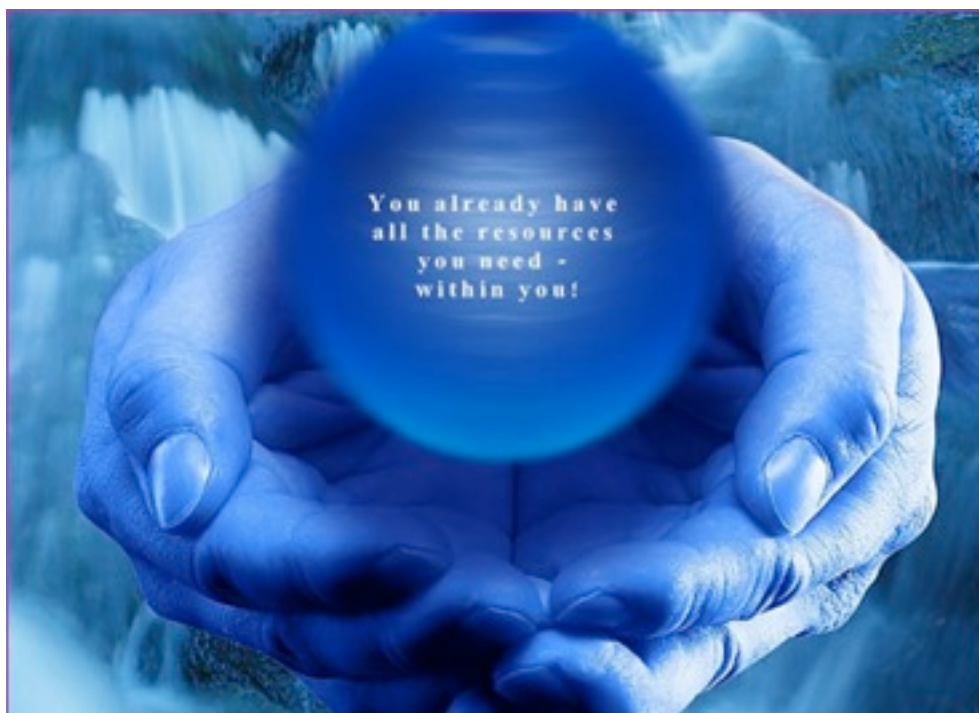
NLP provides tools and skills for the development of states of individual excellence, but it also establishes a system of empowering beliefs and presuppositions about what human beings are, what communication is and what the process of change is all about.

At another level, NLP is about self-discovery, exploring identity and mission. It also provides a framework for understanding and relating to the 'spiritual' part of human experience that reaches beyond us as individuals to our family, community and global systems. NLP is not only about competence and excellence, it is about wisdom and vision.

# NLP Presuppositions

There are certain presuppositions underlying NLP.

1. The map is not the territory.
2. Mind and body are parts of the same cybernetic system and affect each other.
3. The law of requisite variety (also known as the first law of cybernetics - cybernetics is the science of systems and controls in animals, including humans, and machines) states that in any cybernetic system the element or person in the system with the widest range of behaviours or variability of choice will control the system.
4. Behaviour is geared towards adaptation.
5. Present behaviour represents the very best choice available to a person.
6. Behaviour is to be evaluated and appreciated or changed as appropriate in the context presented.
7. People have all the resources they need to make the changes they want.
8. 'Possible in the world' or 'possible for me' is only a matter of how.
9. The highest quality information about other people is behavioural.
10. It is useful to make a distinction between behaviour and self.
11. There is no such thing as failure; there is only feedback.

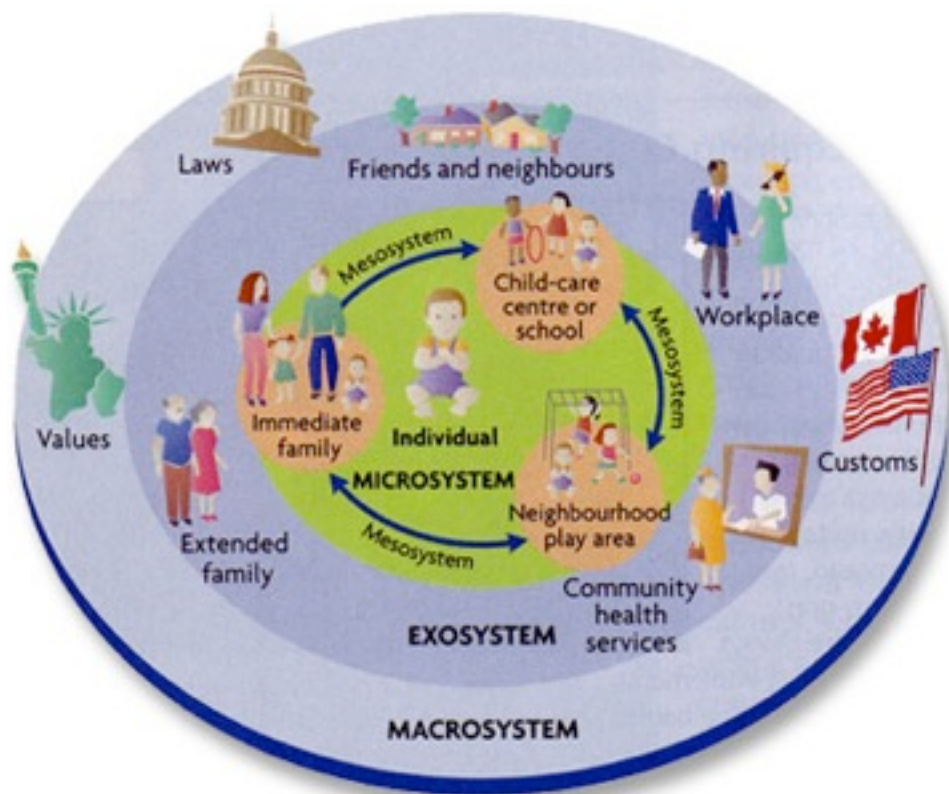
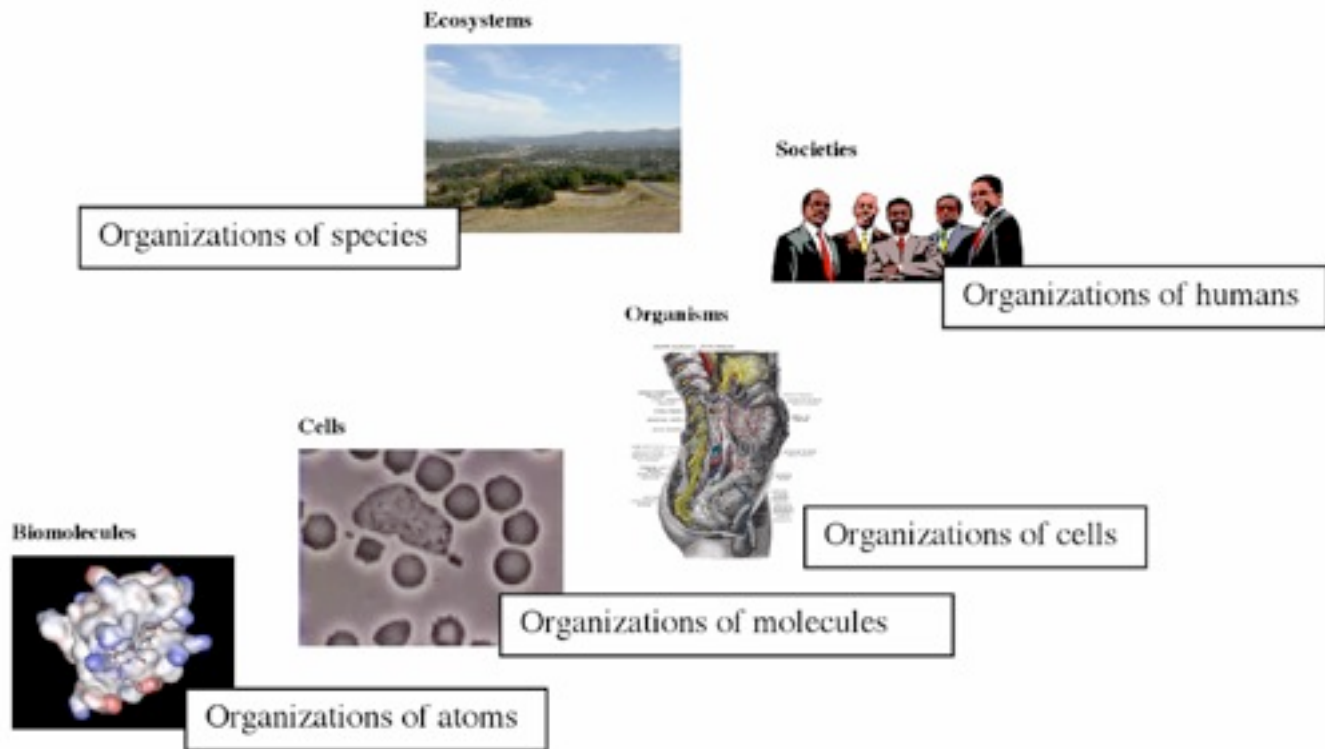


## NLP Is Founded On Two Fundamental Presuppositions:

**1. The Map is Not the Territory.** As human beings, we can never know reality. We can only know our perceptions of reality. We experience and respond to the world around us primarily through our sensory representational systems. It is our 'neuro-linguistic' maps of reality that determine how we behave and that give those behaviors meaning, not reality itself. It is generally not reality that limits us or empowers us, but rather our map of reality.



**2. Life and 'Mind' are Systemic Processes.** The processes that take place within a human being and between human beings and their environment are systemic. Our bodies, our societies, and our universe form an ecology of complex systems and sub-systems all of which interact with and mutually influence each other. It is not possible to completely isolate any part of the system from the rest of the system. Such systems are based on certain 'self-organizing' principles and naturally seek optimal states of balance or homeostasis.



All of the models and techniques of NLP are based on the combination of these two principles. In the belief system of NLP it is not possible for human beings to know objective reality. Wisdom, ethics and ecology do not derive from having the one 'right' or 'correct' map of the world, because human beings would not be capable of making one. Rather, the goal is to create the richest map possible that respects the systemic nature and ecology of ourselves and the world we live in.

The people who are most effective are the ones who have a map of the world that allows them to perceive the greatest number of available choices and perspectives. NLP is a way of enriching the choices that you have and perceive as available in the world around you. Excellence comes from having many choices. Wisdom comes from having multiple perspectives.



## **NLP In Relationships And Communication**

NLP's effectiveness in the relationship field is based on the understanding of our interlocutor's deepest points of view. Some of the tools that it has developed allow us to:

- Recognize the representational orientation your interlocutors use, mostly by observing their non-verbal behavior and the language style they adopt.
- Decode your interlocutors' mental predispositions;
- Extract mental strategies of persuasion, motivation, decision, learning and love from the people who achieve results in these fields;
- Reproduce these mental strategies to obtain the same results;
- Understand the beliefs, values and meta-programs of people with whom we interact, even those who we thought of as odd and incomprehensible until now, and establish more effective communicative relations.

# Boosting Communication With NLP

How can I communicate in a more effective way?

During a communicative process the right hemisphere prevails. Using percentage figures, 38% is made up of tone of voice and 55% by gesture and body language, representing a total percentage equal to 93%. The other 7% is managed by the logical part, i.e.: by words. Therefore if we want to manage effective communication we need to interact with the unconscious.

How many times have we met people that have made brilliant speeches but at the end we still weren't convinced? We register and store hundreds of informations that escape the rational side of our brain, yet they get processed by the emotional side. It is our emotional side that makes us like, or dislike, our interlocutor. It is important to get onto the same wavelength as the right hemisphere, as each one of us has his own "frequency".

When we want to listen to the radio, don't we search for the right frequency? The first task a good communicator has to do is understand the type of subject he has in front of him.



## Sensory Channels In NLP

As NLP points out, each one of us processes information on the basis of sensory channels (seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting). NLP recognizes types on the bases of the preferred system used to process internal information. In other words, there are people who prefer to process information through images, others through sounds, and others through feelings.



For example, after a group of people have seen a film there will be some that preferred the soundtrack or sound effects, others the scenery or special effects and others the “vibes” and the atmosphere the film created. These three types are: Visual, Auditory and Kinesthetic (this last type groups together sensations, taste and smell).

Human beings perceive the world through these different criteria: the **VISUAL** system, the **AUDITORY** system, and **KINESTHETIC** system (connected to sensations). In reality, the three representational systems work together, in a synergic manner, although every human being “will specialize” in one; this preference will greatly influence the way of thinking, speech patterns and behavior. Representational preferences unconsciously push us to verbally communicate using speech patterns characterized by verbal predicates belonging to that representational system. By interpreting our interlocutor’s representational orientation, we can calibrate our communication on the basis of his subjective reality, therefore building a communicative interaction based on “unconscious rapport”.

This doesn’t mean that Visual people don’t also process in an Auditory or Kinaesthetic way, but frequently they will process by images and if I want to get on to the same wavelength as them, I need to use all that is connected to the world of images. In fact, we give preference to one particular system, another less frequently, and we use the third very rarely. Therefore, if I have a Kinesthetic person in front of me who processes using sensation, taste and smell and I want to tell them about a trip to the seaside, it’s useless to talk to him about the ‘brightness of the sun’, the ‘clearness of the water’ and the ‘color of the sand’. Instead, I should talk to him about the ‘sensation of the water against my skin’ the ‘sea breeze that caressed my face’ and the ‘heat of the sand beneath my feet’.

But how do we know what type of person we have in front of us?



## Determining The Preferential System With NLP

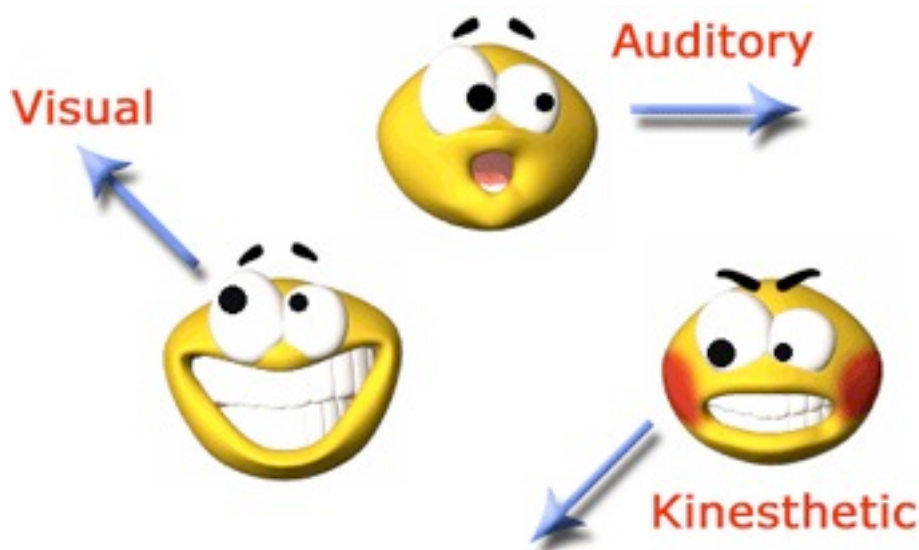
One way of determining our interlocutor's preferential representational system by using NLP techniques consists in observing his physical appearance. To each type corresponds particular characteristics:

- A person who is mainly **VISUAL** walks with an upright bearing, gesticulates upwards, communicates verbally with a loud and quick tone of voice and breathes deeply.
- A person who is mainly **AUDITORY** communicates verbally with a lower and more controlled tone of voice compared to the visual, breathes from the diaphragm, tends to lean the head to one side (as if speaking on the phone) and gesticulates laterally.
- A person who is mainly **KINESTHETIC** breathes abdominally, has a deep voice with long pauses, has a bowed posture, when searching for information 'looks' towards the feet and gesticulates downwards.

## NLP Eye Movement Patterns

Another way consists in observing eye movements. We need to ask our interlocutor a question that has a 'specific' answer. For example: "Where did you go on holiday last year?" "France." Before answering, the eyes will move towards a particular direction, indicating the preferred channel. The Visual looks upwards as if searching for an answer from an imaginary world above the head; the Auditory looks sideways; the Kinesthetic looks downwards.

It is important to catch the exact moment just before the answer, as the eyes could then move in different directions, searching in different sensory channels. In this way you will obtain their primary channel or **ACCESSING CHANNEL** that will allow you to get on the same wavelength as our interlocutor.



## NLP Sensory Predicates

Another way of identifying type consists of verbal predicates that are used during interaction. Below you can find a list of those most used.

<b>VISUAL</b>	<b>AUDITORY</b>	<b>KINESTHETIC</b>
To see clearly	To listen	To touch
To focus	To shout	To feel
To illuminate	To speak	Relaxed
To imagine	To say	Tense
To demonstrate	To call	Pressure
Unclear	To discuss	Real
Colored	Harmony	Understand
To visualize	Noise	To play

## NLP Approach Sequence

The aim of a good communicator is to be able to use the processing channel that is rarely used. But we will not be allowed to do this if we don't first follow the sequence in the correct order. In relationships we normally only use the "dormant" channel when we are emotionally involved with our interlocutor. If we are able to interact with this particular channel, we can emotionally involve the person we face, going well beyond simple understanding.

Once the accessing channel has been identified, we can use the corresponding verbal predicates and everything that is connected to their world. Then, we can use the second channel that is used less often, in order to follow a strategy. We need to imagine that we want to enter a house: We need a key to open the door (Accessing Channel), to turn the handle (secondary channel), and finally we can go inside ("dormant" channel).



## Pacing And Mirroring With NLP

To improve communication, our job consists in pacing the subject's information strategies. However, there is another system that allows us to establish an understanding relationship: Mirroring. This means mirroring our interlocutor's physiology and tone of voice. In other words you need to adopt the same posture as him. For the other person it almost seems as if they are in front of a mirror and, unconsciously, they feel accepted because they think they are facing someone just like them, and they feel they have approval.

The most important rule of rapport is: be alike!

Approval creates the basis on which to continue a discussion. Naturally, "to mirror" does not mean "parroting". If my interlocutor is jiggling his foot nervously, I can move my hand to the same rhythm. If the subject changes position, so do I; naturally I don't do it immediately - if they are speaking, I wait until they finish. Then, when I start to speak, I change my position to that of the subject. To mirror means that if the person I face raises his left arm, I need to raise my right arm, as if I were in front of a mirror. After mirroring the interlocutor for some time, you will notice that he will start to follow your posture. This means you have established the right wavelength, you have tuned in to him.

Have you ever noticed how lovers behave? Their posture is unconsciously in perfect harmony, as if they were performing in a 'ballet'. We can artificially create a similar situation and when we have established Rapport, our interlocutor will be inclined to satisfy our requests.



## NLP Matching Techniques

A similar method is Matching, an indispensable way of tuning in to peoples' internal processes in order to understand their state of mind. I will still imitate their posture but if they raise their left arm, I will also raise my left arm recreating the same muscle tension in the same limb. The subjects will more or less unconsciously see themselves being mirrored, but I will be able to understand their emotional state. In fact, if the person I face has tense legs, contracted facial muscles and is moving his hand nervously, by matching him I can get in tune with his internal state.

The basics of Matching are:

- I recognize your state,
- I understand you,
- I accept and appreciate you.

When a person is sitting on the edge of a chair, leaning forward with all his muscles tense, it is impossible to understand what he is feeling inside if I am stretched out on a sofa completely relaxed!

## Pacing Beliefs With NLP

So, we have looked at many tools with which to tune in to the people with whom we want to talk effectively: the use of sensory accessing channels, Mirroring and Matching. There are also many other NLP ways to match and mirror: I can match the subject by Values. If, for example, my interlocutor holds family as a fundamental value, I will talk to him about the importance of family in today's society. If another person values 'money' I will let him know that this value is also important to me. Obviously you shouldn't alter your own personality. Instead, you need to behave like a twig, which bends in the wind but then goes back to its original position.

In fact, once we have established the right wavelength we can bring the subject into our world. If we aren't at all interested in communicating effectively with those we face, we can ignore everything that has been said so far. If instead we want to communicate effectively to reach a consensus, we should follow everything that has been examined up until now even if this means making some sacrifices.



## NLP: The Study of Success

NLP has been variously described as the technology of the mind, the science of achievement, and the study of success. It is based upon the search for and the study of the factors which account for either success or failure in human performance.

For over thirty years NLP explorers have studied or 'modelled' the behaviour and thinking styles of particularly effective and successful people in business, education, sales, therapy, sport, and personal development.

The results of this work are nowadays presented in workshops and extended trainings which, in effect, provide shortcuts to more successful living - you learn in hours what may have taken the experts years to discover by trial and error.

## NLP Intervention At The Neural Level

Each of our thoughts corresponds to a specific neural pattern. If, for example, I decide to raise my arm, the neurons in my brain immediately take on a particular arrangement. Therefore, it is possible to rearrange cerebral cells in such a way as to remove internal limits and focus on our goals more effectively.

When we were children, we had to put up with a whole series of emotionally involving situations. In order to overcome them we adopted a series of behavioral strategies which, at that time and for that age, we thought were adequate.

If at the age of three we found ourselves in the dark and didn't know where our parents were, we started to scream, to shake and imagine the monster that our grandfather had always talked about. This type of behavior may have been adequate for three year olds but might not be so at adult age. Now, we can't understand why we have such a strong desire to shout when we are in the dark, why we feel awful and we get restless. A part of us has remained trapped, frozen in time at the age of three; our neural patterns have remained stuck in that sequence.

It is possible to re-program our restrictive convictions into strong convictions thanks to guided visualization and specific NLP techniques.



## Boosting NLP With Hypnosis

NLP's techniques can be made more effective if we associate them with hypnotic and self-hypnotic methods, instead of using only positive thinking techniques. We can use a metaphor to explain the differences between these two methods:

Hypnosis can be compared to modeling with clay, aided by water.

Positive thinking can be compared to modeling with clay, without water.

It's obvious that, in the first example, using water allows us to be more efficient in our modeling, unlike in the other example, where only the dampness of our hands is used.

The changed conscious state that hypnosis induces allows us to mould the structures of a group of neurons (cerebral cells) that are usually not activated in ordinary states of consciousness.



Hypnosis is a means of direct communication with the unconscious and during guided visualizations you will be induced into a light trance. This will allow you to mould the clay, to reshape those behaviors that you no longer need. We often restrict our life because we think it is restricted. This conviction should be broken because our brain's potential is vast and we only use 10% of it.

Very few people know that correct breathing can give us access to those sleeping neurons, opening up a series of thought processes not yet used. In fact, slow deep breathing provides us with more oxygen, giving more energy to those neurons that are asleep.

## NLP Operational Principles

NLP consists of a set of powerful techniques for rapid and effective behavioral modification, and an operational philosophy to guide their use. It is based on four operational principles.

1. Know what outcome you want to achieve.
2. Have sufficient sensory acuity (acuity means clear understanding) to know if you are moving towards or away from your outcome.
3. Have sufficient flexibility of behaviour so that you can vary your behaviour until you get your outcome.
4. Take action now.



It is important to have specific outcomes. Many people do not have conscious outcomes and wander randomly through life. NLP stresses the importance of living with conscious purpose. In order to achieve outcomes it is necessary to act and speak in certain ways. NLP teaches a series of linguistic and behavioural patterns that have proved highly effective in enabling people to change the beliefs and behaviors of other people.

In using any of these patterns NLP stresses the importance of continuous calibration of the person or people you are interacting with in order to see if what you are doing is working. If it is not working it is important to do something different. The idea is to vary your behavior until you get the results you want.

This variation in behavior is not random. It involves the systematic application of NLP patterns. It is also important to take action, since nothing ever happens until someone takes the initiative. In short, NLP is about thinking, observing and doing to get what you want out of life.



## Example 1: NLP Resource Anchoring Process

1. Begin by closing your eyes and recall a past experience where you have been feeling extremely confident. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What were you doing then?
- How did you know that you were feeling confident?
- Was there something that you were picturing in your mind when you were feeling confident?
- Were you saying something to yourself when you were confident?

By asking the above questions, you are actually slowly unearthing the strategy for you to feel confident. Now, you may wish to return to your past to find out your unconscious strategies for feeling confident so that you can bring those strategies back to the conscious level.

When you have derived the answers to the following questions, break state, think of something else and return to the present state.

2. Next, recall those “criteria” that may have been useful in triggering your state of confidence. Visualize them as vividly as you can in your mind’s eye... and as you feel the increasing intensity of confidence within you and it is about to hit the peak state, create an anchor for your state of confidence, by gently clenching your fist.

3. Again, recall another past experience where you were feeling confident about yourself. Once again, as you are about to enter into the peak state, clench your fist once more. Doing so will help stack up your anchors and amplify the state of confidence.

4. Repeat Step 3 as many times as you wish. Continue to amplify the power of your anchor as much as possible.

5. Last but not least, do a test and future pace. Think of a situation that you are likely to face in the future, where you are required to reinvigorate the state of confidence. Fire your anchor (clench your fist) to see if the technique works for you.

As simple as the 5-step process may sound, NLP anchoring is actually one of the most powerful NLP techniques. When properly applied, you can create any required resourceful state at the snap of the fingers.

Of course, you are not only limited to confidence building. If there are other resourceful states which you want to elicit at any moment of time, you can use NLP anchoring to achieve the same outcomes.

Try it, be amazed. And don’t forget to come back to share your experience!



## Example 2: Become An Excellent Learner

1. Find the belief that stands in your way of learning new things easily. See, hear, and feel yourself trying but not accomplishing, your objective. You will probably be able to find many examples from when you were in school. Notice all the **submodalities\*** of under-performance, writing down your observations so you can be systematic in your work.
2. Find a strong and useful belief about something in which you already excel. It need not fall into the same category as learning; simply find something that you know you do really well. Examine its qualities, the same way as above.
3. Compare the two, noting the differences. Pay particular attention to the size of each image, their positions in your mental space, and whether or not either involves movement.
4. Push the image of the limiting belief off into the distance until it is little more than a pinprick, shift it across to line it up with your positive belief, and then snap it back toward you into its new position, shifting all the original submodalities to match those of supreme confidence and proficiency. See yourself dropping into a profoundly relaxed state in which you absorb information easily and are prepared to explore and practice your new skills with deep commitment.
5. Deepen the state by intensifying the submodalities, then step into that state of deep trance and pay particular attention to the feelings associated with being an excellent learner. When you have identified a particularly strong feeling, anchor it by firmly pressing a particular spot on your body, such as an earlobe or a knuckle, so that you can easily access the state at a later date by pressing or 'firing' you anchor and remembering as fully as possible the experience you created in Step 4.
6. Slowly come back into the room, bringing all the learnings you've made with you, and in the knowledge that you can repeat this.

\***Submodalities** refer to the sensory (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) subclassification of external experience. The decomposing of an experience into its components of a picture, sound, and / or feeling.



## Example 3: Visual Squash

Create a vivid representation of yourself the way you are now (your present state). All that you consider good and bad.

See yourself the way you would be if you got through your problems and achieved your goals. Be very clear on how you will be behaving, what you will be saying and feeling. Make the image as clear and as rich as possible. Use all your senses.

Place one image in each of your hands outstretched in front of you with a space separating them. This space represents the unexplored territory and unspecified steps that lie between the two states.

Begin to make a series of images or movies of the logical steps from one state to the other. Adjust each picture or movie, frame by frame, changing what ever needs to be changed, until each is a fully representational, progressive stage of the process of change.

When you have between ten and twelve stages in front of you, slowly begin to close your hands, collapsing all changes into a simple process.

Bring your clasped hands towards your body and pull the new state into your body, making a new feeling that represents action and success.

Spin that feeling faster and faster, intensifying it and allowing it to spread throughout your body, so it permeates every muscle, every organ and every nerve, and every cell. As you do this, look at where you want to go and decide clearly what you need to do first. Then see yourself taking the second step, then the third, and keep spinning and intensifying the feeling until you feel compelled to get up and go for it.

