What is NLP?
NLP simply explained

by Stephan Landsiedel

An introduction to
Neurolinguistic Programming

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What is NLP?

Content in this e-book

I am pleased that you have downloaded and started reading this e-book. In this e-book I would like to introduce NLP to you. Each key point is explained and treated by me in detail, so that you have a good overview of what NLP is all about.

P.S. We have many more NLP-E-Books and would be very happy to welcome you at one of our free evening seminars.

1. What does NLP stand for?

Neurolinguistic Programming, NLP for short, is a motivational and communication model that was developed in the seventies. It was developed through the analysis of very successful psychotherapists and is used today in various areas of life such as therapy, sales, leadership, partnership and in dealing with children.

NLP brings together conversation-, behaviour-, hypno- and body oriented approaches. Thereby our thinking, feeling and behaviour (neuro) is systematically changed (programmed) by means of language (linguistics).

Let us take a closer look at the individual components of this complex name:

- **Neuro:**
  Neuro refers to the nervous system that we need to absorb and process information from the environment through our sensory organs. Our perception, our thinking, feeling and behaviour depend on our nervous system.

- **Linguistics:**
  Linguistics stands for the language we use to communicate with other people outwardly and at the same time inwardly with ourselves. Words create our inner reality.

- **Programming:**
  Programming means a purposeful systematic change. The NLP approach means: I change as purposefully as possible and maintain this change so that I can build on it. This way I do not have to start from scratch every time.

Do you want to improve your communication in order to deal with people more successfully? You want to be more creative and develop your full potential? Then make your life and your personality happier and more successful with the help of NLP!

2. What are the benefits of NLP?

Through NLP you learn:

- To deal consciously with emotions in everyday life
- To sharpen your perception
- Communicating in a new quality
- Get a positive mindset
- To change behaviour patterns in the long term
- To find goal-oriented solutions

In their NLP trainings, participants get to know useful techniques that should help them in their own areas of life.

- If something goes wrong again, it doesn't necessarily have to be bad. The question is: "How do I make the best of it? Why could the situation even be good for me?"

- Positive intentions can also hide behind negative behaviour. Stubborn and defensive behaviour might even be helpful, depending on the context. The question is: "Where could my behaviour be useful?" On the whole, NLP promotes self-reflection.

NLP graduates often report that NLP has changed their perception and that they had a much more positive way of thinking after the training. Sometimes a single thought is enough to bring about change.

Of course NLP can also be used in therapeutic areas. For years the method has successfully found its way into psychotherapeutic practices, counselling centres and psychosocial institutions. Alternative practitioners and psychotherapists use NLP to change the behaviour of their clients in a sustainable way.

Professional NLP trainers use NLP techniques in target-oriented coaching sessions and thus promote the strengths of the coachees. The fields of application of NLP are immense and there are no limits to the use of NLP.

3. Where does NLP come from? The origin
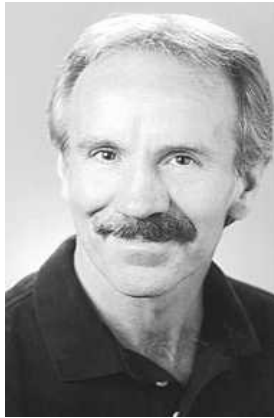
Richard Bandler, John Grinder and Frank Pucelik met in the seventies. At that time, John Grinder was assistant professor of linguistics at the University of California in Santa Cruz. Richard Bandler was a mathematician, gestalt therapist and computer specialist. They wanted to learn continuously and develop themselves further.

They found out how experts achieved very special achievements in their fields. John Grinder, Richard Bandler and Frank Pucelik began to model successful people and recognise the patterns they used to achieve their goals. For example, they explored why some well-known psychotherapists were so successful in treating their clients and others were not. They recognised that their work was based on a common pattern of behaviour.

Bandler, Grinder and Pucelik developed a model that is applicable to everyone and promotes communication, learning and personal change. They called it "neuro-linguistic programming". Bandler, Grinder and Pucelik passed on their knowledge to students in workshops and seminars. They became especially famous through the modelling of hypnotherapist Dr. Milton Erickson, family therapist Virgina Satir and Gestalt therapist Fritz Perls.

4. Quotations on NLP

"If anybody can do something, you can aswell!"
Richard Bandler

"NLP is a usermanual for your brain!"

Richard Bandler

"Whatever another person says cannot make us what he sees us as as long as we ourselves do not allow it.

Virginia Satir

"The only thing standing between you and your success is the story you keep telling yourself!"

Anthony Robbins

5. Is NLP dangerous?

Attention! NLP is dangerous if the user has not completed a professional training that explains which problems can occur with certain types of treatment. If it is not carried out correctly, trance inductions, confrontation therapeutic procedures and trauma treatment can cause psychological damage to the client.

Many interventions must not be carried out at all if the patient is not authorised as an alternative practitioner or psychotherapist. Professional NLP trainers know how far their competences reach and where their limits lie in their application.

On the other hand, NLP can lead to excessive feelings of self-esteem and omnipotence. Consequently, users may believe that they are invulnerable to the knowledge. Completely free from the burden of the ability to be self-critical and through self-affirmation, users can lose their footing.

Why NLP is criticised is often due to the bias, ignorance, hasty associations and negative individual experiences of the respective person. Although the method's roots are anchored in science and there are many studies that speak for its effectiveness, there are still critics who claim that NLP is not science-based enough.

Others believe that NLP can be used to read thoughts and manipulate people. NLP is a danger! An insight into the techniques opens up many new possibilities, which can lead, among other things, to direct the behaviour of a person in a preferred direction. The knowledge about oneself and others, and a deeper knowledge of human nature, can be called manipulation.

One should also be sceptical about the promises made by vociferous marketers. "NLP leads to happiness, wealth and success in a flip of the hand" is a popular sentence that should not be believed too much. In reality it is not quite that simple.

6. The effectiveness of NLP

The subconscious mind plays an important role for decisions and actions. Richard Bandler and John Grinder already proceeded from this assumption in the seventies. They consider in their work that the unconscious has to be included in profound change work. Only if the brain is taken into account, change work can prove to be truly sustainable and effective.

A new behaviour can be programmed and practised. Neuronal networks that are frequently used form a "brain highway", whereas networks that are rarely used "overgrow" like a jungle. If the behaviour is not programmed correctly, the brain may choose the old path again and drive on the brain highway.

What does this have to do with NLP? In NLP new behaviour is made accessible to the brain. Via a so-called Future Pace, action alternatives are already programmed into the path network of the brain for the future. The objective of NLP, to no longer have to deal with a problem but to focus on the solution, also opens up the willingness to change. With the help of various tools, users can change behaviour and emotions in a targeted and above all sustainable way.

7. The NLP Presuppositions

The map is not the territory.
We all have different conceptions of the world, but none of these conceptions represent the world completely and in an acute way. People do not react to reality itself, but to their own representation of reality.

There are no mistakes - only feedback.
Every reaction and every event can be used as feedback and as an opportunity for learning.

There are no right or wrong models in the world. However, some models are more useful than others for performing certain tasks. If you want to go on a hike with a car atlas, you are not using such a useful model. A hiking tour with a hiking map would be easy. Nevertheless, the car atlas is not wrong.

Every human being has all resources within him.
In NLP we assume that people are full of resources. But sometimes they do not have access to them. Then an experienced programmer helps to restore access. With appropriate resources, people can solve problems and do amazing things.

Within their model of the world, people make the best subjective choice available to them.

If people had other and more appropriate ways of meeting their needs, they would not do much of what sometimes seems to happen out of pure spite.

Behind every problematic behaviour/symptom there is a good intention.

Every behaviour aims at a positive function in the life of the person concerned, independent of possible negative effects.

For every behaviour there is a context in which it can be meaningful or useful.

Learning is learning, which means that the behaviour will eventually lead to the desired goal. The aim is also to develop more choices in addition to this behaviour.

Resistance from the client means a lack of flexibility on the part of the consultant.

Resistance does not result from malice of the opponent, but is an indication of missing repeat. The counsellor can therefore do something himself to ensure that the connection to the client is correct.

If something doesn't work, do something else.

All too often we expect that we just have to try it long enough. But if you run into the wall, it can take quite a long time to get through it. So it would be good to try a different approach and look for a door, for example.

8. The top 10 NLP techniques

NLP offers effective methods in the most diverse areas of application. They serve to improve communication and the respective areas of life. All techniques are basically effective, you just have to know how to use them.

1. Rapport

Rapport is the positive relationship between individuals, which is characterised by mutual respect, understanding and trust. Masters of communication meet their interlocutor in their experience of the world and guide them on this basis. First of all, rapport, i.e. trust, is established. In pacing, the person who wants to lead adapts their behaviour, body language, facial expressions, voice and speech to that of their interlocutor. Then they move on to leading.

Exercise: Do you have an important conversation coming up that should go well? Maybe it is an interview or a meeting. Take a conversation partner and practise with them how best to produce a rapport.

2. Anchoring

An anchor is a stimulus (stimulus, trigger) that triggers a certain, always the same reaction in a person. For example, listening to a song can be connected with a feeling of being in love and numerous memories. Conscious anchoring is an extension of the concept of classical conditioning according to Pawlow. In this way the human being can consciously create desired emotional states.

Exercise: Put yourself in a situation where you have laughed a lot. Take a close look at the feeling of amusement and set an anchor just before the climax of your feeling. For example, make a fist with your hand and press three times. Think of another situation and distract yourself for a moment. Then test the anchor again by balling your hands. Now you should feel amused again.

3. Six-Step Reframing

Change your behaviour in six steps. Think about the behaviour you want to change and identify the underlying pattern. Establish contact with the part of you inside that is responsible for the behaviour. With the help of a creative part within you, you develop a new behaviour and make sure that you implement it in the future.

4. Swish technique

With the Swish technique, annoying habits can be dissolved and strong motivation built up. Imagine a picture of your unwanted behaviour and create a target image. Now make a Swish with both pictures: The triggering picture of the context is drawn large and bright. Then place a small dark picture of the target in the lower right corner. The small dark picture gets bigger and bigger until it covers the first picture completely. And Swish!

5. Representation systems: VAKOG

Humans experience the world through their sense organs. NLP distinguishes between five different senses: seeing (visual), auditory (hearing), kinesthetic (feeling), olfactory

(smell), gustatory (taste). By sharpening your senses, you can considerably improve your perception.

Exercise: Three people have read the same book and talk about their experiences. Who uses which representation systems?

6. Meta-Model

When speaking, people like to omit, generalise or distort information. Frequently, erasures, generalisations and distortions are used. If a message sent does not correspond to the message actually meant, misunderstandings can arise. The meta-model is helpful to penetrate into the deep structure of a behaviour or problem.

Exercise: During the next conversation, pay attention to what language your counterpart uses. If something is unclear, ask. When can you use the meta-model and certain question techniques to clear up misunderstandings in the conversation?

7. SMART method

Set your goals using the SMART method. Your goals should be well-formed, i.e.: specific (S), measurable (M), attractive (A), realistic (R) and timed (T). Do you have a goal in mind right now?

Exercise: Find a place where you feel particularly comfortable. Take a pen and a piece of paper and think: Maybe there is something you always wanted to do but never really got around to? What goals and dreams do you have? Write down your well-formed goal and use the SMART method.

8. Time Line

With the help of a timeline, goals can be planned systematically. Thereby, events in the past, present and future are taken into account. Develop an irresistible vision. There are different types of timelines: the in-time type and the through time up.

Exercise: With the technique Tempting Future you can plan your future and pre-programme it on the timeline. Re-imprinting after dilts is an effective format for treating serious trauma and bad experiences in early childhood.

9. Milton Model

The Milton model is a linguistic reversal of the meta-model. It provides guidance for unspecific language use. Extinctions, generalisations and distortions are used to induce and maintain a trance state. In this way the human being comes into contact with his hidden, unconscious resources of his personality.

Exercise: Take a conversation partner and put him or her in a trance and relaxation using the speech patterns of the Milton model. Be as creative as possible: "Perhaps you have just noticed that you are breathing in and out slowly and deeply. Maybe you notice that your right little finger is moving straight. While you are sitting on the chair listening to my voice, relax.

10. Strategies

There are so-called macro and micro strategies. A macro-strategy is, for example, the step-by-step development of a career: Abitur, studies, doctorate, employment at a university, habilitation, etc.
Micro-strategies describe a specific internal processing of sensory perceptions. If one wants to find out what a person does in order to be successful

and to learn efficiently, it is helpful to know their micro-strategy.

Exercise: Use the love strategy to feel as much in love as possible. Remember a time when you were happy with your partner. What did he have to do to make you feel this deep feeling of love? Find out which strategy leads to this feeling and recall the state at any time.

9. Learning NLP, but how?

As the saying goes: Practice makes perfect. No master has ever fallen from the sky. Imagine you come home from an exhausting NLP training weekend and put your documents in your desk drawer. Three weeks pass by and by chance you find your documents again. You notice that you can only remember a few exercises. What do you do now?

Decide for it:

- To repeat some exercises and apply them in everyday life
- Participate in one of our NLP practice group evenings
- To form your own practice groups and to exchange information about NLP at regular intervals
- To participate in other seminars, trainings and online courses of Landsiedel NLP Training.

10. How do I start as a NLP beginner?

As a beginner, you can put together your desired programme from a wide range of training offers. Maybe you want to focus on NLP and become a master in this field. Maybe you want to work as a coach and give seminars yourself.

Which offers come into question?
Ask yourself the following qestions:

- Would you like to learn NLP from home or on site in a group?
- What topics interest you most?
- How can you implement the contents of the training in your everyday life?
- What would you like to do later with your completed training?

11. Areas of application

NLP is used wherever communication and the exploitation of one's own potential are important:

- in the field of psychotherapy
- in business (e.g. in management, human resources, sales, consulting, training, human resources development and corporate functions),
- in pedagogy

- in the health sector
- in personal development
- at sports
- in promoting their own mental and physical health,
- in politics
- in education
- in the legal system
- in the development of creativity in writing, the performing and visual arts
- for hobbies etc.

NLP in the company

Every communication begins with ourselves. Good reporting, exact goals, excellent behaviour are three of the most important things in "inner management". Of course, optimising one's own behaviour also increases the quality of leadership in professional and personal relationships. In the business world, successful communication, a trusting relationship and goal leadership are essential for a successful working day. To achieve this, it helps to accept and understand colleagues, superiors and customers in your own world view. Cultural barriers in multinational companies can also be improved with NLP.

NLP in business means:

- to think in a solution- and goal-oriented way
- optimise perceptual capacity
- learn and develop effective strategies for action

Presentation skills and rhetorical training are also a basic component of every modern company culture today. Many managers and consultants in companies have been inspired by the creative and innovative aspects of NLP. They use the NLP knowledge base for company development, for team building, for the design of future strategies as well as within the framework of a comprehensive quality management. NLP skills are also increasingly used in negotiation training.

NLP and health

In recent years, NLP research has concentrated on this,

- how personal health is acquired and maintained
- how stress can be reduced
- how the healing powers of the body can be demanded and
- how to understand the relationship between health and deep-seated assumptions, beliefs and attitudes

Relevant health topics which are dealt with by NLP: Weight loss, anxiety, sleep disorders, depression, panic attacks, addiction, tinnitus, lovesickness, anxiety disorder, smoking cessation. Of importance is the question of how recurring patterns and illnesses can be made changeable so that illness does not occur again in the first place.

For those who want to work alternatively, yoga offers an excellent, useful and very physical complement to NLP. The physical and mental techniques of Yoga can have a positive influence on your life. You develop calmness and style in hectic everyday life and improve your health. Learn more about yoga and meditation.

What does NLP have to do with psychology?

When in the 19th and 20th century psychology was almost exclusively concerned with the topics of depression and mental illness, the American psychologist Martin Seligman began to reverse the view and consciously use positive feelings to bring about change. He found out that optimism can be learned and that he wanted to promote the strengths of others.

Positive Psychology found out that you can increase your well-being and happiness if you use your character strengths. If a person pursues an activity that makes sense to him and uses his strengths for this purpose, he will live a much healthier life. Happy people live longer and are less prone to mental illness.

Martin Seligman distinguished between six virtues, to which 24 chain strengths are assigned:

- Wisdom and knowledge: creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, joy of learning, perspective
- Courage: bravery, perseverance, integrity, vitality
- Humanity: love, kindness, social intelligence
- Justice: social responsibility, fairness, leadership
- Moderation: Forgiveness and compassion, humility, modesty, prudence, self-regulation
- Transcendence: appreciation of beauty and excellence gratitude, hope, humour, spirituality.

NLP in psychotherapy and counselling

Historically, NLP has its origins in various short-term therapeutic, solution-oriented, hypno-systemic and constructivist psychotherapy approaches. For a few years NLP psychotherapy has been around - an independent psychotherapy approach, which however is struggling for professional recognition. In some practices psychotherapists offer solution-oriented short-term therapies and use NLP in a targeted way. Apart from that there are overlaps in the treatment methods of classical psychotherapy and neuro-linguistic programming. The best known is probably the treatment of phobias with NLP. It can help people to overcome a phobia within a very short time.

NLP offers tools...

- to establish trusting relationships with different clients,
- to understand the holistic structure and effect of attitudes, beliefs, values and self-images,
- to a broader understanding of the effects of language,
- to work in a process-oriented manner that protects the integrity and privacy of clients and facilitates permanent change,
- for a solution-oriented and short-term therapeutic setting.

NLP, education and school

The earlier children learn to communicate, the better. Of course, it also depends on the social environment they are in and what they learn from others. NLP basically promotes communication between parents and child. Adults discover how they can communicate with their children in a positive, understanding way.

By expressing themselves clearly, parents enable their child to understand them and react appropriately. The choice of words is particularly important in understanding. Constant denials can have a negative effect on the child's behaviour. "Don't spill" may lead to even more spilling, because in order to follow this command, the child must first think about the action.

If you want to understand children, you should put yourself in the world of the child. This is the only way to ensure that the message gets through and is understood.

- What does my child already know?

- How does it feel right now?

- Does it understand me?

NLP can also be helpful in the school system. There, certain learning strategies are helpful to assert oneself and to withstand the pressure to perform. Tools for effective learning should contribute to the development of self-confidence. Learning can be fun and is even healthy!

We have reached the end of this short introduction to NLP. Use our extensive e-book library to download numerous other e-books on the subject of NLP.