

## **NLP in business**

© Copyright, 2003 Mike Hawkes, Power2Change  
Telephone: (+44) [0] 7885 227979  
Email: [mike@nlp-hypnosis.org](mailto:mike@nlp-hypnosis.org)

Permission from the author must be sought to reproduce,  
copy or distribute this document or any part of it.

All rights reserved.

Version: 1.0  
Dated: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2003

Reference: 20031031-NLPBUS-01V10

## NLP in business

Business tends to view communications as either a 'technology thing' or something that human resources should be doing. With the world moving towards electronic communication systems, more and more people choose to communicate through these vehicles rather than dealing face to face. Humans naturally distort incoming messages such that the meaning of any communication fits the belief pattern of the receiver and this means that written messages are frequently misunderstood or deliberately taken out of context.

Email can be one of the most resource hungry technologies businesses can implement. A simple query sent to one person often gets copied to an ever increasing audience under a 'for your information' heading. Before long, many parties are involved in what becomes an electronic debate, snowballing out of all proportion and eventually requiring the action that should have been chosen in the first place: a meeting. Unfortunately, this is now involves many parties and the cost keeps rising.

Effective communication is something that every business needs: internally, staff should understand messages and their associated contexts while externally legal, production, consulting, sales and marketing teams all need to manage clear, concise and definitive information. Messages need to be understood and effective communication has a place at every level in every organisation.

When working to tight deadlines, small issues become major problems very quickly. Misinformation or misunderstandings can cause major difficulties and interpersonal communication gradually breaks down, often leading to high-stress levels and blame cultures. This is of increasing concern, as business leaders are legally personally responsible for the well being of their staff now.

Most people have had experiences with call centres. Some have been involved with contract or sales negotiations. If people feel that concerns have been misunderstood or believe that they have been pressured into making decisions, business suffers.

Major technology groups have recently demonstrated how effective NLP-based communications could be utilised to prevent redundancies from unduly affecting morale. The methods chosen, combined with these highly-effective communications systems meant that even though companies had to reduce costs through international redundancies (and other measures), the remaining staff remained motivated and many submitted further cost cutting ideas to help the business survive.

As a relatively new technology, NLP has been introduced to many businesses to help influence the outcome of contract negotiations, management decisions, and customer relationships. NLP practitioners do this by defining the required outcome and determining what has to change in order to obtain it. By modelling thought processes NLP practitioners can model excellence or change limiting belief structures through the introduction of new or expanded cogitative processes.

In sales negotiations, meeting the customer in their 'model' will often yield better results, faster. Staff will gain knowledge, through accelerated learning techniques, how to shift people from a negative state to a positive state, easing problem resolution and enhancing interpersonal relationships. Contracts can be negotiated to favour the NLP-literate party by understanding

how to determine when suggestions have been accepted and installed in the other party.

Equally important is understanding when other people are using these skills against you and what state they are aiming to elicit. NLP practitioners should be using these techniques elegantly and without conscious effort and this level of proficiency can only be obtained through using skills taught through usage, rather than just reading about the subject.

The Power2Change NLP and business practitioner courses will introduce you to NLP and it's associated technologies. The master practitioner and business master practitioner courses extend that knowledge and enhance your subconscious processes to provide you with immediately usable enhanced communication skills.

Mainstream organisations often have to issue corporate communiqués and these should always motivate staff. Companies may need to issue bad news and this needs to be communicated in a positive way. Sales and marketing personnel need to define what the customer requires before making suggestions and call centres need to be better at understanding. NLP provides the communication skills to do this easily and effectively and this is why we consider the improvements that NLP provides to be so valuable in the corporate world.

Whether you choose to use it in electronic communications, face-to-face meetings or large presentations, NLP enhances the message and is considered to be a technology in its own right now.

More information on Power2Change's NLP courses is available by contacting Mike Hawkes ([mike@nlp-hypnosis.org](mailto:mike@nlp-hypnosis.org)) or David Taylor ([david@nlp-hypnosis.org](mailto:david@nlp-hypnosis.org)) via our websites [www.power2change.com](http://www.power2change.com) or [www.nlp-hypnosis.org](http://www.nlp-hypnosis.org)

## Case studies

### ***International Financial Services Provider***

The company provides personal financial services to members of the public throughout Europe and the Southern Americas. The company was attempting to produce a new computer system that introduced new business rules and better working methods.

The system had been developed for some five years, was running two years late and internal communications had broken down such that managers refused to discuss issues and an active blame culture had developed. Sub-contractors had been employed to assist with the project but with poor project definition, this relationship had deteriorated to the point that both parties were communicating via solicitors. Morale was extremely low with high absenteeism and all teams involved had a belief that the development was a failure that would be cancelled prior to its completion, writing off some £40M of investment.

We were invited to analyse the programme and prioritised tasks that would allow the system to be completed. We set realistic objectives for the board and suggested that a pilot system could be delivered within 4-6 months if downward trends could be reversed.

Following the completion of our programme analysis, the board invited us to manage the entire programme and to introduce changes that would deliver a pilot system to the business within 6 months. The work undertaken included:

- Re-establishing communication channels between managers;
- Defining the deliverables for a pilot system and agreeing the scope of work that could be completed within the available time;
- Further project planning for post-pilot and international system roll-out (logistics, infrastructure, internationalisation etc);
- The production of detailed project plans and getting all managers to agree to production and delivery schedules for both UK and international divisions;
- The introduction of formal team briefs and intranet-based team communication systems;
- Re-structuring management teams to provide a more effective working environment with streamlined procedures;
- Motivating staff and changing belief structures such that management and all teams (business, development, field operations, infrastructure, logistics, finance etc) were committed to delivering a pilot within the available time and budget;
- Changing the team ethos from merely passing problems up to management to suggesting solutions (shifting the belief from 'here is a problem, what would you like us to do?' to 'we have this problem and I think we should do this ...');
- Modifying training systems to utilise accelerated learning techniques and introduce problem resolution methods;
- The introduction of a two-way reporting system between management and the board such that issues could be resolved as soon as they occurred;
- Improving supplier relationships and renegotiating sub-contractor contracts such that all parties were able to resume activities without resorting to further legal action;
- The negotiation of international system hosting contracts and the definition of international data centre and infrastructure managed services;
- The introduction of automated regression and performance testing systems to reduce costs associated with bringing in international field staff for system testing;
- Identification, modelling and installation of best working practices to improve performance (working out what works well, learning the cognitive processes required and installing these processes in other team members); and,
- Using covert NLP patterns to install positive thinking and stress reducing methods throughout the team.

Covert and overt NLP techniques were used throughout the time spent with the client. Covert techniques were utilised as the team consists of over 120 people based in disparate locations and it would take too long to introduce concepts and gain acceptance to utilise these techniques on a 'one-to-one' basis. Initially we sought permission from the board to utilise covert techniques and, following a few demonstrations, were advised to 'do what was necessary to save the project'.

Having delivered the system on time and to budget, we were retained as consultants on a part-time basis to ensure that the company continued to improve. This work is still ongoing.

## ***Corporate training***

This client is a financial clearinghouse, providing credit rating and clearing activities for high-street retailers. The client asked for technical training in specific technologies.

Conventional training methods were suggesting that 2-3 weeks would be required for staff to gain the understanding required to utilise the technologies effectively. Having reviewed the suggested material, we modified the training to use NLP techniques and developed a new training system that would install the information subconsciously prior to providing conscious access routes to it. Effectively this reduced the required training time to 2 days.

We presented the course and installed over 6 complete technologies in the first day. At the beginning of the second day, we asked the delegates to produce working systems from first principles and all, without exception, were able to do this without further assistance.

This demonstrated how effectively NLP Training techniques could be utilised in teaching any subject in a faster and more effective manner. By training the subconscious mind first, then providing the conscious links to the installed information, people learn faster and retain information better than conventional 'death by PowerPoint' approaches.

## **Conclusion**

We have many more examples where we have introduced NLP methods to business. NLP techniques can be utilised at all levels within a company. Without exception, we have found these techniques improve communication, reduce internal costs and improve business.

Many think about NLP as a therapeutic aid, training system or human resources issue rather than considering the benefits that enhanced communication provide throughout an organisation. Now NLP is becoming more widespread, businesses are embracing the methods and improvements it provides. NLP learning comes through usage rather than reading about the field and we would recommend that you attend Power2Change's introductory seminars or attend our training at practitioner, master practitioner, and business practitioner or business master practitioner levels.