# NLP IN BUSINESS (NLP FOR BUSINESS ENHANCEMENT)

NLP is recognised as a useful tool in business as it enables businesses to improve sales, ensure better communication between staff members and departments ,improve negotiation and influencing skills and clarify business objectives. Many businesses have used NLP including British Gas, Bupa, Ladbrokes and Virgin and NLP can help small businesses, the self-employed and big businesses alike. In this essay, we will look at how NLP can be used for the various people within a business, sales and service staff, how business profitability can be increased as well as individual accountability and personal performance within the business. We will also look at effective goal setting and its importance in this environment.

NLP is often employed as a talking therapy and is used to overcome anxiety, phobias, and to reduce stress to name but a few. However, it is also ideal for business as it identifies ways in which people think, feel and behave and following on from this, ways that these can be changed if they are unhelpful to the person. So it follows that it can be used not only on a personal level privately but also within a business setting. It can be used by the individual employee, by managers and by the business leaders.

NLP was devised by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in the 1970s. They studied successful people across different disciplines in order to identify how and why they are so successful. They studied the ways that great communicators in the world of business delivered their messages, how people motivate themselves and others and how they persuade. They believed that if one person could do something then anyone could do it if they knew how, these skills would be transferable and it was merely a matter of finding out how the successful person excelled. NLP is

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the business of modelling excellence and then transferring excellence into any area of life where it is needed.

## NLP For Sales Staff

NLP is of benefit for sales staff in multitudinous ways. Sales staff wish to persuade customers to purchase whatever it is that they are selling and be able to differentiate their offering from those of their competitors. It is an accepted fact that people buy from people that they like so the first thing the salesperson has to do is to build rapport with his customer. NLP is invaluable for teaching the basis of rapport. 7% of communication is transmitted through the words used, 38% is through how the words are said and 55% is through non verbal communication - body language. So in order to build great rapport the salesperson needs to be aware of body physiology and know how and when to use this.

An NLP technique in building rapport is mirroring and matching. People do this unconsciously when they are in rapport. Mirroring is the reflecting back of the physical patterns of someone's behaviour without being obvious and matching is the same concept but also incorporates the other person's language, beliefs and their map of the world as well as the physiological aspect. Matching and mirroring means that you can put someone at ease. The aspects that are matched are people's gestures such as arm and leg crossing, facial expressions, breathing patterns and also the tone of the voice used. Once rapport has been established, another NLP concept can be incorporated, Pacing and Leading. We pace the person we are building rapport with which means keeping in rapport with them and then lead them into the direction that we wish them to go. If we have built sufficient rapport then they should follow the lead. This should always be

used in an ethical way to influence and is often used by the salesperson to lead the customer into a more resourceful state.

Being aware of body language can ensue that the salesperson knows when to end a conversation, know if they have understood what the customer wants and the degree to which they have touched core motivation. Any break in rapport and subsequent matching will give an indication that something is not quite right. This gives the salesperson the opportunity to go back and look where the incongruence lies to have a better chance of securing the sale and delivering what the customer actually wants.

We can use eye accessing cues which may tell us how people deal process information, visually, auditory, kinaesthetically or in an auditory digital way (self-dialogue). Not only does this tell us how to present information to the customer, using language with the appropriate predicates but it can also help us with rapport as we can mirror their chosen representational system. It also increases sensory acuity as we can detect whether the person is imagining, remembering or feeling at the given moment in time. Sensory acuity is being aware of someones physiology, tonality in order to establish what they are really thinking and feeling which is not always in alignment with their words.

Sue Knight said that "Language is the currency of business transactions" (2009) and NLP investigates language and can influence how we use language as a description of our thoughts, feelings and sensory abilities. In a sales environment, using language as an effective way of questioning the customer as to their current state, their business problems, the possible implications of these problems in invaluable. Once you understand correctly what the customer's requirements are, then you are better able to give them what they want. NLP can help people in looking beyond the surface structure of what people say to find out the deep

structure of what they actually mean. This can be done in a number of ways and one of the most important is the meta-model. The conscious mind can only handle between 5-9 bits of information at one time so in order to be able to function in a world where we are said to be exposed to over two million bits of information every second (Mihaly Csikzentmihaly, The Psychology of Optimal Experience) our mind needs to filter the information in certain ways and as a result, much of what is deemed not relevant at the time is deleted, or generalised or distorted. Understanding this and the ways in which this is done enables a good questioner to ask appropriate questions to establish what the customer really wants.

Good questioning can also unveil people's values. This is important in business as people like to deal with people that think the way that they do and that they like and this is often because they have the same values. This alone may give a salesman the edge against a competitor.

Meta programmes are ways in which people process information and they are numerous. The importance to the salesperson is that they can help him to achieve rapport and motivate the customer by adjusting his sales pitch in a way that is easily understood and appreciated by the customer. Examples of meta programmes are the way people approach problems. Is somebody motivated by moving away from a problem "I don't want to be in pain", "I don't want to be embarrassed' or do they move towards something "I want to be fit and healthy", "I want to be confident". If the salesperson is dealing with an 'away' person, they can position their opportunity as a way of dealing with their problems, of avoiding the things that they are trying to avoid and with someone who moves towards something, the salesperson positions his opportunity as a way of achieving the customer's goal.

Another example of a meta programme is chunk size. People may process information in big chunks - generalities, the global picture - or small chunks - the details. If the salesperson is

describing the opportunity in detail to a 'global', big chunk thinker, this could potentially bore the customer and vice versa. Sales pitches can be adjusted to take this into account. This is also known as the  Hierarchy of Ideas and is described by Transform Destiny as "how to master the art of communication by controlling the flow of conversation or ideas from abstract to specific and vice versa." We chunk up to get agreement and to separate intention from behaviour, chunk down to get to details and distinctions and chunk laterally to access other examples, find connections and relationships.

NLP also assists the salesperson in the handling of objections. Once the salesperson has built rapport with the customer and has used careful questioning to probe the customer's thinking in order to fully understand the objection, he will have been made aware of any beliefs revealed in your questioning and will be able to answer these objections by addressing the beliefs underneath them. The problem could be reframed. Frames are the viewpoints and perspectives that arise from beliefs we have about he world and our place in it. Sometimes these frames limit us. Reframing is when you take a situation and the beliefs attached to it and put them in a different frame - a different content frame or a different context frame. Events only carry the meaning that we give to them so when we give them a different meaning, we can then feel and behave in a different way. This would be a content reframe. A context reframe focuses on whether the situation that is perceived in a negative way could ever be seen as positive in a different context. Is there anything positive about this situation, could the sales objection actually have a positive spin? An example of handling an objection through reframing could be if the objection is that the company is too young and not experienced enough, a reframe could be that the company is young and energetic and will have fresh ideas.

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Perceptual positions can also help the salesperson. This is the technique of seeing a situation from different perspectives - from the first position which is yourself, from the second position which is the person you are dealing with and then the third position is the neutral position, the objective position. If you can see the objections that may come your way by being in the shoes of your customer and gaining insights, if you an anticipate their needs, then you clearly have an advantage.

The salesperson may also be able to elicit his customer's buying strategy. We all have strategies for our behaviours that are more often than not, unconscious. If you can determine what these are the salesperson will be able to present information to his prospective client in an order and sequence that the prospect will find easy to understand and enjoyable.

Sales staff will also benefit from anchoring. This is an NLP technique that allows you to access any emotional state that you want in order to be more resourceful when you need to be and to recall that state immediately through a word or gesture that has previously been set. This can be used for calm or confidence, energy, whichever state is appropriate for the situation, for example, when feeling intimidated. In addition to anchoring, the salesperson can also change their submodalities so that they can think differently of the person that intimidates them. They can 'shrink them down to size'. We will discuss representational systems and submodalities later in the essay.

Negotiation which may be part of the sales persons role will also be enhanced by many of the techniques already discussed, rapport, anchoring, perceptual positions and meta programmes. One meta programme that we have not yet discussed is convincer patterns. If you can establish how your prospect is convinced by something i.e. do they need to see it be successful, hear about it, try it out, how many times do they need something to be successful before they

believe it, then you will be in a  better position to convince your customer to buy or for a better position to be negotiated. Values are also important in negotiations and if you can use questioning and sensory acuity to be able to ascertain what their values are then it is easier to find agreement or find out where there is a possible blockage.

## NLP for Service Staff

The NLP Presupposition that states that the meaning of Communication is the response you get is important here. This means that you have to take responsibility for the outcome of interactions and if they do not go the way that you want or intend then you have to look at your method of communication and not blame the misunderstanding on the person you are interacting with.

 The meaning of the communication is the response you get

NLP would be invaluable for helping service staff to build rapport with their clients whether their clients are internal in the organisation or external using the matching and mirroring and pacing and leading techniques described earlier. Pacing and leading is especially important for angry customers as it enables the salesperson to stay with them in their anger until they are in a place to lead them into a more resourceful state.

 To be a successful communicator one needs to accept and utilise all communication/behaviour presented to them

Perceptual positions are also useful here as how the customer feels can be explored and perceptions altered. This was demonstrated in a contribution by Jane Revell in 'NLP Business Master class' Molden, D. (2007) when she worked with a group of people who worked with

passengers. The passengers were described as rude, demanding, sexist and inconsiderate amongst other things. After the perceptual position exercise, the service staff saw that they may have been inviting some of the bad behaviour by their attitudes in the first place - the beliefs of the service staff affected how they behaved towards the customers and therefore how the customers behaved back - a self-fulfilling prophesy. In addition, they could see that although some the passengers were still difficult, this did not mean that all of them are. This is also a useful exercise to see situations from managements point of view.

When trying to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings, values are also important. If one can see how the customer is responding because their values have been negated, even if these values are not important to the person dealing with the situation, they will be better able to resolve the issue once they have a better understanding of it.

Reframing is also useful here in helping the customer to see their situation in a more resourceful way. Anchoring can similarly be used to keep the service staff in a calm state when dealing with difficult customers.

Meta programmes are also useful here in the recruitment of service staff. One meta programme is whether people are externally or internally referenced. Customer service departments benefit from people who respond to external feedback. Some people are externally referenced which means that they know if they have done a good job if someone external to themselves tells them so e.g. a boss or a customer. Internally referenced people look to themselves for validation. They do not need approval from others to know if they have done a good job. If the service staff are internally referenced, they may not take customer feedback seriously.

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Another NLP Presupposition here is that there is no failure, only feedback. Staff need not to take feedback as personal criticism but feed it back to the business so that service and products can be improved.

- There is no Failure only Feedback

## Improve Business Profitability

A business can improve its profitability in various ways using NLP techniques. We have already discussed how sales can be increased by increasing the effectiveness of the sales staff and retention of customers and acquisition of repeat business by the effectiveness of the service staff.

If we look at marketing and advertising, representational systems can be used in campaigns. The NLP Presupposition that the Map is not the Territory is significant here. We experience ourselves and the world through our five senses and also store all of our memories and attach meanings to them through what we call the Representational Systems. Our experiences are therefore filtered and therefore reality as it is and how we perceive it are not the same. This is what 'the map is not the territory' means. We filter out any information that does not sit well with our perception of reality and therefore limit our potential for growth and understanding. The representational systems are visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory and gustatory.

- The Map is not the Territory

- Our five senses can usefully represent distinctions in how we relate to our environment and our behaviour

- Perception is reality

No matter the deletions, distortions and filters, whatever a person perceive as their reality becomes their reality. If you can speak to your customer in a language that they understand, using predicates (the words that we use that reflect what we think according to our dominant representational system) then you can broaden your appeal if talking to a group of people by using a variety of predicates.

The business could use market research to find out the values of their customers and then ensure that their business offering is in alignment with these values. As discussed earlier, people like to buy from people they like and from companies that share the same values. Witness here the growing popularity of community supporting supermarkets, green companies and organic producers.

Anchoring can also be used in marketing and advertising as the business can anchor good feelings of success or health to words or jingles used in the campaigns, anchored and linked to the product or service offered.

Meta programmes are also useful here. For example, insurance products are 'away from' items and can therefore be marketed in the appropriate way e.g. to prevent loss. Another meta programme is the match or mismatch programme. This programme ranges from those who like everything to be the same, to those who like sameness with exception (mostly the same with something a little different) to differences with exception (mostly differences with a little the same) and ends with those who only see the differences, the mis-matchers who are always looking for differences. Does your product have the same quality but improved features or completely innovative? The former will appeal to those with a sameness with exception tilt and the latter will appeal to those who like differences. Examples have been used by Coca Cola for rebranding; "Brand New Look. Same great taste"

Business profitability can also be improved by hiring the correct people for the company and putting the right people in the right roles. This means identifying the meta programmes that the staff use and seeing where they would be most appropriately placed. For instance, someone with a mismatch programme would be useful in a role that requires attention to detail, spotting when something is wrong, in quality control perhaps or lawyers scrutinising documents. Other programmes mean that you can consider whether the person likes to work in a team or on their own, are they externally or internally referenced, are they focused on self or others, do they see the bigger picture or the detail? It is also important that you hire people that share the same values as the company so value elicitation could be used in interview. Is HR policy aligned with the organisation's objective, mission and identity? More of this later when we discuss increasing individual accountability.

In terms of the company being aligned, one that sets its mission as excelling in customer service but then engenders an atmosphere where sales people feel forced to keep prices down by under selling service support in order to hit their personal targets will be creating customer service issues. Profitability will be increased in the long term if all staff members and management levels are in alignment with the values of the organisation.

Once they have been hired the coaching and training of staff. Giving them the skills and motivation to succeed is key and this will be discussed in more detail below.

## Increase Individual Accountability and Personal Performance

Individual accountability and personal performance can be increased by the use of the neurological level model which applies to individuals, groups and organisations. There are six levels and from the top down they are purpose, identity, values and beliefs, capability,

behaviour and environment. If a staff member is out of alignment, they may not be operating to the best of their abilities. Molden (2007) explains that this is the basis of motivation, how it is created and maintained and therefore how it can also be destroyed if the levels are not in alignment. According to him, purpose is the source of motivation - what purpose do you serve by what you do? Identity is the expression of motivation - how do you define your sense of who you are? Values are described as the staying power of motivation - what is important to you in fulfilling your role? Beliefs are the energy of motivation- what do you believe about your potential, what are your limitations? Capability is the application of motivation - what skills can you develop, the limitations to your ability? Behaviour is the product of motivation and lastly environment is the context for motivation - does your environment reflect the person that you are?

By identifying areas that are not in alignment, staff can change or improve these and as a result, improve their performance in a role or change to another that suits them better. They are better motivated. Changing higher levels brings about greater change. For example, if you change your purpose from a career that is focused on making money to one in the caring profession, all your beliefs, values, capabilities and behaviour have to change in alignment with your change in purpose. If you change your environment, there is no change other than that. This also links in to the NLP pre-supposition that the resources a person needs to effect change are already within them.

   The resources a person need to effect change are already within them

Procrastination, an affliction that drains thousands of pounds from companies in time may also be due to a misalignment. A staff member may put off a certain task because they believe it is

not their job, beneath them or simply a waste of time - this could be because the task does not fit in with their identity in that role or their values or beliefs.

Increasing personal performance will have at its heart building better relationships, not just with customers but with colleagues, your team and other teams within the organisation, including at board level. If everyone is working well together, understanding the task at hand, motivated then productivity will obviously be increased and staff turnover reduced. Rapport is essential here as is understanding the other person's meta programmes as discussed in previous chapters. It is also worth noting that in accordance with NLP Presupposition that the positive worth of the individual is held constant, while the value of the appropriateness of behaviour is questioned, people work better when treated with respect. The days of bullying corporations are coming to a close.

> The positive worth of the individual is held constant, while the value of the appropriateness of behaviour is questioned

Managing and motivating people is easier when the managers work with the concept that the map is not the territory and people have different maps from which they work. The NLP adept manager will use knowledge of his team's meta programmes to his and their advantage.

The Map is not the Territory

NLP can be used to improve personal performance by changing/challenging self-limiting beliefs. We can do this using the meta model, the language they use, socratic questioning and then changing the way that they experience any limiting event from the past. Once these limiting beliefs have been removed, the person can move forward and fulfil their potential.

🦗 The ability to change the process by which we experience reality is often more valuable than chasing the content of our experience of reality

So once these beliefs have been changed, how do we move on? Here we move into the realm of strategies. As Adler (2010) says, people get results because of what they do and the way they do it. A strategy may start with a mental picture that motivates you eg. deciding what you want for breakfast such as a picture in your head of coffee percolating, followed by the aroma and then the sound as it pours from the pot into your mug. All of these things, visual, olfactory followed by auditory might be required to motivate you to make a pot of coffee. We have strategies for everything but this happens largely unconsciously. However if you elicit what these strategies are, you can change them for the better.

Personal performance can be increased by modelling excellence. If someone within the company is excellent in area that the staff member also wants to be excellent in then they can model themselves on this person. Asking the mentor how they do something might not be enough, they may have to elicit their strategies by asking questions to determine which representations they are using and the order in which they use them.

For better personal performance, we also need to use a feedback system. Here we can use the four stage success model.

- Decide what you want

- Do something

- Notice what happens

- Change what you do until you get your desired outcome

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There is no failure only feedback so if the strategy doesn't work then change it until it     is

successful.

NLP also uses the TOTE system - test/trigger, operate, test, exit. It is used to effectively measure

the effectiveness of the changes that we make to the strategy. The strategy must have a a well-

defined representation of the outcome, an operation upon which modification can be built,

must involve all 3 of the major representational systems, a decision point to end the operation

of the strategy and an exit point. A strategy may continue to loop for a set number of loops or

time limit before deciding whether to change parts of it. It also needs an external check to

confirm whether the strategy is going to be successful.

☝ All results and behaviours are achievements whether they are desired outcomes for a given

   task/context or not

Effective decision making is also crucial in personal performance and individual

accountability. Decision making utilises strategies. If a person can identify their decision-making

strategies, they will be able to improve where they may have difficulties such as procrastinating

or not thinking things through properly, not involving other departments or stakeholders into

the process.

Goal setting is also important in the decision making process and we will discuss this in detail

later in the essay. Decision making is also impacted by neurological levels so these should be in

alignment. Chunking is also helpful as you can investigate what would happen at higher levels

and then go down into the detail of a decision but also take it out laterally, 'outside the box'

thinking. Perceptual positions can help in seeing the effect the decision would have on those

affected and may head off unintended consequences.

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Presentations are more effective when staff members use a number of NLP techniques such as gaining rapport with the audience, using language that is rich in all of the modalities so that it captures and keeps everyone's attention, story telling, metaphors, chunking up to give the global picture, anchoring which can be used to link gestures with humour. The presenter could even future pace the presentation going well and anchor himself for confidence and presence. Also you could employ perceptual positions so that you can appreciate what it would be like to be in the audience and adjust accordingly.

Anchoring can be used to install any empowering anchor, whether it be confidence, curiosity, calm which can then be used to improve personal performance as the situation requires. This relates back to Presupposition that the person with the most flexibility will control the system.

🔦 The person with the most flexibility will control the system

Individual accountability and personal performance can also be improved by creative problem solving. Instead of blaming problems on others, people can employ many techniques to solve the problem and in the process, excel within their organisations. Creative problem could employ lateral chunking (thinking outside of the box) or even looking at the language used when describing issues such as the detection of small words with big meanings such as 'but, however, although'. These words limit beliefs about what can be done rather than opening up the possibilities.

Anchoring can also be used for creativity and energy, perceptual positions to give insight on how others might perceive the situation, reframing which could give a positive use of something that has gone wrong. A well-known example of this concerns the founder of IBM, Tom Watson. One of his employees made a ten million dollar error. The employee expected to be asked for his

resignation at his meeting with Tom Watson who said "Are you kidding? We just spent ten million dollars on your education".

As the mistake had already occurred, Watson chose to see it in a different way, the education of an employee.

- There is no Failure, only Feedback

Another relevant NLP presupposition is

- All results and behaviours are achievements whether they are desired outcomes for a given task/situation or not

Although there has not been success in this situation, something has been learned and different action can be taken in similar situations.

Neurological levels, perceptual positional and reframing are also useful in leadership. Turning negatives into positives means that you can keep your team motivated when things go wrong and may retrieve some value from the situation, seeing things from your team's positions will build rapport and trust and a knowledge of their values within the neurological levels will give an insight into how they can be motivated and influenced in order to get the best performance. Effective team building relies on effective goal setting, what is the teams purpose, mission, identity, values and this can all be assessed through the neurological levels model. A team can also be better understood, managed and motivated if you have a knowledge of the individual member's meta programmes. As a leader, this means that you will also be better placed to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings. Relevant Presuppositions here would be:

- The positive worth of the individual is held constant, while the value of appropriateness of behaviour is questioned.'

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🔧 There is a positive intention motivating every behaviour and a context in which every behaviour has value.

Time management may be seen as a problem and learning how to code time differently could improve individual accountability. People can experience time in different ways. There are through-time people and in-time people. Through-time people are planners, they work well with time management systems and benefit from time management courses. In-time people live in the moment. They will give you their complete attention and focus but this may make them late for their next appointment or not have that report completed by the deadline. Through-time people manage their day to be early. but may be clock watchers and not totally focused on the here and now. If you are late for a meeting with a through-time person, they may think that you do not value their time. If you are aware of how you code time and your speech patterns concerning time, then you can avoid pitfalls within the work setting and with people that code time differently.

## How Outcome Goals Can Improve All Areas of Business Performance

Goal setting is important for the individual and corporations. If you don't know where you are going, how are you going to get there? It is believed that these goals have to be written down in order to have a  better chance of being successful otherwise they stay in the mind and are jumbled up with the other 1500 thoughts per minute the the average human being experiences. The oft quoted 1979 Harvard MBA study on goals setting appears to back this up. The study revisited graduates 10 years after ascertaining that 84% of the class had set no goals, 13% had written goals but no action plans and 3% had written goals and concrete plans. The 13% who

had written goals and had concrete plans made twice as much as the 84% who had no written goals at all but the 3% of the class who had goals and action plans had made ten times as much as the 97% who hadn't. So not only do we need to write goals down, we then need to have a plan to attain these goals.

🎤 If you don't know where you're going, how will you get there?

Although we have discussed the effect on individuals in goal setting, it is relevant to businesses as the goal setting exercise can focus on an individual's career or business goals and targets, they can be used when managing or coaching other people for their careers and it can be used at appraisals or upon promotion. Departments and organisations can also use the same principles. Boards of directors and management teams can use them to set goals for the business or when leading teams and for projects to set the direction.

Outcomes are a result about which you are very clear - what and how you want to achieve and how achieving it is going to affect all aspects of your life. We can distinguish the difference between goals and outcomes as goals focus on the individual whereas outcomes focus not only the individual but everybody and everything else affected by the outcome as well. Goals are the specifics that you want, outcomes are more the 'why' you want to obtain the goals. To set compelling goals, one has to define the goal, decide what you really want. What resources do you need? What do you have already and what resources do you need to acquire? This could be physical resources or skills. Goals need to be within your power, you have control of them, you have the responsibility for critical decision making. It has to be self-maintained. If you are relying on other people to change for you to reach your goal, this is not going to happen.

If you acquire your goal, what will the effect on others in your life be? For example, will your family be neglected whilst you work longer hours? Is this something you and they are prepared

for? Will it affect your health or your finances? Will it be a win/win for everyone concerned? This is looking at the ecological state - what is the result of achieving your goal upon your environment? Have you foreseen and considered any unwanted byproducts of your success? We also have to consider what evidence you will have to show that you are making progress? What will you see, hear, what does it feel like emotionally and physically? The evidence should be sensory based, what can you taste and smell?

In order for the goal to be compelling, something you are truly motivated to do, you should consider why it is so important to you, what will it achieve for you, what higher values will it serve and is it in alignment with your personal mission statement. You also need commitment. WH Murray said "Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness…the moment that one definitely commits oneself then providence moves too".

Goal setting is focus - what we think is what we get. Sue Knight (2009) builds on this when she states that desired state thinking is linked to charisma, focus on what you really want, not the 'problem thinking' which comes from what you don't want and not only will you focus on the good and see opportunity but you will be able to take people with you too. Passion is infectious and attractive. This is also the case for organisations. Problem thinking means that an organisation is reactive, reacting to economic changes and competitors actions rather then focusing on the company vision which should be inspirational, understood and shared by the individuals and teams within the company. This can help to move customers with the organisation, to take them with you, to influence them whilst taking into account economics and competitors.

Examples of 5 outcome focused goals would be;

- I will take the company into the FTSE 100 in five years

- I will get a promotion within 1 year

- Improve employee retention by 20% in the next year

- Increase market share by 3% in the next two years

- Move within the top 20 rankings for my industry employee satisfaction survey within three years

Examples of 5 actions to deliver outcome goals might be

- produce pre-tax profits of £200 million

- Take a presentation skills course

- Offer trainee programmes to improve skillsets of current employees

- Develop two new products and offer them to the market within one year

- Instigate interviews with all departments and individuals to ascertain their current levels of satisfaction and awareness of company values.

The review period should have short term, medium term and long term periods which could be up to 6 months, 6 months to one year and one year plus.

Goals have to be flexible and reviewing them gives the opportunity to change anything that isn't working or no longer fits in with the values of the company and also to assess whether the actions that have been set out for the achievement of each goal has been completed and successful.

Goals need to be CSMART which stands for

CSMART

- Commitment

- Specific

- Measurable

- Achievable

- Realistic

- Timescales

They can be reviewed using the GROW model which is

GROW

- Goals

- Review/reality

- Options

- Way forward

This allows for follow through and replanning if required and an indication of progress. Each goal will have several actions to make that goal a reality. We can also incorporate a SWOT analysis where you look at your strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats so that action can be taken to eliminate as far as possible the weaknesses and threats, such as any extra training

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required, are there more resources required. It also enables the use of the individuals/business strengths and opportunities. When assessing the goals, NLP PreSupposition 'There is no failure only feedback' comes into play yet again. If something isn't working then change it.

As well as making the goals of the business or organisation more attainable, looking at the goals of employees and making sure there is understanding and alignment means that everyone is working towards the same goal, in the same direction and the workforce can actually be motivated and feel better invested in the company. This means that performance will also increase, staff retention figures will rise and creativity may be enhanced. It will also mean that departments will be working in the  same direction and not working against each other if values and goals are aligned. On a neurological level also, when setting the goals, do they sit well with the individual's values and the values of the company. If not, the individual and the company will keep finding road blocks to their success.

Creating a Business Vision incorporates a company's mission, purpose, goals and values. An organisation needs to look at it's long-term goals and what the company and world will look like when these have been achieved - NLP future pacing, being aware of the representational systems, what will you see, hear, feel taste and smell.  Perhaps it can incorporate an outcome that has never happening in the industry before. How do you want your organisation to be remembered? This will help in creating a compelling vision - it should be big and focus on success and project into the future, be in alignment with your well-formed business values and goals and tell your employees how the company is to be represented by them. The company's mission includes the company's purpose, values and goals and it is these that help to form the vision.

## Conclusion

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NLP has numerous applications in the business world as it does for the individual. We have seen how it can be used for the sales staff to increase sales by better influencing of the customer, by building rapport and speaking in the customers language and using their meta programmes to move them in the direction that you want to go, remembering to be ethical in the application of these techniques. Of course, if questioning has been used to elicit the customer's values for better alignment and knowing exactly what it is that your customer wants, then you will always be in a place of win/win. We have also seen how the salesperson can change his state for greater confidence or calmness to be the best version of himself when the particular state is required.

NLP is also essential in the customer services field. Again rapport is paramount as is understanding what it is the customer actually wants and using problem solving skills to rectify the situation. Most customers don't mind when things occasionally go wrong as long as the organisation rectifies it to their satisfaction and understands the impact on them. Perceptual positions are invaluable here. Being able to see the problem from another's perspective usually results in better resolution. Reframing is also useful in turning the problem into something seen in a better light. Meta programmes can be used to make sure that those employed in these types of roles are suited to the role in the first place.

Next we looked at the uses of NLP in improving business profitability in areas not related to customer services and sales. We looked at marketing and advertising and how using representational systems to improve the appeal and targeting of your market can be used and the use of the meta programmes that the customer audience may have. We also looked at how hiring the correct people for different roles is made more fool-proof by NLP.

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In looking at individual accountability and personal performance, we saw how NLP is invaluable in so many areas. Personal effectiveness is greatly augmented by making sure the neurological levels are in alignment, challenging self limiting beliefs. We looked at how strategies can be improved and used in more effective decision making. Leadership is also an area in which NLP can have a dramatic effect and of course, NLP was originally founded on the idea of modelling for excellence and therefore is of immense value to those who wish to be better at what they do. They can do this by modelling those who excel in the industry and also those who already work in their organisations.

Goal setting was the last thing we looked at. Although companies tend to have goals that they work towards, they set targets and budgets and bigger organisations set goals and targets for their employees which may be reviewed annually. However NLP can help in making these goals a reality by providing real clarity on what the organisation really wants and making sure that the goals of their departments and employees are aligned to these. Time isn't wasted discovering that the goal was not appropriate and departments are not working against each other.

Board level team relationships can be enhanced in several ways, through rapport in order to build better relationships between the members of the board, conflict resolution through using perceptual positions, creative problem solving but also through effective CSMART goal setting and alignment of the departments to the business values.

It is clear that NLP can enhance business in numerous and far-reaching ways and can make the organisation's mission statement a realistic statement with clarity, drive and a means of attainment with a happier and more motivated workforce.

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