



Your Route to Success with NLP Signposts

Setting the scene

Think about that moment when you wake up in the morning. Do you bounce out of bed with enthusiasm or do you eventually crawl out yawning? A reluctance to get up is not just physical tiredness, it is mental tiredness as well. People who love life and who look forward to their day are glad to get up. If life is not like that for you, then decide now that you will regain the high levels of motivation and career hunger that bring satisfaction at all levels. This is the time to manage your own motivation and to fire up the passion for personal success and reward. It is easy to slip into comfortable ways in a job and not be aware of time slipping past. Are you sure that every day brings with it something new and an opportunity to test

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yourself in different ways? Falling into ways that are routine and predictable is not the route to take if you want to make yourself stand out and grow a satisfying career. Great people are enthusiastic and energetic, seeking out their own motivation. If it does not naturally come your way at the moment, then use the ideas and techniques in this book to find new life and vitality in the skills that you bring to your job and the energy you bring to your team. Now is the time to aim higher, do more, give more and ultimately get more.

Statistics show that one person in five goes to work and does an outstanding job. The rest do either a good job, an average job or a below average one. Success will come if you put yourself in that top 20% of highly effective people and, better still, influence people around you or in your team to give more of themselves to the job. Then tangible differences will be made, businesses will thrive and you will be acknowledged. People who are eager and ambitious need to have a stockpile of behavioural tools and techniques that they have mastered. These will help facilitate meaningful change and personal advancement. Successful people are purposeful and they know that flexibility is the key to success. Now is the time to focus on what you want out of life and what you are prepared to change to achieve it.

What do you *really* need to do to be successful? How do you set your goals, achieve these results, overcome obstacles along the way and have the influence over your work that you need to? How can you have more influence over other people and make sure that your negotiations lead to success? To enjoy your career, create harmonious and productive relationships in the workplace and progress with commensurate financial

reward, you will need to be confident that you are making the right impact and developing the level of self mastery required to be effective. This way you will be sure that you are behaving in a way that brings you the response you are looking for. The result of that is that you will live the life that you want.

What can I do for my employer?

Today, most people will be doing more work in the same hours and for the same pay or, worse, for a pay cut, and with no bonuses. Long-term views of careers may be hard to find as it is well nigh impossible to know what is going on behind the closed doors of the board room.

For you, what does this mean? How can you be sure that you are appreciated and your contribution is acknowledged? How can you improve your performance and develop your skills when it would seem that budgets have been cut and there is no money available for the kind of training and development programme that you would ideally like to follow? Perhaps there is a feeling that life is not under your control but under that of the employers. How do you use all of your skills to do the best you can and to make sure you are valued?

The starting point of thinking will be to recognize that the only way to live is by accepting that you are in control of your own life, so it is all down to you. Although we cannot choose the circumstances in which we are born and brought up and although we don't know what can happen to us along the way, we can alter how we react to them. Control lies in how you respond to life. Look at the successful people in your organization who seem to be valued and appreciated.

They are no different from you and no more capable than you. However, it is highly likely that they probably have more self belief, more motivation and they will actively seek out opportunities to improve their fortunes. Look at these people hard because they are your role models and you will soon be adopting and improving on their techniques that have taken them to the top of their field.

If you also decide to start thinking about ‘What can I do for my employer’ rather than ‘What can my employer do for me?’ you will have made two major shifts in attitude that will already reap extraordinary results. Show your employer how good you are and your employer will want to support you in all the ways that will add to your success.

Becoming a prized asset

More than this, how do you make sure that you are the most prized asset that your employer has got? How do you make yourself indispensable and make sure that you are seen in a different and positive light? When you shift your personal performance from good to great, you will be able to command the next stage of your career and be that rare commodity an organization is looking for – a brilliant contributor. Reliance on an employer to be the person who controls the development of your career is a thing of the past. There is now a mutual responsibility and it is not just academic qualifications that make a rounded and valued employee. Make sure your boss appreciates you and you will then be in a better bargaining position for moulding your role to suit your growing skill-set.



Alex Mitchell, Head of Influencer Relations at the Institute of Directors, believes firmly that you are 100% in control of your success. A particular passion of his is to ensure that young school leavers and graduates find their way into jobs that will allow them to develop their talents to the full. He advocates a path into the workplace via meaningful volunteering where skills such as project management, leadership, budgeting, self-discipline and team playing can all be learnt. These are tangible, practical skills that can be added to any academic qualifications, thus increasing chances at interview and in the job market. Structured skills based volunteering is a way to give back to the community while gaining useful skills.

The next vital piece for Alex is ensuring that business leaders pay close attention to this experience won in a different yet valid environment. Alex's vocabulary is made of the words that you want to hear – inspirational, challenging, positivity, realism, curiosity. His message is clear – career opportunities may not seem to be around but there are always opportunities to create them for yourself.

What is NLP?

Neuro Linguistic Programming is considered by some to be a science of excellence, a means of establishing excellence and then modelling it. Originally developed and promoted in the 1970s by its founders, John Grinder, a linguist, and Dr Richard Bandler, a gestalt therapist and mathematician, it is an effective and rapid way of addressing problems people have in terms of confidence, communication and phobias. They were greatly influenced by the work of Milton Erickson, a renowned

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psychiatrist who specialized in medical hypnosis. By modelling his way of addressing the unconscious mind through hypnotic language patterns Bandler and Grinder went on to develop NLP as techniques that can be taught to improve personal effectiveness.

The prime focus of this book is learning how to develop the life skills needed to create the life that you want by utilising all of these NLP tools and techniques to the full.

Let's start with what are called the 'Presuppositions of Neuro Linguistic Programming'. These are the core beliefs that summarize what NLP is all about, giving the framework within which these tools and techniques have been developed. I will be using these presuppositions throughout the book as signposts. Each one will be explored to see what it means for you and how you can address it to add to your skills in your job.

The presuppositions used are as follows. They will be explained further as we come to each one through the book:

- ◆ **Everything in NLP should increase choice.**
- ◆ **There is no failure, only feedback.**
- ◆ **People have all the resources they need to succeed.**
- ◆ **If what you are doing is not working, try something different.**
- ◆ **The mind and the body form a linked system.**
- ◆ **The map is not the territory.**
- ◆ **We are always communicating and the meaning of the communication is the response you receive.**
- ◆ **We are all in charge of our minds and therefore our results – the law of cause and effect.**

- ◆ **The person with the greatest flexibility controls the system and will have the greatest influence. There are no resistant people. There are just inflexible communicators.**
- ◆ **Behind every behaviour there is a positive intention.**
- ◆ **People are not their behaviours. Accept the person and change the behaviour.**

NLP links language and neurological pathways to a pattern of behavioural techniques that result in the brain being reprogrammed in order to do things more effectively and therefore achieve goals. This means that NLP shows you how to think differently, act differently and get the results that you choose. Add to this the vital application of how this can add zest to your job and increase the control that you have over it and the success you aspire to. Suddenly you can experience the exhilarating feeling that choice lies with you. I will be taking a different presupposition of NLP to guide every chapter and linking it to the desired attributes of successful people.

NLP and you

NLP is not for the intellectually idle. Focus, concentration and consistency will mean that by taking committed short steps and by using tried and tested techniques, behaviour will change and if behaviour changes, then so does everything else. The definition of madness is continuing to do the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. This is the NLP lucid and clear path to the sanity that change brings with it. You may well be using some of these techniques unconsciously already, so you will be adding to your portfolio of NLP skills. Whatever we call them and whatever they are, the important point is that they work.

The need for clear communication is not restricted to the workplace. Personal relationships depend on you being able to express clearly what you think, what you feel and what you want. What matters in communication is not what you think you are saying but what meaning someone derives from what you have said. Have you ever sent out an e-mail and been taken aback by the tone or content of the response? This is probably because the words you used did not convey the meaning you intended. Add to this the fact that words form only part of communication, in addition to body language and other signs, and you can see that getting it right in the office environment is a path fraught with potential pitfalls.

Change – the route to success

In the course of my work in head hunting and executive coaching, I often find that people want to know how to change and how to get better results. Self-knowledge is a great thing and it is important to know how to use that personal mastery to bring about change where you need it. Self-knowledge needs to be followed by effective action.

‘The person with the greatest flexibility controls the system.’

What does this mean? That the person who is prepared to change is the one who will be more likely to be in control of relationships. By change I mean change of style, change of perspective, change of language, change of mindset, change of tone and general subtle changes of approach.

This book, therefore, will bring you ideas on how to tackle issues that before have seemed impossible. In the course of

the book you will work towards a strategy for your personal plan for individual success and you will define the milestones along the way. Small steps are always the best way to work towards a goal so decide now that in the next month you will utilize and practise the techniques that you need to help you get to where you need to be. Fortune favours the brave and those people who are brave, who are prepared to open up their minds sufficiently to embrace new techniques and methods of developing are those who will reap greater rewards. We are not looking at personal survival. We are seeking personal satisfaction and gratification in a career with the inevitable positive impact that it will have on life at home.

Setting your goals

What exactly do you want to achieve? Rather than working your way through the book and taking in the information as you go along, decide now what your goal is. What is so important to you that you are ready to go through a process of change to get it? Are you aiming for major transformation, a moment of enlightenment about your career? Are you going to use it to enable you to achieve your next promotion within a twelve-month time span? Will you be reading it with the objective of raising your profile at work so that you will be appointed Project Manager? Could it be that you just want to lift yourself above the 'redundancy zone' and be happy to stay in a job?

The way to achieve the best results is to have a clearly articulated goal. When you set off in the car or on train, heading off for a destination, you usually know where you want to end up.

You might not have every detail of the route mapped out but you do know where you want to be when the journey ends. In career terms you need to have that clarity about what you want and nothing will divert you from this bigger picture.

Once you have set a serious goal, you can then set the milestones for getting there. Make sure that the formulation of your goal is positive and that it is moving you towards what you aspire to, rather than shifting away from something that you don't want, that you feel negatively about or something that you fear. If you don't know where you are going, how will you know when you get there? If you just keep following the path, you may wake up one day aged fifty and realize that you are not doing what you wanted and time has slipped by.

Look at your work life and think about what you can do to move from good to great, to be recognized as a high performing person and to have the recognition and satisfaction that will go with it.

Here are a few thoughts about what you might be considering:

- ◆ further training and development;
- ◆ more responsibility;
- ◆ better relationship with your boss;
- ◆ better working relationships with colleagues;
- ◆ promotion;
- ◆ a team to manage;
- ◆ a change of product portfolio;
- ◆ international experience;
- ◆ relocation;

- ◆ a new job;
- ◆ greater confidence;
- ◆ more empowerment to make decisions;
- ◆ greater influence;
- ◆ being listened to;
- ◆ more money;
- ◆ an opportunity to shine.

In the course of this book we will be looking at what can help you along the road from good to great and we will also be examining what could be holding you back. Sometimes limiting beliefs about what you can do and what you are capable of are born from past experiences that simply do not apply to the person you are today. These can stand in the way of achieving goals or even having the confidence to articulate an ambitious goal. Your upbringing, your family, your education and your personal experiences can help as well as hinder. You can now look forward to expunging limiting beliefs from your life and having added momentum in the pursuit of your goal.

Ways to formulate a powerful and compelling goal

The SMART technique is a recognized way of helping clarify your thoughts about what you want. Here is the way to think through what you are looking to achieve:

Specific. A goal needs to be specific rather than general and you need to be able to answer the following six questions:

Who is involved?

What do I want to accomplish?

Where is it?

What is the time frame?

What do I need to do and what are the constraints?

What will I get when I accomplish the goal?

Measurable. These are the milestones you will be able to set in place to help you towards your goal so that you know you are on track, hitting your target dates and maintaining the energy you need in order to get there. You will ask yourself questions such as 'How much?' 'How many?' 'How will I know when it is accomplished?'

Attainable. As you work through the process of identifying the goals that are most important to you, you will begin to see the ways you can make them happen. You will identify the attitudes, abilities, skills, and confidence that you have that will allow you to reach them. You will grow in your abilities to reach the goals you have set so that they become more attainable as each day passes. You will identify missed opportunities in the past and this time you will be able to do everything in your power to get there.

Realistic. The goal can be high as well as realistic. Make it something you are willing and able to work towards. Only you know how much you are prepared to give in order to get there. Be sure that every goal represents substantial progress and that you have the motivational force to get there. If you believe you can do it, then the goal is realistic.

Timely. Be sure to give your goal a time frame. This is what will give it a sense of urgency and will give it the energy it needs to get there. If you decide that your goal is 'I will be promoted to General Manager and get a salary

hike to go with it', then you need also to anchor it in a time frame. A goal that you will unconsciously be working towards is one that says 'Within twelve months I will be promoted to General Manager and I will have a 10% salary increase and an improved comparison.'

Let's move now from the theory to the specific and formulate a goal that is important and specific for you:

1. **Make it positive.** Now that you have decided what your goal might be, make sure that you state the goal positively. This is the sure way to convert it into reality. For example, you might want to say: 'I want to create a career that has new challenges and opportunities for personal growth.' This would work rather than 'I don't want to be doing the same old thing next year and feel I haven't moved on.'
2. **Give it context.** Be sure to put it in the right environment where you can see and hear where it will take place. This gives it more power and energy.
3. **Make it yours.** Be sure that this is a goal that is fulfilled by you. For example, a goal that will succeed is one where you say: 'I want to win sponsorship from my company to qualify as an accountant.' Saying 'I want my boss to sponsor my accountancy exams' is now outside your control and unlikely to succeed.
4. **Examine the consequences.** Think through the changes that success in achieving this goal will bring with them and be sure that this is what you want. Have you thought through the impact on you personally, your family, your way of life and your friends and family?

5. **Make sure it is worthwhile.** Remember that you will be putting energy into achieving this goal so make sure it is absolutely what you want and that is something that will enhance your life at a number of levels.

Using all of those guidelines to help you work through what your goals are, fill in this chart to help you formulate your thoughts:

WHAT I WANT TO ACHIEVE AT WORK

In 1 month	In 3 months	In 6 months	In 1 year	In 2 years

Thinking about your goals will have brought with it a sense of reality about the level of changes you will need to make in order to get there. As you work your way through this book you will find numerous ways to help you. You may even find that you want to do more than you currently think you can. These NLP techniques will give you a sense of certainty and confidence. Now is the time to raise the bar of your personal success and to get the kind of career that will bring with it the fulfillment you are seeking.

Take the time now to close your eyes and visualize the time when you have achieved the goal you have written down. Think of where you will be sitting and what will have happened around you that is different. For example, if you have decided that you are going to be promoted, see yourself sitting in the appropriate office. Look in your desk drawer and look at your new business cards that reflect the change in title. Put them back and look around you and hear the buzz of your team at work. This is your future and you have created it. Take the time to absorb the feeling of this success and create a clear memory. Now open your eyes with the determination to get what you want.

Write down your goals somewhere as a constant reminder of your big picture goal – on a screensaver on your computer, or a note in your desk diary on the Monday of every week. Little notes that you can put inside a book, a briefcase or a desk drawer are the little surprises that will spring out at you and remind you of where you are going. People put photographs on their desk of their families, reminding them of why they are working. Why don't you put the photo of the car you will buy, the holiday you will go on or the house you will live in? Find

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some kind of tangible symbol of what your goal is and place it somewhere that will remind you of what you are doing. Whatever it is, make it ever present today so it becomes the norm in the timescales you allowed yourself.

Right – let's press on! A compelling future awaits.