

## **NLP Strategies**

You have probably heard the adage, “If you are a hammer, everyone is a nail.” That’s what we often find in the sales world today—most people have only one, two or maybe three tools that they use over and over again in almost all persuasive situations. Certainly the basics will always pertain in any persuasive situation, but the danger lies in ending up treating everyone the exact same way. How do you customize and adapt to each particular person you’re working with? Many camps on this issue are out there. On the one end, you have the NLP camp, those who believe that neuro-linguistic programming is the key to success. Others believe that persuasive success is all about the closing tactics they learn from expert sales trainers like Brian Tracy, Tom Hopkins or Zig Zigler. Still others feel that Dale Carnegie’s people skills are the way to go. You hear of people using fear. Some just focus on understanding personality styles. All these camps are great and each has much to offer, but individually, they each represent only a small part of the persuasion pie. To be the most powerfully persuasive individual, at all times and in any situation, you have to have *all* of the available tools under your belt. NLP is one of those fundamental pieces to the persuasion pie that many times gets overlooked. So, let’s now focus on the basics of NLP so you can add it to your persuasive toolbox.

## **What is NLP?**

Neuro-linguistic programming, or “NLP” as it is called today, is a very interesting science. NLP was first developed by UC Santa Cruz professor John Grinder and graduate student Richard Bandler. Its basic premise is that one’s thought patterns, beliefs and attitudes can be used to “preprogram” actual experiences that are yet to happen. NLP is very focused on *how* we think, what influences the way we think, and how we structure what we think. Subscribers to the science are encouraged to closely study and then model those individuals who do things well. When studying them, you don’t ask them *how* they did it—just what they were *thinking* when they did it. For example, if you asked Michael Jordan how to play basketball, he could give you a big list of dos and don’ts. He might outline a series of necessary drills, but that is not what NLP is about. Instead, you would find out how Michael Jordan perceives basketball in his mind. What are his beliefs and attitudes about basketball? When he makes a decision on the court, what is he thinking?

NLP is made up of several different models, each then having different techniques associated with it. Let's break NLP down further and take a basic look at some of its major models.

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