

NLP and Embedded Commands

An embedded command is a suggestion that is hidden within written or spoken language. It is used to communicate to the conscious mind while also sending a message to the subconscious mind. The intent is to actually *bypass* the conscious mind and communicate directly to the *subconscious* mind. Since embedded commands usually remain undetected by the conscious mind, they are very commonly used in marketing and advertising. It is in this covert way that marketers can create expectations and desires within their audiences without encountering resistance. Often, the embedded commands are small fragments that fit into a full sentence. For example, Pepsi used to have the slogan that encouraged, “Have a Pepsi Day.” The embedded command was “Have a Pepsi.”

The most effective embedded commands are short and concise. In fact, ideally they should be no longer than two to four words. It is much easier to use these commands in persuasive writing than persuasive speaking because you can visually highlight the command with boldface or italic font, for example. When using this persuasive technique, first determine what exactly you are trying to say to your audience. Then create the sentences where the embedded words and phrase will logically and contextually fit. Finally, set the embedded commands apart in some visual way: italicize them, boldface them, underline them, highlight them or use a different color.

While harder to emphasize, embedded commands are also a powerful tool in persuasive speaking. Certain phrases have specific command forms that follow the “two to four words” rule. Effective phrases can include word associations, cause and effect statements, presuppositions, questions, hidden suggestions or analogies. Essentially, when incorporating embedded commands into our spoken presentations, we are looking for phrases that jump out at us. Consider the following examples:

Become wealthy

Buy now

Use this material

How good it feels

Going to happen

Read each word

Feel good

Follow my lead

Act now	Change your life
Become really interested	You will understand
Learn this material easily	Invite you to notice
Use this process	Learn quickly
Enjoy life	Use this skill
Learn how	Improve your results

Studies show that embedded commands can actually change our attitudes or beliefs, even if we are totally unaware that they have. Embedded commands are effective simply because the conscious mind has no opportunity to analyze or evaluate them. Because of this, we can create expectations of behavioral changes with embedded commands as well as with direct and indirect suggestions. The subconscious mind will create an internal reality to match the commands being received.

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