

Improving Communication Styles with Neuro Linguistic Programming (N.L.P.)

By: Mary K. Lamborn, Master Certified N.L.P. Practitioner & Cash Flow Queen

Have you ever listened to your boss talk about something and walk away wondering what that was all about? Or you talked with your spouse about changes to your family budget and nothing happened? What about you telling your children not to do something and they still did it?

I am sure we have all experienced a break in communication and wondered if we're we speaking the same language...

Neuro Linguistic Programming, the study of human excellence, refers to: Neuro (neurology and the mind), Linguistic (the language you use) and Programming (your internal programs, values, beliefs and attitudes). In N.L.P. we learn that "communication is the response you get back." Effective communication based on N.L.P. is the key. Learn to identify the different communication styles and create the outcome you want to achieve.

According to "the N.L.P. Communication Model" we receive information through various filters to delete, distort or generalize according to our Meta programs, values, beliefs and attitudes which make up our internal representation system and creates our state which affects our physiology and leads to our behavior or response. Simply stated, the filters or perceptions define how we think, feel and respond.

If everyone received information from the same filters, all communication would be received the same, we would all think the same, feel the same and our responses would all be the same. Common sense tells us that is not how we process information. We are individuals with our own perceptions and preferences. We have had our own experiences, teachings and memories which are not interpreted the same way by others. Carl Jung stated, "You cannot receive anything outside of you that is not you."

Science tells us that you receive eleven million bits of information every second, but can only process about 126 bits at a time, less than 1%. I observed a demo with toothpicks to help visualize this concept. If someone were to hand you a case of toothpicks, you could only accept one box out of the case every second. In ten seconds you have received 10 boxes but deleted, distorted or generalized the rest.

If a speaker at a seminar was delivering her speech (eleven million bits of information every second) you would be in the audience receiving 126 bits or less than 1%. However, the people on either side of you will not necessarily receive the same 126 bits that you receive. They do not share your experiences, memories, filters or perceptions. Everyone picks up a different 1%.

This is just one of the major challenges for gifted students learning in traditional schools. All available media must be utilized to stimulate each person's learning and communication style. As we will see, reading a book will only be received by 25% of the students. What happens to the rest of students?

In N.L.P, we learn that communication is 7% the words we use, 38% the tone, tempo, quality and volume used to convey those words, and 55% the physiology expressed during the communication. How the words in a message are delivered affects the reception of the message. However, the choice of the words we say can have a huge impact too.

One of the challenges in each of the scenarios in the introduction is that the person communicating with the other assumes the person receiving the communication has the same filters, experiences, teachings and memories so they should get the message being communicated. However, the outcomes are entirely different!

Recently I was speaking with a business owner about her business and the subject of communication with her daughter came up. She mentioned that the communication was strained, as if butting heads all the time. Having observed her (to identify her preferred representational system) I asked a few questions about her daughter. What did she like? How did she do certain things i.e. in school and at home? I made a couple suggestions about the kind of words she used in her next discussion with her daughter. I also mentioned that the unconscious mind does not process negatives. If you tell a child “do not color on the wall,” you will return to find colors on the wall. A few days later, she let me know what a positive difference it made to change her thinking and the words she used when talking with her daughter. She felt a real connection for the first time in a long time.

Understanding your own communication style or representation system first will help you to communicate with another more effectively. How do you receive information? For example, do you prefer to see the boy with the basketball, hear him bounce the ball, feel the ball in your own hands or count the number of times the ball bounces before the basket is made? The representation systems are visual (see), auditory (hear) and kinesthetic (feel). Two others are olfactory (smell) and gustatory (taste). A derived representation system which may combine with others listed is auditory digital (self-talk – needs data). In essence, we use six senses to collect information.

For our purposes we will focus on visual, auditory, kinesthetic and auditory digital, hence preferred representational systems. The following are brief descriptions of each representational system and some of the words they use:

- ❖ A person who is primarily visual may stand up straight, clothes are clean, pressed and coordinated; memories are in pictures; they like to go places and see things, may be quiet; they like to read for themselves; they do not remember verbal instructions and may become bored by long dissertations. They use visual words, i.e. see, visualize, imagine, view, and look.
- ❖ An auditory person may move their eyes from side to side, as if hearing from one ear or the other, and is distracted by other noises. They like music and talking on the phone. They can repeat things back to you as if hearing the recording play back in their head. Math and writing do not come easily, but they may excel in learning a language. They like to be told how they are doing. They use words like: talk, speak, hear, listen, rings a bell, and sounds.

- ❖ A kinesthetic person may not stand tall. They move and talk slowly. They get a feeling about what they are doing. They like physical rewards and may be touchy-feely or get into another person's space. They may tend to stand too close to others. They may respond with a gut feeling. They use words like: feelings, touch, hold, hard, get a handle, and contact.
- ❖ An auditory digital person may portray some of the above representation systems. They tend to talk to themselves. They are organized. They follow a process: steps, procedures and in a particular sequence. They need the data, details as soon as possible in a conversation or they lose interest. They used words like: know, motivate, process, understand, that makes sense.

Notice which of the representational systems you tend to identify with the most. Do you notice the flavor of the words you usually articulate? What do you think happens when you communicate with others using only your preferred representational system? Can you see why, when they are trying to receive your communication, how hard it is to grasp the intent of your message? Their filters are deleting, distorting or generalizing what you are saying? They are not necessarily getting your message.

You understanding the other person's style or representation system will enable them to receive effective communication from you. If you create the appropriate "bridge" between you and the other person, you can achieve positive communication towards your purpose, goals and outcomes. **NO MORE BREAKS IN COMMUNICATION!**

In the mother-daughter example, the mother is auditory digital and the daughter is visual. Talking about the time or reasons to do something did not resonate with the daughter, in fact she was not really part of the conversation. When the mother became creative and asked her daughter to imagine what would happen if...the daughter became receptive to her mother's message.

Now consider the intent of your message. Convey it utilizing the words and phrases from the favored representational system of the person you are speaking with, not yours. How is your message being received? Do you notice something about their physiology? Are they more interested and engaged in the conversation? How does that affect the intended outcome?

Utilize these concepts during your meetings or with friends and family. The holidays are just around the corner. Be the bridge that brings everyone together for the holidays and all the days after!



Mary Lamborn has over 30 years' experience in office management and bookkeeping, business analysis, business modeling, human resources and benefits administration, 15+ years as a storage feasibility analyst, and debt reduction strategies. She has worked in various industries including Accounting, Retail, Trucking, Medical, Real Estate, Construction and Development, and Storage. Mary helped start a non-profit to aid women and children and obtained some grants for it. Her company, MKL Enterprises, LLC provides N.L.P. & Time Line Therapy® for individuals 7+ and business owners, Revenue Modeling, Cash Flow Strategy and Bookkeeping.

Mary is a member of NAFE, the National Association of Professional Women (VIP 2013-2014), the American Institute of Professional Bookkeepers, National Bookkeeping Association, A QuickBooks ProAdvisor, and the National Notary Association. She earned her Associates Degree in Small Business Management from College of the Canyons and her Bachelors of Science Degree in Business Administration and Project Management from DeVry University. She graduated Magna Cum Laude. Mary is a Master Certified N.L.P. Practitioner and Certified Time Line Therapy® Practitioner.

Mary is a native of Los Angeles. She is the proud mother of a daughter and son, and the grandmother of two amazing boys.