

# NLP

## Three letters that *changed* the world

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Is there a therapy or transformational process that has been as influential and all pervasive as NLP?

*By Sudha Hamilton*

**N**euro linguistic programming (NLP) has, over the last 30 years, reached into nearly every level of our society. Beginning with the therapeutic community, Richard Bandler and John Grinder (who were the founders) developed their work in conjunction with three of the most effective and well known psychotherapists of the time - Fritz Perls (founder of Gestalt), Virginia Satir (family systems therapy) and Milton Erickson (hypnotherapy). As NLP included principles from all of these disparate modalities, it dropped a large pebble in many pools of consciousness - and the ripple effect has been substantial. It is highly likely that any training or transformational work that you may have done has been positively and powerfully influenced by the many guiding principles inherent in NLP. Recently the publication "Psychology Today" stated that "NLP may be the most powerful vehicle for change in existence."

From there, NLP immediately began spreading like a virus into the corporate world, infecting sales trainings around the world, as managers realised that this work could make their people more effective and therefore their companies more money. Modelling "rapport", and "anchoring their intentions" with powerful gestures and mental images, firstly sales people, and then all levels of corporate management began to expand their understanding of how we all think and operate. Training and Development Journal says "NLP does offer the potential for making changes without the usual agony that accompanies these phenomena....it offers the opportunity to gain flexibility, creativity and greater freedom of action than most of us now know." NLP has been instrumental in the shift to a greater consciousness within our corporate world.

NLP has also been hugely influential in the field of sport and other high performance categories. Coaches and athletes have benefited from the techniques employed by NLP - "reframing" their communication to be able to perceive new possibilities and identifying our sabotage tendencies through "parts integration." Golfing star Tiger Woods and tennis great Andre Agassi both utilised NLP techniques to reach the peak of their particular sports. A strong mental performance is such a vital component of any successful performance, be it on the sports field or on any other world stage. Politicians and performers