



Practical application of the fundamentals of NLP

[Abstract](#)

Imagine a simple set of concepts that, when integrated into your mind, will change the way you see the world and yourself. And, as a result, you'll experience greater results in with less effort.

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Welcome! The following **Twelve Mindset Tips for Improved Performance** are based in the presuppositions of NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) as I learned them in my training in 2002. Think of these presuppositions as the fundamental beliefs, the assumptions upon which NLP is built. As you read through them, I believe you'll find them to be familiar maybe even "common sense."

If that's the case, this may be a nice reminder. If these are new to you, I hope you think about them and incorporate them into your view of the world.

The purpose of this white paper is to introduce you to a (possibly) new way of thinking about the world, the people in in it, and how you choose to interact with them. When you adapt these ideas, you may find your thinking will shift. You may become more understanding, more persuasive, more influential with the people in your life.

These ideas are universally applicable to every day life at home and in business. Regardless of what you do for a living or what you do with your day; is it safe to assume you interact with people? When you become more effective in your interactions, you have greater influence with those people.

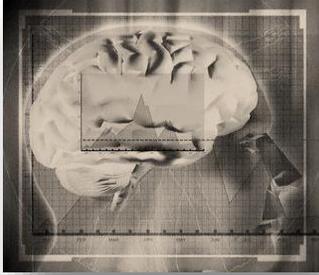
It is my intention that you'll use this information for everyone's benefit. This is actually one of the presuppositions – that change should be ecological.

George Gillas

Introduction

What is Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP)?

Let's begin by breaking down the name.



Neuro: Neuro describes our nervous system. This is much more than just our brain. When we talk about “neuro” of NLP, we are talking about mind. And, would it be fair to say that your mind is much more than the bundle of tissue that comprises your physical brain?

And to bring it back to physical neurology lets also consider your entire nervous system.

Think about this for a moment; every cell in your body is connected to your nervous system. Nothing happens in your body without your nervous system being involved.

Some estimates claim we have more neural connections in our body than there are stars in the known universe or grains of sand on the planet. Another estimate puts the number of potential neural connections at 10 to the 10th to the 11th connections... a number far to large to even imagine. What we know for sure is that, neurologically, we are all very dense!

Our neurology experiences the world through our five senses:

- Visual: what we see - both external and through our imagination
- Auditory: what we hear - both external and through our imagination
- Kinesthetic: what we feel - both external and through our imagination
- Olfactory: what we smell - both external and through our imagination
- Gustatory: what we taste - both external and through our imagination

NLP adds a 6th – Auditory Digital: what we say to ourselves.

We are, without question, complex beings.

Linguistic: Linguistic describes the language and other non-verbal communication systems through which our neural representations are coded, ordered, and given meaning.

This is the “language of our mind.” NLP is effective because we communicate to this level of mind using the language of the mind, which is often simple and not logical.

Programming: The ability to discover and utilize the programs we run (our communication to ourselves and others) in our neurological systems to achieve specific and desired outcomes.

Think in terms of a computer program – the software. When you install a new program you expect certain replicable and desired results; that’s what a program delivers. Undesirable programs that run subconsciously produce consistent undesirable results. If we rewrite the program to get desired results, we can change behaviors and produce what we want, when we want. That’s the outcome part of NLP.

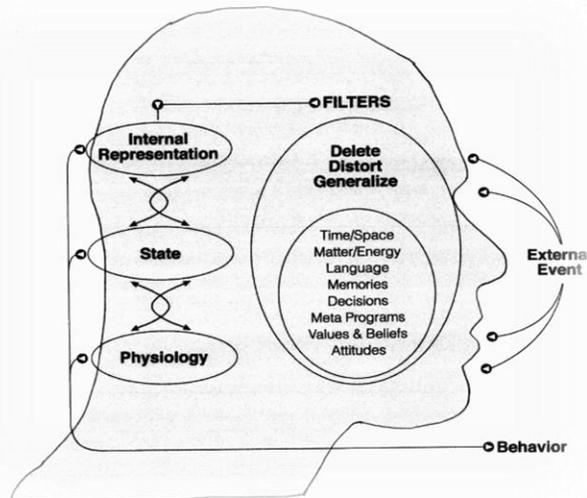
NLP is the art and science of using the language of the mind to achieve our specific and desired outcomes on a regular basis.

NLP provides the methods to model successful behaviors and the tools to make desired unconscious changes to replicate those behaviors.

Tip #1 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance: Respect for the Other Person's Model of the World



People see their world differently than you do. This doesn't make it right or wrong, just different. And, regardless of how well or how long you've known someone, inevitably you'll find that they have a way of seeing something that is different from your viewpoint. Here's why:



Look at the NLP model of communication above. Can you see that your internal representation of an event is a function of your experiences, beliefs, state-of-mind/health, etc.? think about something as simple as how you are feeling.

Do you think differently when you are sick, exhausted, angry than you do when you are vibrant, rested and joyful? Of course you do.

When the internal filters change, the meaning we give to events in the external world changes – as does our behavior. Put simply, we react/respond to an event based on the meaning we give that event. The external world (for the most part) is neutral; what meaning we give to the world (internal representation) dictates our behavior.

If you can accept that, to a degree, “perception is reality” then you can respect, or at least understand, that others will likely have a different view than you. With this model, can you begin to understand another person’s view of the world -without accepting it?

This presupposition is a critical first step to being flexible – more on that later. Here are some thoughts on how to shift your thinking.

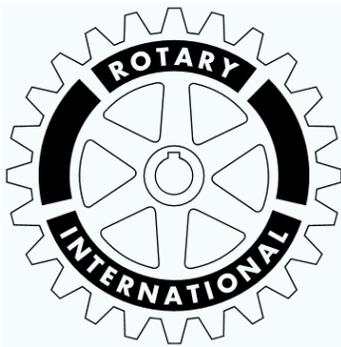
- a. Do I understand that they see the world through their eyes, experiences, present state and that this is different than how I see the world?
- b. What can I say and how can I act so that the other person feels safe in expressing their views – even though they may be different from mine?
- c. Can I engage in a conversation with someone who has opposing views to an emotionally charged topic such as gun rights, abortion, immigration, politics and still be civil and open to understanding their point of view – even without accepting it?
- d. In a sales situation, you want them to buy your product or service. They don’t see it that way. Can you ask enough deep, probing questions to understand their view? And by doing so, can you imagine yourself “on their side” helping to solve their problem rather than trying to sell your solution?

**Tip #2 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance:
Behavior and Change are to be Evaluated in terms of Context and Ecology**



When you decide to make a change ask yourself if it good for you, for your family, for your company, community, etc. Think in terms larger than just you – this is what’s meant by ecology.

The context should serve you and others in your life. Sometimes we think that change for the sake of change is a good thing; and it often can be. When you run the change against the ecology questions, you’ll see that it helps make your decision easier.



Rotary International has “The Four Way Test”:

Is it the truth?

Is it fair to all concerned?

Will it build goodwill and better friendships?

Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

Are you changing for you or for someone else?

Have you focused enough on the benefits of change – and what you are moving toward, or are you still thinking about how you don’t want your present situation? This is an important question because deciding to take action to move away from things that are not serving you will certainly get you into motion.

Away-from motivators will get you on your way. And, for long-term success, you want to decide what it is you are moving towards! Towards motivators keep you going.

Think in terms of diet and weight loss. How many people do you know who go from diet to diet and see, to always put the weight back on? And then there are those who use the diet to get started and decide to make a lifestyle change of healthy eating and exercise. Diet is away from; away from all the foods you should not eat. Lifestyle is towards new habits of exercise, nutritious meals, adequate rest, etc.

Also consider, making a change requires planning. And for it to be successful, it needs to be your plan. Have you taken the time to consider what life will be like if things don't change? What does that feel like? Then, have you made a vivid picture in your mind of life having made these changes now? How much better does that feel?

Create the plan that works for you. Identify the resources you may need (people, food, supplies, etc.) to be successful in your plan. Then, take action and benchmark your progress. Remember also to celebrate successes.

And a final reminder about ecology...

When you do make a change, is it ecological: good for you, your family, your business, your associates/friends, community, etc.? or is the change you want to make purely self-serving?

Tip #3 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance: Resistance in a Client is a Sign of Lack of Rapport

There are no resistant clients, only inflexible communicators. Effective communicators accept and utilize all communication presented to them.



One of the presuppositions present in this is that people are open and willing to change with new ideas and information. If, when presenting an idea to someone you find they are not moving, the onus is on you to establish enough rapport, trust and credibility, that they will be open to the idea of listening to you.

Then, can you be flexible enough to present the idea in a different way: perhaps in a way that matches their

model of the world?

Utilizing all communication presented means that you are aware of the non-verbal feedback you are receiving from the other party. Most communication (93%) is nonverbal. Research tells us that only 7% of our communication when face-to-face with another is the words we use. Tone and tempo accounts for 38% of the message and your physiology (posture, eye contact, etc.) is the remaining 58%.

How many times in your life have you heard, or said, “It’s not *what* you said, it’s *how* you said it...” Focus on the body language and tone along with the words.

How does this apply to a sales situation?

There is an old expression in selling: *people will not change their mind but they will make a new decision based on new information*

Have you ever been in a conversation with someone who constantly pushes back or constantly insists because they are inflexible? How can you change the conversation – and change your response to them so they can be more open?

Consider the possibility that the way you are communicating something does not make sense to the other person... how can you change the delivery? What do you need to do differently so they are more receptive?

Are you sensitive to the other person's body language? Communication is more non-verbal than verbal. What can you "read" in the other's body language or tone of voice? Keep in mind that being sensitive to body language can also backfire if you read too much into it. Take note of their body language at the beginning of the conversation.

What you want to tune into are shifts that happen as important points are covered. Just because someone crosses their arms doesn't mean they are resistant... they might just be cold! Use common sense.

In a sales or negotiation situation, have you noticed a shift in body language when suddenly the other person became resistant? What about when they opened up to your ideas? How can you respond to that change and present new information in a way they may be more receptive?

Think back to conversation you've had when you noticed the "shift". Can you quantify what happened? What can you do to build your skills on this topic?

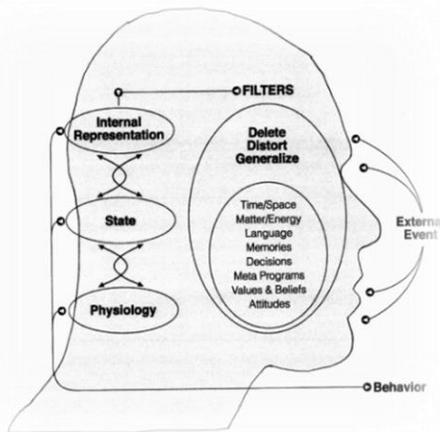
Tip #4 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance: People are not Their Behaviors



Have you ever been in a really foul mood? Just mean and/or miserable? Can you recall times when you may have been really hungry, had a headache, or just didn't want to deal with anyone? Is that who you are? Of course not. After all... people who have seen you at your worst – know that's not WHO you are – right?

Recognize that the person's behavior is the best indication of how they are feeling at the moment – but it is not who they are. The behavior is just a snapshot in time – a momentary glimpse of the end result of all the processing going on inside their head.

We respond to our internal representation of the world – the meaning we assign in our head is also influenced by things as complex as our emotional state and as simple as whether or not we've had enough sleep or if we're hungry.



Remember this diagram?

An external even takes place – you see, hear, feel, smell, taste something and that event then goes thru a series of filters in your mind.

Some are old and deeply rooted such as your values and beliefs, attitudes and memories.

And, just to make it more complicated, your mind then distorts, deletes or generalizes this information to make sense of it all.

And then there are other filters that give added meaning to the event. What is your mental, emotional, physical state at the time? Are you tired or excited or hungry or ill? Are you resting or sleepy or full of energy? Did you just have a great laugh with friends or an argument with your spouse? All these affect your internal representation and ultimately your behavior.

Now consider, the only thing others see is *the behavior – how you respond or react to the external events*. Knowing what you know now – you can realize the behavior is not the person; it is simply the *visible external end of the internal subconscious processes*.

Even positive behaviors are not indicators of who the person is. Many performers, actors, and singers are bigger than life on stage (behavior) and very shy and introverted in “real” life. They take on a “larger than life persona” because that’s their JOB... it’s what they love to do. And when alone or with family and friends, many will tell you they are shy – even introverted. The behavior is what we see, it is who their audience believes them to be, but it’s just an act – and external behavior.

Have you ever “accused” someone of being their behavior? Or been accused? We’re not going to get into the names that we sometimes call each other... Realize that calling someone a ___ doesn’t mean they are a ___. It’s simply the external behavior – the end result of the subconscious processes in that moment.

Can you think of times when someone behaved, maybe in an inappropriate way and you thought “that’s who they are”? And, knowing what you know now – I wonder if you can imagine a new way to respond to behaviors...

Think of a time when you acted in a certain way, perhaps to “fit in” with a group. How did that feel? Do you think others noticed? Because you acted a certain way is that who you are – who you were?

In a sales situation, have you ever encountered a strange behavior only to find the person was “testing” you?

How do you respond if the person you are meeting treats you poorly or is acting in a way that you did not expect – or approve? What can you do in your mind, to diffuse your desire to respond to their behavior and instead, move past it and get to conversation that is real and meaningful?

When have you encountered someone who was acting in a way that seemed disingenuous? Did you want to be with them – or do business with them?

What insights can you draw from this? How might you now start to think differently about people's behaviors?

And knowing that people can only see your behavior – how will you change now?

**Tip #5 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance:
Everyone is Doing the Best They Can with the Resources
They Have Available**

Behavior is geared for adaptation and present behavior is the best choice available. Every behavior is motivated by positive intent.

Behavior is geared for adaptation and present behavior is the best choice available. Every behavior is motivated by positive intent. Once you adopt this thinking, you'll find it easier to forgive people for some of the things they say or do.



Now, let's keep it real, mass murderers and terrorists test this thinking to the limit. We're not going to go into geo-political discourse here because the majority of people reading this, myself included, are not dealing with sociopaths or psychopaths; we're dealing with prospects, clients, and folks just like you and me.

So. For a moment just stop and think about situations you've been in when you made a decision that, in retrospect, wasn't the best choice. If you choose to believe now that you did the best you could with the resources you had; doesn't that take some pressure off?

Do you ever beat yourself up over decisions or actions from your past? Have you gotten caught in the "should have – could have – would have" thinking? How do you feel after a trip down that path?

One of the questions you can ask yourself when you see someone doing something that seems out of sorts to you is, "I wonder HOW they do that?"

Not WHY but HOW.

How questions the strategies they use and does not judge the person (question the behavior – not the person) – starting to see a trend here?

When we start thinking about other's behaviors, we often get stuck in "why are they doing that... what are they thinking... why is this happening..." Often times these type questions lead you to judge the person, triggering your internal filters to create a model based on your "stuff."

Go back to Tip #4 and the diagram which shows how internal processes take place to create a behavior. Rather than stimulating old patterns, ask a new question – "How do they do that?"

This puts you in a state of curiosity. And curiosity is a receptive, open and non-judgmental state to be in. This is also an outstanding question to ask yourself – a way to interrupt the pattern of shoulda – coulda – woulda thinking. Try it now. Simply ask yourself "How did I do that?" and you'll likely find you have a slight feeling of confusion. That confusion can actually start to build a new neural network; a network of curiosity instead of judgement.

Consider a problem or challenge you are facing now. And think about other situations similar to this one where you overcame or found solutions. Can you identify the resources you can tap into now? HOW did you solve the problem then? How did you evaluate what resources you needed to find – how did you decide on a path – how did you take action?

Think back to decisions you made and consider that "hindsight is always 20/20". Can you now choose to give yourself a break and realize that, at the time, you did the best you could do? Can you also realize others did as well?

I recently read "there are no failures – only wins and lessons" Imagine now how much more powerful you can feel when you adopt this thinking.

In a sales situation realize that people will not make new decisions unless you can provide them with new resources – new information about how you and your service/product can provide them with the new solutions they need now.

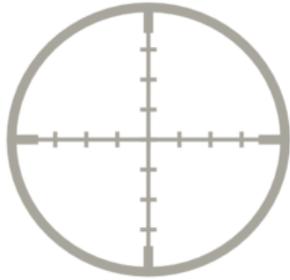
Remember Einstein's definition of insanity – doing the same thing and expecting different results. If you are in sales, your JOB is to offer new solutions. Keep in mind though, your prospect may be stuck in that regretful thinking. Can you recognize they may be stuck and ask intelligent, focused, curious questions to help them move past "stuck?"

Imagine you can you stand out and separate yourself from the other sales people who want your prospect's money. How does that feel? What will their response be to this new energy?

Do you ask your prospects about how they made past decisions? What resources were available then? Did they need to include others? Did they need additional research? Did they need a trial period or hands-on demonstration? If you did the exercise in the last section, you'll appreciate the power of this questioning.

You've solved problems before, and now with your guidance, you will help them solve their current problem. You're asking questions out of probing curiosity and helping your prospect remember that they too are successful problem solvers. And in the process, they'll tell you what you need to help them with to win the account.

**Tip #6 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance:
Calibrate on behavior. The most important information available
about a person is their behavior.**



Calibrate means to notice – in detail. What is their initial body language and posture. What behaviors do you observe at the beginning of a conversation – do those behaviors/body language change?

Sometimes we get too hung up on ‘body language’ and what it may mean. A simpler way to think about this is to notice changes. Just because someone has their arms crossed, doesn’t mean they are closed to what you are saying... maybe their chair has no arms, and this is more comfortable.

Inferences from body language are meaningless unless you have a baseline of normal behavior – a place to start. Just like a roadmap will do you no good unless you know where you are. So, don’t assume too much – and trust your instincts. You are better at this than you may think.

Notice what behaviors change as you move along in a conversation and compare/contrast those behavioral changes to the baseline you noticed initially. Did they start out in an open and welcoming posture then shift when you said something important? Look at the whole picture – and the context of the conversation. Trust your gut...

Calibrating on behavior also provides you the information you need to start to establish rapport at the unconscious level. This is important information you need to quickly establish trust and credibility. Once you have the baseline you can adjust your body language accordingly. You can begin to use techniques to build rapport. When they shift, and you are in rapport; you’ll know what they are feeling, and you can guide the conversation based on those insights.

And what they are feeling is important. We know that we make decisions based on emotion and back them with logic. Feelings emanate from the unconscious/subconscious mind. Feelings are not rational - and they drive nearly everything! By calibrating on the person’s behavior and getting into rapport, you can genuinely sense what they are feeling. This is an incredible advantage if you desire to be an influential and persuasive communicator.

We already know that people are not their behaviors – and their behavior is the most important cue you have about them at the moment. Remember, their current behavior is simply a response to the meaning they are giving to the event, whatever that event may be.

We mentioned earlier you are better at this than you may believe. To develop your skill, because you want to be the most effective communicator you can be, think about observing people and wondering what you can infer simply by watching them from a distance.

Watch people in coffee shops and restaurants. Observe sports fans at a sporting event. What reasonable assumptions can you make, moment by moment, from their behavior? Just be careful, if you do this exercise of observing people in public not to stare too long. Go with your initial gut instinct... your unconscious mind needs very little time to gather all the information necessary. Practice... and do it discretely!

When in a sales conversation, do you notice a change in outward behavior throughout the conversation? Does your prospect become more open? More closed? More curious? Look for changes as the conversation goes forward and utilize the positive, non-verbal feedback you get. (93% non-verbal)

Keep in mind, it's about the change in body language – the change in behavior in the context of the event. Take everything into consideration: the words you are both saying and the changes in non-verbal feedback you are getting.

With practice, it will almost be like you are reading their mind because, sometimes, the body language speaks before they do. Don't assume though – use this carefully.

Listen. Observe. Ask questions. Be curious. Be patient. Trust your gut!

Tip #7 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance: The map is not the territory.

The words we use are not the event or the item they represent.

Allow me to be literal for a moment. When you look at a map – you are not looking at the actual land – you are looking at a 2-dimensional representation of the land.

The map is an illustration of the land, not the land itself. Words are the common tools we use to describe and try to explain an event to another person. Some use eloquent words – others use simpler language. Either way – the words are a tool and a tool only to represent an event.



The words we use to describe an event are like the map depicting the land; they are a way to represent an event – not the event itself. And your representation of the event is affected by your unconscious filters - the meaning you give to the event. We call this your Internal Representation. More accurately, words are the tool we use to communicate our internal representation of an event to another person in a way that they can hopefully understand.

And if that event reminds you, at some deeper level, of negative emotions from memories you have; your account of the event will be influenced by those memories whether they are conscious or not.

Think about “eye witnesses” to an accident. Each sees the accident, and each has a different version of what happened. That’s why it’s important for investigators to get eye-witness reports quickly.

To add confusion to the process; the only time you recall an actual event is the first time you think of it after it happens. Each subsequent time you recall it you

are remembering the event plus your memory of the event. A great example of how your mind distorts memories is to visit your childhood home, or neighborhood. Or better yet, your high school cafeteria! *“I remember it being soooo much bigger!”*

As time goes on, your mind can delete and distort parts of the memory.

What does this have to do with sales or communication?

Be careful when talking to prospects about their problems or “pain points” and remember the words they use may be distorted or exaggerated. Someone else may give you a completely different account. What can you infer, from any non-verbal signals you are reading about the authenticity of the comments? What can you guess about the intensity the person feels? Are they mitigating or exacerbating the problem at that moment?

Gather as much information as possible to get a bigger, more accurate picture. And use their wording to describe it back to them so you can demonstrate that you are seeing it the way they are. Be curious when you probe for more information. Don’t ask leading questions – be open and non-judgmental. And ask open-ended questions (those without a yes/no answer) to gather more information.

Genuine curiosity is the key here so be sure your body language and words are consistent with curiosity. Ask so you can learn more and help. You’ll be surprised at how much information will come your way.

**Tip #8 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance:
People have all the resources they need to succeed and to achieve their
desired outcomes. There are no unresourceful people
only unresourceful states.**



This is one of the most optimistic presuppositions – the assumption is that we have all we need to overcome obstacles and challenges. Sometimes we just need help identifying those resources.

When you get stuck, one thing you can do is to get to a quiet place and think about times in your past that you felt stuck. It doesn't have to be the same situation – or even a similar situation because you are activating a neural network of “creative problem solving.” By engaging those memories, your mind begins to realize that yes, you can solve this one too!

Think about times from your past when you dug in and found solutions that you didn't think you had – but you found them. Or perhaps you created a solution then that you can tweak a little to utilize today. Can you recall a time when you felt stuck, and you dug in and created a solution?

Go back to that time now and look at the situation through your own eyes – as if you are there again. It's fun! You overcame a problem... you won! Look through your eyes. See what you saw. Hear what you heard. Listen to your self-talk and remember the feelings you had when you arrived at the solution. Allow yourself to enjoy those feelings again now. And hold on to the feelings while you...

Imagine creating an image for your current problem. Any image will do. Imagine that image floating in the room in front of you in such a way that you could walk around it and view it from a different perspective. Then, in your mind's eye, do just that. Look at the image from above and below. Look at it from different directions and notice what you can notice by simply allowing yourself to have a different perspective on the problem.

What solutions do you have now? What new ideas based on new perspectives come to mind?

How can I use this in day-to-day life or in a selling situation?

In conversations you can remind people they have overcome similar things. In sales, remind your prospect of how they had a problem and found resources in the past. Gently remind them how those resources often came from a sales rep just like you.

How can you move your prospect into a more resourceful state? Ask them about times in the past when they solved problems, overcame obstacles, made important decisions. Ask them to recall what they did and how they did it. What was the process? What resources (new products/services/ideas/technologies) did they gather to creatively solve the problem then?

Can you ask well-formed questions that cause them to “go inside” and remember times when they solved problems, overcame obstacles, made important decisions?

Imagine for a moment that you ask them questions like these and they get into a mind-set of being a problem-solver... a solution-oriented decision maker...

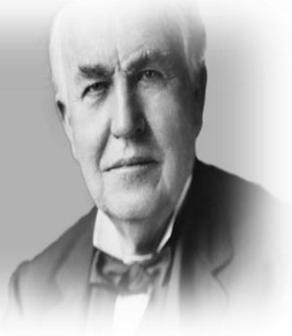
They are feeling smart. They are feeling empowered. And they realize that your curiosity and your sincere interest in them and their problem/solution is responsible for them feeling the way they do...

How would that state of mind be beneficial to your offering?

Tip #9 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance: There is no failure only feedback.

How might this concept change your business? Your thinking? Your communication? Your sales or sales management?

It's been said that when Thomas Edison was asked about how he failed thousands of times to create an electric lightbulb, he basically responded by saying he didn't fail, he simply found *10,000 ways it didn't work*. *Feedback – not failure.*



“I have not **FAILED.
I’ve just found
10,000 WAYS
that won’t work.”**
—Thomas Edison

“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.” - Winston Churchill

“Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly.” - Robert Kennedy

Take a moment and think back on your successes and your “failures”. If you’ve been in sales for a little while you understand that you can learn more from the sales you missed than the ones that were easy. But only if your mind set is right.

Can you also think this way about employee challenges? What about conversations with supervisors, board members, friends, and family?

When you think of it all as feedback, you are in a better position to reframe and retry. It does take will power to adopt this one; and when you do, you’ll notice your influence increase dramatically.

- We’ve all had failures. Some more important and painful than others. Consider for a moment what you could learn if you were to think back now on some of those events as “feedback” and not failure.
- If you had to explain this thinking to someone you care about, how would you do it? What pushback can you anticipate? How might you frame the conversation, so you get them to buy in?

- In selling and business, think back now about the sales you missed or the deals that never quite materialized. What can you learn, as you think back on these as opportunities for feedback, so that next time something similar comes along, you can handle it better?
- Is there one particularly painful memory you have that you still consider failure? What if someone had the ability to look at that memory, in all its detail, and find feedback that will help you in the future... what would they report back to you?
- I wonder what would happen if you could consider now there are only two outcomes to any event: “wins” and “lessons”? How does that change your perspective?

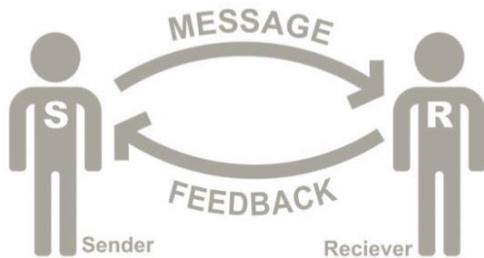
You can develop this new mindset by practicing on the little things immediately. What minor setback have you had recently that, when you revisit it now with the intention of learning, could you easily reframe for new insights?

And with practice, when you decide to commit, can you imagine yourself making this your new paradigm? Wins and Lessons.

How do you feel now having gained these insights?

Tip #10 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance: The Meaning of Communication is the Response You Get

To communicate is to be involved in a two-way action. Merriam-Webster defines communication as: *a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior* “Exchanged” is a key concept in the definition of communication.



As we already know, face-to-face communication is over 90% non-verbal. When you think you are being clear and precise but are met with a look of confusion or irritation; the meaning to the receiver is confusion or irritation.

How do you correct the message so that your intended message is acknowledged by the receiver? Are you sensitive enough to feedback to evaluate and adjust your message if necessary.

Have you calibrated on behavior* so you can be aware of and utilize non-verbal feedback while communicating with the other person?

In a selling situation – are you more focused on your words, delivering your scripted pitch; or are you communicating? Are you utilizing feedback and asking questions if your prospect seems confused or is giving you unexpected feedback?

As a consumer, how do you respond to a sales person who is more focused on the features and benefits of their product and their slick marketing materials than they are in talking *with* you?

Think back to important conversations you’ve had where the outcome wasn’t what you wanted... when you walked out without the deal. If you could replay those conversations now, what would you do differently?

When would you have stopped and asked the prospect if you are being clear?

Could you see yourself saying something like, “Sometimes I get a little too far into the details, Mr. Prospect, and I lose people... I want to be sure I’m giving you the information that answers your questions and addresses your needs in a way that I’m really clear. How are we doing so far? What questions do you have at this point?”

That would be a change of pace from most sales people, wouldn’t it?

One last thought. Don’t ask your clients or prospects if they understand. It can come off as insulting. They are smart people... if anything ask if you are being clear. Watch for the telltale signs of confusion. You know what they are. When you have rapport with a client, you’ll feel their confusion before they even have a chance to voice it. Stop. Inquire. Clarify. Be in tune with your prospect – not your script and win the game of selling.

Okay, one more last thought. Scripts work, otherwise your company would not be providing them to you. They work best when you internalize them and make them yours, so they are conversational – natural. Think about a scene from your favorite movie. Those words were written by a third party, memorized and delivered by a skilled actor so they are believable in the context of the film. So it is with scripts – they need to be *you* for them to work. No shortcuts here. Sorry!

** Tip #6: Behavior is the most important information available about a person at that moment.*

**Tip #11 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance:
The Law of Requisite Variety –
The system/person with the most flexibility will control the system**

Have you ever met anyone who is inflexible in their thinking or in their position on an issue? Or, have you ever tried to persuade someone simply by stating your position over and over – perhaps in a louder voice? Has it happened to you? How effective is that?

Have you met people who have the ability to talk to anyone? Think of the CEO who knows the names and talks to the people in the shop with the same ease and grace she negotiates with vendors or communicates to her board.

When you think of the relationship between success and the ability to communicate; imagine what could happen as you learn to become more flexible because you want to win more often.

Successful people find solutions. They are flexible in their thinking and in their adaptation to their environment. They adapt a mindset of looking for new ways to solve problems.



Einstein said, "*Problems cannot be solved by the **same level of thinking** that created them.*" That's flexibility of thought.

Aristotle, "***Soul and body, I suggest, react sympathetically upon each other.***"

There is, without doubt, a mind-body connection. Massage therapists, trainers and other professionals who work with people's bodies know this to be true: people who are stiff in their body are often less flexible in their thinking than those who are loose and flexible.

Could you consider the possibility that, by making your body more flexible; your thinking could begin to expand? What about meditation? Just imagine, that through some simple exercises you could increase your flexibility in thinking and communicating and, as a result, become more successful in your field.

What can more flexibility in your thinking do for you? Imagine a conversation that seems to go around in circles, with no foreseeable resolution. By recognizing the simple idea that no decisions will be reached without new information; could you invite the other person to "look at this from a different perspective" and then explore new options.

Even if the options you discuss are not realistic, at least this gets you out of the same repetitive pattern.

To recognize this is to be more flexible. You don't even need to have the answers to the different perspectives; by simply inviting the other person(s) to explore them presupposes they are there, doesn't it? This is one more way to become the problem solver by simply asking the right questions.

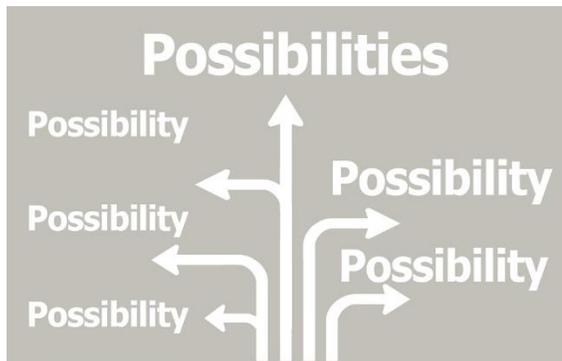
Remember Edison's 10,000 ways it didn't work! If he was not flexible in his thinking would he have ever invented the incandescent light bulb? How much longer might it have taken?

Practice looking at things with fresh eyes. Imagine there are alternative ways to view events, conversations, comments. Practice moving your body. Stretch. Take a yoga class, walk your dog, do something to move on a daily basis. Add some gentle flexibility training to your daily routine and you'll begin to notice your thinking start to change too.

The Law of Requisite Variety – be the person who is most flexible. And win more often.

Tip #12 of 12 Mindset tips for improved performance: All Procedures Should be Designed to Increase Choice

When you think about being “stuck” it usually has something to do with a lack, or a perceived lack, of options, If you can only see on thing to do, and that one thing does not serve you, or is in conflict with your values; you feel stuck.



What if there were choices? What if there were other options that you just have not been able to realize? Think back to times when you felt stuck. How did you get out of that feeling and into action? Most likely, you decided on a direction and started. And by getting into motion, you no longer felt stuck.

Options are the remedy for stuck. Options are the solution to problems. Options create choices and choice feels like freedom, especially after being stuck.

Sometimes stuck feels like you have a choice; either do it or don't do it. Not much freedom here, is there? Try this exercise when you think that all you have is do it or don't; yes or no. ask yourself the following questions:

- What will happen if I do it?
- What will happen if I don't do it?
- What will not happen if I do it?
- What will not happen if I don't do it?

Or, to put it another way:

- What will I gain if I do
- What will I gain if I don't
- What will I lose if I do?
- What will I lose if I don't?

This may seem as if you are asking the same questions. You are not. This forces you to look at your situation from two additional points of view. The answers may not readily come to you and the exercise of searching for the answers will often times give you additional insights to recognize there are more options that do or do not (apologies to Yoda).

Another concept here is that we often get so deep into our problems that we simply cannot see outside the problem. And, when you think about it now, the solution to any problem is not in the problem, the solution is always outside the problem – in “not problem.”

As an experiential exercise, pick up a piece of paper and look at it. you can see the boundaries of the paper, right? Now, bring the paper to your face so it is touching your nose. What do you see? Just paper. Think of the paper as a problem, we get so deep into the problem that its all we can see. If you move the paper away from your nose to arm’s length again, you can once again see the boundaries of the paper, can’t you?

More importantly you can see all around the paper – you can see everything that is “not paper” and, metaphorically, that’s where the solutions to paper/problem reside.

Go back to Tip #8 and review the exercise of imagining your problem to be floating in midair in front of you. When you do this, its like you are moving the paper from blocking your view to a point where you can see “not paper.” You can, in your imagination, see your problem’s boundaries and since you have now given it boundaries, you can experience all that is “not problem” – where the options are.

For more on this and other tips on how to use your mind for improved performance, email George@GeorgeGillas.com and request a copy of “*Soft Eyes ~ Still Mind ~ Laser Focus*” It’s free... no strings attached, literal or metaphorical!



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