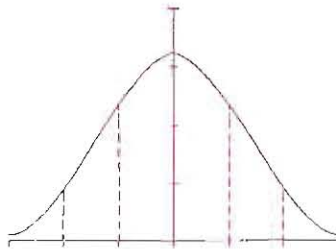


# 16 PF Newsletter

**Neuro-Linguistic Programming – NLP: What is it, what can it do for you, and should you be using it?**

**Nigel Johnson,**  
a NLP trainer and master practitioner, addressed our April meeting.



Here is a simple test: go to a seminar and write copious notes on the subject. Write them up a few days later. Then lose them. Then try to write the article a month later. You will have to do it from memory and it's a fair bet that whatever has stuck will be the key points and those which you have found to be most interesting and potentially valuable.

So it is with me.

Our speaker in April was Nigel Johnson, who for some years has been working in HR consultancy, specialising in coaching and leadership skills. His subject, that of neuro-linguistic programming, has been around since the early seventies, and many readers may, like me, have been intrigued to know more, heard snippets over the years, read a few articles on the subject, spoke to a few people about it, but somehow have never put the whole lot together and made a coherent schema of it. It's been rather like trying to nail jelly to the ceiling. The result is that you may be able to speak of 'neuro-linguistic programming' to the uninitiated, thereby giving an entirely unwarranted impression of the depth of your learning, but if challenged to explain more, you may either take refuge in more jargon, or simply imply that you cannot possibly divulge such sensitive information which might be misused by anyone not part of the cognoscenti.

The term 'neuro-linguistic programming' is a marvellous conversation stopper, but is also an accurate description of what is actually going on. The 'neuro' refers to our neurological processes of sight, taste, hearing, smell, and touch; 'linguistic' signifies that we order our thoughts and behaviour to express them to others; 'programming' simply refers to the way in which we order our ideas and actions to produce a given result.

OK. It's NLP from now on.

### How it all began

In the early seventies, American academics John Grinder and Richard Bandler studied three top therapists. Their purpose was to find out what these exceptional therapists actually did, and their purpose was to be able to pass on their techniques to others.

Their studies resulted in some fascinating discoveries.

In therapy and counselling, two vital ingredients of success are the ability to develop rapport with, and respect for, the client. This is known as pacing. One way of developing rapport is to match the body language of the other person. Look at people in conversation: you will see that they often unconsciously seem to match each other's body language.

(Many years ago, a colleague just returned from a NLP course, told me about this. We were in a hotel lobby area with businessmen engaged in earnest conversation with their bosses/subordinates. We spent a hilarious half hour noting their matching body language. Try it.)

The other technique is known as leading. Simply put, having developed rapport and established a 'bridge' you can now adapt your behaviour so that the other person follows. You cannot do this unless you have established the rapport in the first place.

Sounds cynical? Well, we do it all the time. When we sympathise with someone in their bereavement, for example, we don't tell them to cheer up - not at first. We tune in to their feelings, show sympathy, and then gradually come round to trying to cheer them up. This is a simple example of pacing.

### Instigating change

Nigel gave us a model for thinking about personal change, learning and communication. It provides a framework for gathering information and is particularly useful for identifying the best point of entry to instigate change.

### Identity

This is your basic sense of self; your core values and mission in life.

### Beliefs

What we think of as true and use in our daily lives. These are things we believe give us permission and also limit us.

### VENUE - The Naval Club, 38 Hill St Mayfair, W1

- ① 20th June Meredith Belbin: Details inside!
- ② 1st October – To be finalised
- ③ 28th November – To be finalised

### Capability

These are sets of behaviours, skills, and strategies that we use in our lives.

### Behaviour

What we actually do, regardless of our capability.

### Environment

What we react to, our surroundings and the other people we meet.

So in problem solving, refer to this model and ask yourself at what level the problem lies. If you get that right, you can better channel your efforts to remedy it.

As mentioned earlier, body language is an essential component of NLP and particularly through clues we give out through eye movements. Studies by neurologists have shown that we systematically move our eyes in different directions depending on how we are thinking. These can be vertically or horizontally. When visualizing something from our past experience our eyes move up and to our left; when we try to imagine something we have never seen, our eyes move up and to the right. When trying to remember sounds, our eyes move horizontally to the left, and to the right for constructed sounds. When our eyes go down and to the right we are accessing our feelings, and when they go to the left we are talking to ourselves. Staring straight ahead with our eyes out of focus can also indicate visualisation (or boredom, I suppose.)

### Are you left-handed?

These rules apply to most right-handed people. For left-handed people, the reverse may be true, but it will always be consistent. When applying these rules, it is important to look carefully before drawing firm conclusions. Being able to access the clues we give out with our eyes is an important part of NLP and can provide valuable information as to how the other person might be thinking.

So how should we be using these techniques? Nigel Johnson says that he does not teach NLP techniques, but rather uses them as an aid in his consultancy and training work. That is where they can best be put to use, and perhaps those of us in consultancy might do the same.

For me, the session clarified a number of things on which I was previously somewhat hazy. Having to write this brief article has, in fact, helped me to consolidate my own thoughts. However I have come to realise that NLP is not something that can be knocked off in one session. Or by reading a few articles. It is a big subject, is developing still, and is well worthy of our attention.

Perhaps the most I can hope for amongst our readers is that like the student, who, when asked at the end of a lecture if he now understood the subject, replied "I'm still confused - *but at a much higher level.*"

*David Roberts*

### Acknowledgement

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## Meeting in London - Thursday 20th June 2002 A chance to meet Meredith Belbin

The next meeting of the 16PF Users Group will be held on **Thursday 20th June 2002**, starting at **11.00 a.m.** (Please note the different start time) and concluding at **4.00 p.m.** Coffee will be served from **10.00 a.m.** The meeting will be held at **The Naval Club** at 38 Hill Street, Mayfair.

**11.00 a.m. - 3.00 p.m.**  
**Dr. MEREDITH BELBIN**

We are very pleased indeed that **Dr. MEREDITH BELBIN** has agreed to make a return visit to the 16PF Users Group.

Most famous, of course, for his work on team roles, Meredith Belbin continues (at the age of 76!) to be one of the most original and innovative management thinkers around. His ability to conceptually link management style with basic human psychology is exceptional and those of us who have attended his previous meetings know that he is always a most interesting and stimulating speaker.

Meredith's latest book, "Managing without Power: Gender Relationships in the Story of Human Evolution" was published by Butterworth Heinemann last year. This has been widely publicized, not least because of its discussion of differences in management style between men and women and the implications of these for organizations and for HR.

The book's theme is that human evolution has been characterized by its diversity, producing first gender-based differences in behaviour, then bio-physical diversity and finally psychogenetic diversity. This last development accelerated about 30,000 years ago but then slowed, coming to a virtual halt and leaving us with a huge problem in managing this frozen inheritance.

Meredith is currently working on a new book, "The Origins of Human Behaviour and their Bearing on the Present" (planned to be published this Autumn) which will include the Archetypal Questionnaire. At our meeting, the data the Questionnaire has already generated will be discussed and those attending will be given the opportunity to complete it, if they wish.

**3.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.**  
**DIFFICULT PROFILES**

The last hour of the meeting will be devoted to the discussion of difficult or unusual 16PF profiles. This is an informal session and we do encourage members to bring their own examples to share with the Group.

The cost of the meeting, including luncheon, will be £45 (to members) and £58 (to non-members). Places may be booked by telephoning me:

**Jane Wilkinson, at 01932 244997; Fax 01932 220561 or by e-mail [jwilk@compuserv.com](mailto:jwilk@compuserv.com)**

**Or you can write to me at Creek House, Chertsey Road, Shepperton, Middlesex, TW17 9LA.** Please contact me by Friday 14th June 2002 at the latest so that all catering arrangements etc. can be made. Receipts

can be collected at the meeting.

Finally, just a reminder that future meetings this year are planned for Tuesday 1st October and Thursday 28th November.

*Belinda Smith & Jane Wilkinson,  
Joint Chairpersons*

**Performance and Personality:  
A review of recent research**

**Is there a proven and identifiable link between performance and personality traits? Hugh McCredie tries to sort out the evidence...**

About a year ago I set out to review recent research in job performance and by the time I was finished I was left with a sense of déjà vu. Let me try to explain what I mean.

Around 1990, certain academics were arguing that there was a hole in validity studies of personality and other predictor variables in that nobody ever bothered to define the chief criterion, performance, against which they were validated. There arose a growing realisation that individual worth is more than just job-specific contractual task performance. This realisation spawned a host of deductive (top down) models attempting to define the non-task aspects of performance. These included 'Prosocial behaviour' (Brief and Motowidlo, 1986), 'Role behaviour' (Ilgen and Hollenbeck, 1991) and an 8 factor model by Campbell et al. (1993). The latter included Job specific task proficiency, Non-job specific task proficiency, Written/oral communication, Effort, Personal discipline, Peer/team facilitation, Supervision/leadership, Management/administration. Organ (1988, 1997) offered 'Organisational citizenship behaviour' (OCB) that featured Altruism and Conscientiousness.

**Similarity with Boyatzis**

In 1993, Borman and Brush reported an inductive (bottom up) study describing 18 factors that they had found to constitute contextual, as distinct from task performance. In the same year Borman and Motowidlo suggested that 'Contextual Performance' consisted, essentially of persisting, volunteering, helping, rule following and supporting organisational objectives.

My sense of déjà vu was particularly strong when I encountered Borman and Brush's 18 empirically derived factors. The full list comprises Planning/organising, Guiding/directing/motivating; Training/developing, Communicating, External representation, Technical proficiency, Administration, Working relationships, Co-ordinating, Decision making/problem solving, Staffing, Persisting, Handling stress, Organisational commitment, Monitoring/controlling, Delegating, Influencing, collecting/interpreting data. What struck me most was the similarity of this list to what Boyatzis (1982), and many of us since that date, had been calling personal or behavioural competencies.

Notwithstanding the fact that contextual performance seems to encapsulate elements that have been known about for some time, retaining the Contextual[Task performance distinction gives us quite a useful

backdrop for considering recent personality research. In reviewing the latter I have followed Cattell's lead and included mental ability as part of personality, alongside the traits more traditionally included in personality inventories; i.e. those underpinning the Big Five.

With regard to general mental ability (GMA), Schmidt and Hunter's most recent (1998) meta-analysis concludes that this is the single best predictor of future performance (r=.51 or 26%). Interestingly, Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2000) suggest that non-traditional measures of intellectual ability (e.g. EQ) can at best add only 1 to 4% to explanations of success.

**The Big Five**

Turning to the Big Five measures, Salgado et al. (1995) found that 16PF second order/global composite scores correlated with job performance (p < .025) but that composite source traits did not. I would have to add that my own experience with 16PFA source trait composites did elicit significant connections [see McCredie, H (1998) 'Personality, skills and performance', 16PF Newsletter, 15]. Mount and Barrick (1995) found that the conscientiousness had the strongest validity (r = .31) of all Big 5 factors, over a range of occupations. Barrick et al. (2001), after correcting for measurement error, found the following validity data in the most recently published meta-analysis that I have been able to find. Returning to Borman and Motowidlo's dichotomy, these

<b>Predictor</b>	<b>Performance correlations</b>
Extraversion	Training .28; Teamwork .16; Managerial .21
Emotional Stability	Overall .13; Teamwork .22
Agreeableness	Teamwork .34
Conscientiousness	All .27, Managerial .25; Sales .25
Openness	Training .33

researchers originally suggested that cognitive ability predicted task performance via the acquisition of task knowledge, whilst personality predicted contextual performance. However Motowidlo et al. (1997) reported more complex relationships. They found that personality impacted on all three components of contextual performance - contextual habits, contextual skills and contextual knowledge but that the latter was also influenced by ability. Similarly, ability influenced the three components of task performance - task skills, task knowledge and task habits- but personality also impacted on the latter.

To avoid cluttering this Newsletter, I have refrained from listing the references that I have cited. Anyone interested in having these should email me [hmccredie@coordinates.u-net.com](mailto:hmccredie@coordinates.u-net.com).

*Hugh McCredie  
Managing Consultant, Coordinates*

**SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL**

The Editor welcomes contributions from members either as letters or as articles on the use of the 16PF.

Case histories, unusual assignments, as well as unusual profiles are welcome.

When submitting material, please enclose a 3 1/2" disk together with the printed copy. This saves re-typing and minimises the risk of mistakes.

**To tell or not to tell; that is the question: whether 'tis nobler to guide them into the best decision, or stand back and let them cock it up . . .**

The testing session over, I looked at the scores of my four candidates - candidates for the post of sales representative.

Strangely, they seemed to divide into two pairs. Candidates A and B seemed to have appropriate personality profiles (16PF5) and good selling skills as measured by a sales aptitude test. They also had good general intelligence as measured by AH4, being in the A grades of my normative data.

Candidates C and D were also closely aligned but in a less satisfactory way. Their 16PF scores were OK: nothing remarkable. Sales aptitude again, was OK. Double glazing salesmen they were not, but that was not what they were going to sell. Their scores on AH4 were in the E grades - the bottom 10% of my normative data.

Clearly, I thought, it was going to be a tussle between candidates A and B. At this stage I was mindful that candidate A had seemed over-confident at the testing session. His manner was that it was all very much in the bag. My thoughts were prescient because I learned from the commissioning manager that an existing employee had recommended him. But the manager had been unimpressed at the interview, telling me that he had come across as being 'somewhat cocky', his elbow resting on the desk in a casual manner, for example. It confirmed my own impression.

So it had to be candidate B from my point of view. To my surprise, the manager preferred candidate C. I looked at the profile again, and also the job description. A little probing established that the sales job did not require really strong selling skills. It was more a question of keeping the company's name in front of the customer, solving any technical queries, talking about any new product developments and so on. So on that basis, he could do the job - but probably without any distinction, I thought. I looked at the AH4 score again. He had 65 - one of the lowest scores I have ever had. My normative data consisted of 105 sales representatives with a mean score of 88 and a Standard Deviation of 14. I was very unhappy to think that Candidate C was being given serious consideration.

What to do? This is my key point: should the consultant simply point out the pluses and minuses of each candidate in so far as they are relevant to the job, (I was trained to do this), or should he - indeed can he - take a stronger line? I had always taken the first course, with perhaps a little subtle guidance here and there, and I had never had any real problem. This was different. My

candidate was clearly in favour of candidate C. Should I let him carry on - and after all he was paying the salary and had to live with the consequences - or should I take a very firm line and hope to persuade him of the mediocrity of the candidate? And what of my own reputation? If it didn't work out, would the client remember my views, or would he say - maybe in a year or so - "Yes, we spent time and money on psychometric testing but it was a waste because we selected the wrong chap."

So I tried again, going through the candidate's CV. One thing just did not add up: the candidate stated that he had a university degree. I could not understand how anyone scoring 65 on AH4 could even get a good clutch of GCSE's, never mind a degree. However my client seemed to have made up his mind and it seemed that all I could do was to give him a gypsy's warning. I said, that if he was determined to take the candidate, he must at the very least get adequate testimonials from the previous employer. I had to leave it there.

The candidate was appointed and after a week or two I fed back to him his test results. I quizzed him about his AH4 score, and got unsatisfactory answers. "I've never liked doing those sort of things," he said. I wasn't going to let it go at that. "But you must have done many such things during your university course," I said. "And what about your 'A' levels? There's no mention of them on your M" He said he just hadn't put them on. I was suspicious.

Three weeks later candidate C was sacked. He had had difficulty in picking up the training, although more surprising was the fact that there had been poor comments from representatives with whom he had spent days out in the field.

The manager admitted that he had made a mistake. It even transpired that after his sacking, the candidate wrote an 'almost illiterate 3-page letter' which, in the view of the MD, could not possibly have been written by the same person that compiled the CV.

So there you have it. How far should a consultant push his own view if he is sure of his ground? And what about basic, common sense things, like asking for evidence of qualifications, and making sure that testimonials are taken up? I am convinced the candidate tried to fool us. He paid the price, but the company wasted three months.

Pity 16PF doesn't include a factor for low cunning. Would have saved us a lot of trouble.

*David Roberts*

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