

---

## NLP tools and processes of motivation

Bogdan - Alexandru, FURDUESCU,  
Valahia University of Targoviste, 35 Lt. Stancu Ion Street, Building D,  
bogdan\_af@yahoo.com

### Abstract

*Neuro-linguistic programming (international acronym: NLP) is a special approach to understanding the communication process, triggering an attitude of curiosity, passion and dedication in studying the ways of improving and developing the behavior of human being, being not only an efficient system for stimulating spiritual evolution and increasing spiritual harmony, but also a great impetus for changing mentalities at the social level. also, it provides many useful means to deal with the real problems of today's management and leadership. However, the information about NLP presented in the paper should not be interpreted as therapeutic indications, but this does not mean that it may be considered unnecessary.*

*Keywords: tools; motivation, NLP; processes*

JEL Classification: O15

### 1. Introduction

To develop professionally in the same direction with the organization, an individual must effectively fulfill his/her duties and tasks. Providing the optimal framework for current activities, verbal communication, non-verbal communication and *sensory acuity* are extremely important for the application of NLP tools that have the role of determining the force of action and the success of the activity. Also, with the help of non-verbal communication, responses are received in NLP processes regarding the behaviors and reactions of the people around, and this serves as a reason for identifying communication resistance and developing strategies to overcome it.

### 2. NLP tools of motivation

NLP *tools* have the mission to create a correct and optimal relationship between verbal communication, non-verbal communication and *sensory acuity* (responsible for the way in which the information from the organizational

environment is perceived). In the book *"Efficient use of neuro-linguistic programming in company management"*, published in 2013, Iosif C. M. mentions that *"verbal and non-verbal communication influence the type and sensitivity of sensory acuity so that it delivers the maximum amount of information in optimal conditions"* (Iosif, 2013, p. 72).

To meet any objective, a number of elements are required (*direct commands, the use of positive terms and of motivation triggers*) whose mixture does nothing but create a link between the manager or leader and the person who has to fulfill it, with the aim of achieving it in an efficient and effective way.

The relationship between *positive terms* and *motivation triggers* determines the force of action of *direct commands*, the success in individual activities and professional success. The force of the relationship of these elements is the force of *the motivation triggers* which, in most cases, underlies the proposed objective.

Table 1. Comparative analysis of NLP tools

<b>Features of ...</b>			
<b><u>... alignment</u></b>	<b><u>... anchoring</u></b>	<b><u>... calibration</u></b>	<b><u>... goal setting</u></b>
<i>Non-verbal communication</i>	–	<i>Non-verbal communication</i>	–
<i>Sensory acuity</i>	<i>Sensory acuity</i>	<i>Sensory acuity</i>	–
–	<i>Positive terms</i>	–	<i>Positive terms</i>
–	–	–	<i>Direct orders</i>
–	<i>Motivatiational triggers</i>	–	<i>Motivatiational triggers</i>
–	<i>Verbal communication</i>	<i>Verbal communication</i>	–
<i>filtering stimuli</i>	<i>filtering stimuli</i>	<i>filtering stimuli</i>	–
–	<i>Reactivation</i>	–	<i>Reactivation</i>

Source: adaptation after Iosif, C.M., 2013, p. 87.

### 2.1. Alignment

This tool *represents the change of the way of perceiving reality through another person's perspective* (Szekely, 2003, p. 16) and *presupposes that this person is, subtly, like another person in gestures, behavior, but without being observed by that person* (Iosif, 2013, p. 86). If various non-verbal signals (curious, inquisitive, funny, happy, angry, frustrated, scared etc.) emitted by the people around are correctly identified and interpreted, the communication process in the organisation can be improved. In addition to the non-verbal signals transmitted, the following should also be considered: the combination of eye and facial

expression (smile, frown, direct visual contact or avoidance thereof, duration of visual contact, etc.), movements and body posture, gestures (hand movements to support the message), voice tone (variations in the pitch and tone of sounds, speed of speech, voice quality).

To exist an interpersonal relationship between two or more individuals interacting or influencing each other and to remove the barriers that appear in the communication process, an individual can *align* with another individual both at physical (aspect) level and at psychic level (aptitude).

Thus, the following elements can be *aligned* within an organization: *the human relationship existing in the organization, the perception of proprioceptive space and subjective experience, the actions necessary to achieve the goals within the organization and the results obtained.*

There are perceptual positions in the *alignment*, that identify different views a person may have in the communication with another person (Dilts & Lozier, 2000, p. 39). These positions can be: *initial* – perception of reality is done through one's own sensory system (sight, hearing, smell, taste and sense of touch); *secondary* – perception of reality is done by acquiring the point of view of a person; *tertiary* – perception of reality is done by acquiring the point of view of a third party.

*Alignment* has two variants, namely the *internal* one (considering the person in question and his / her attitude towards the world) and the *external* one (which considers the working team seen as an element of adaptation and internal integration).

*Alignment* may be (Iosif, 2013, p. 86):

- *personal* – both the internal elements and the external elements of an individual are considered;
- *of the support process* – takes into consideration the purpose and goals proposed;
- *environmental* – individual goals, actions, objectives are subscribed to a larger system.

To develop his/her own career, the individual must align his/her own goals and achievements with those of the organization, the increase in efficiency thus leading to improved performance at individual, team and organizational level.

## 2.2. Anchoring

Dilts R. B. defines *anchoring* as (Dilts, 2014, p. 256):

- *The process by which an internal response gets connected to some external triggers (similar to classical conditioning) so that the response may be quickly, sometimes hidden, reaccessed;*
- *The process by which a stimulus or an (internal or external) representation gets connected to and therefore triggers a particular response.*

Also, *anchoring is nothing but a cause-effect relationship between an external stimulus and an internal behavior* (Szekely, 2003, p. 25). *Anchors* occur naturally both in all *representational systems* (they may be intentionally / consciously used in case of analogous accentuation), and in numerous *personal change techniques* (such as the *anchor collapse / crash process*). The NLP concept on *anchors* originates from the Pavlovian *stimulus → response* reaction, a classical example of conditioning, this tool having the possibility of associating any sense and originating from both the internal environment and the external environment.

*The anchor* makes different connections between external stimuli and the different mental processes of a person (Iosif, 2013, p. 83), also having the role of filtering the information received from the organisational environment so as to prevent communication blockages. The repetitive use of an *anchor* leads to the creation of various specific work routines, so that the responsibilities of correctly achieving the tasks received are maximized (Iosif, 2010, p. 160). By disuse, *anchors* are relatively easy to lose; they must be activated / reactivated from time to time. By using an *anchor* both internally and externally, it is allowed the improvement of the experiences of the concerned person (Bodenhamer & Hall, 2008, p. 75).

*Anchors are* the experiences of an individual integrated into a behavior and interpreted in relation to a certain reference term, their use leading both to the avoidance of communication bottlenecks in certain situations and to the optimization of the transmission and storage of information, thus eliminating the distortions of communication from the organizational environment.

This tool triggers an observable and measurable behavior relative to an external stimulus or internal representation. *anchors* act on behavior, but they are out of consciousness. If an anchor is made several times, it becomes stronger to that person, because the *stimulus→response* relation grows stronger (Iosif, 2013, p. 83).

*Anchors* can be:

- *natural* – they are the stimuli that the individual encounters both in the external environment and in the internal environment, which are not created and do not act upon his/her command, their action being subjected to fate / destiny and having a rather low factor of achieving the objectives;
- *created* – are those invented structures that act upon the command of a particular person, their action being prepared in good time and for a specific purpose, having an extremely high factor of setting and achieving the objectives.

Positive experiences of an individual can be *anchored* depending on the context, so as to generate certain resources that can be used in other experiences and similar contexts. With the help of *anchoring* those behaviors and states that - by their use in certain situations - can generate new behaviors and attitudes related to a certain context are identified (Iosif, 2013, p. 84).

The use of this tool allows the association of a *neutral stimulus* with a *response triggering stimulus* not only to change a type of older, well-rooted behavior in response to a *new stimulus*, but also to determine customized behaviors of an individual – whether he is manager or not – or of a working team, depending on the context, a relatively minor change in the behaviors of those in management positions and their subordinates being able to lead to new and superior performance.

### 2.3. Calibration

*Calibration* is defined as (Dilts, 2014, p. 257): "*the process of learning to 'read' the unconscious, non-verbal responses of others in an ongoing interaction by coupling observable behavioral indices / indicators with a specific internal response*"; "*adjustment to the state and internal sensory processing operations of the other by interpreting the previously observed non-verbal signals*".

In the book "*The big book of NLP techniques*", published in 2008, Vaknin S. says about this tool that it *is the ability by which a person can identify in other persons different behavioral, psychological indices and can use them in his/ her relationships with them* (Vaknin, 2008, p. 65).

A very important technique in calibration through which people can enter the world of others is *eye accessing cues*. Our eyes mirror strong clues about how we think, allowing to recognize the emotional state of an individual and providing information about his / her ability to receive certain information and to relate to his / her emotional or psychological state. This technique provides extremely

important information about the cognitive processes and feelings of the employees within the organization.

Based on non-verbal signals transmitted by the individual, the *calibration* tool helps identify his/her emotional states. Usually, *calibration* has an intuitive and unconscious action that correctly identifies the states of different individuals, as well as the changes in their internal processes.

Non-verbal signals and states are better identified if senses have a higher level of use within that person (Iosif, 2013, p. 82). *Calibration* should also take into consideration the *feedback*, not the verbal, but especially the non-verbal one, because it provides information about the way in which the different methods of analyzing the states and behaviors of a person are perceived. In order to obtain the expected results, it is necessary to use observation, not interpretation in this tool, because *calibration* does not imply the interpretation of certain signals, but only their observation (Iosif, 2013, p. 82).

The *calibration* tool seeks to establish the *associations-dissociations* between an individual's behaviors and experiences, the fundamental information deriving from the *VaK sensory filter* (that includes both sensory channels and non-verbal signals). This tool seeks, in particular, to optimize the ability to interpret non-verbal language transmitted by a person and to "*mark*" and "*measure*" the changes in its standard behavior, *calibration* helping to observe if the communication of the person in question coincides with the non-verbal signals he/she emits.

#### 2.4. Goal setting

*Goal setting* is a NLP concept known in the literature as "*positive affirmation*" or "*negative affirmation*", a very simple and effective tool in *programming* the nervous system (brain) to achieve the established goals. a person can achieve the goals he / she established by a multitude of roles he / she accomplishes both within the company and within a specific activity (Andreas & Faulkner, 2008, p. 29).

*Goal setting* is the purpose of a person's actions within a particular frame and should only be done in positive terms (Bandler, 1993, p. 87). In order to achieve an objective, it must be specific, presented in detail and requiring as many representational systems as possible (Szekely, 2003, p. 36). By using this tool, the goal must be set to be predicted so that some of the errors are identified and eliminated before starting the action. To be fulfilled, the goal must be adjusted to

the initial state of the individual or team in which he/she works, because the intent of the subject or team may be considered an end in itself.

For each objective, one must establish an importance, a necessity, a way to achieve it and a certain consumption of resources. All these elements must be correlated with each other, but also with the general objectives of the unit, so that achieving a particular objective of a person helps achieve the overall goal of the unit (Iosif, 2013, p. 85). The following steps must be taken in setting a goal:

- *becoming aware of the goal and identification of the negative effects of its achievement, defining the goal in positive terms;*
- *identification of the various negative aspects as a result of achieving the goal and how the goal can be represented at sensory level, at the level of each person involved in achieving it.*

Objectives must be ordered according to their importance both for the individual and the working team, and for the organization. The individual's objectives will be in correlation with those of the team he/she works in. The manager and leader are responsible for aligning the objectives with those of the organization. In order to achieve the objectives, they must be sufficiently motivating, quantifiable and coordinated with a realistic action plan.

The criteria for a goal set to be achievable are:

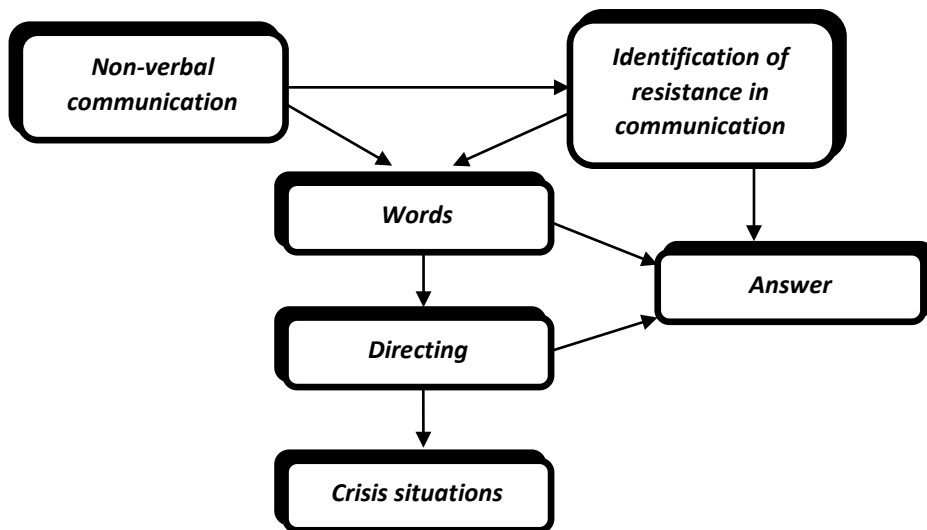
- the positive formulation of the *objective* so that it seems a normal activity;
- the *objective must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, accesible, Relevant and Time-Related);*
- *motivation* is one of the most important factors in the fulfillment of the objective, helping when losing physical energy or enthusiasm;
- the division of the objective into several activities (tactical thinking), for an easier approach;
- *constant verification of the progress made*, thus also maintaining *motivation*;
- *rewarding each success that is closer to achieving the objective* so that the individual or the working team adopt the behavior desired by the organization.

Also, the available resources need to be compared with those needed to successfully accomplish a group of individual objectives as they link the present state to the desired state, achieved with the accomplishment of the organization's objectives.

### 3. NLP processes of motivation

*NLP processes aim both to optimize an individual's physical, psychological, material and psycho-emotional behavior, as well as to get a positive attitude towards the workplace with a minimal amount of influence from the manager and the leader and over a relatively short period of time. Thus, NLP processes are used to make reframing and substitutions through communication. Guidance has the role to direct messages in the communication process, and behavioral flexibility has the role to identify the resistance in the process and to optimize it*

Figure 1. General scheme for the use of NLP processes



Source: adaptation after Iosif, C.M., 2013, pag. 95.

#### 3.1. Guidance

In the book *"Time for a change"*, published in 1993, Bandler R. W. defines *guidance* as *"the process through which a person directs the behavior of another person to develop certain actions, in the conditions of an existing report between the two persons"* (Bandler, 2008, p. 101). This process uses – as the main tool – *motivation triggers*.

*Guidance* involves influencing an individual so that he/she can change his / her behavior to get the desired result. This process can lead both to increasing individual and / or working team performance and to developing individual potential. The objectives of this process are to establish and maintain *the rapport*, the experiences and the responses of the person concerned based on the verbal



and non-verbal interactions, the calibration of the experience by accessing verbal and non-verbal indices (Iosif, 2013, p. 92).

In order to request and receive feedback - which either has a positive impact on professional development or is a source of frustration (both from the recipient and from the one who gives it) - reception must be active, verbal descriptors (words) must be correctly decoded, so that the perceptions of subjective experience, caused by interests, skills, emotional states can be verified. Everyone has their own *guidance* system, and the information generated is transformed into feedback based on beliefs, values, to deliver results with increased benefits (Iosif, 2013, p. 92).

The role of *guidance* is to significantly influence a certain behavior of an individual (persistence of the *motivational* process) and not to manipulate, the individual keeping conscious control over his/ her own actions. a person's behavior includes information about himself / herself as well as how he / she sees the world, acting as a set of rules by which he / she perceives certain events. Taking into consideration the objectives and processes that can be achieved through this process, the persons within an organization can be guided towards purpose, thus ensuring the achievement of those objectives.

Non-verbal language has the role of providing useful information both for achieving the objectives and for a better communication with others. Thus, *guidance* ensures correct perception of the message sent to the receiver in such a way that the communication channel is used as efficiently as possible.

The more effectively is the role fulfilled by *guidance*, the more information it provides about a specific context, so that *reframing* can be best adjusted to that context and can generate a favorable response. Experts in the field consider that there are five frames with the help of which this process focuses its actions in order to achieve a certain objective.

These frames are (Iosif, 2013, p. 93):

- the *objective frame* – shows what a person wants to achieve, with what resources and by what means;
- the *evidence frame* – tries to identify possible omissions that would lead to the failure to achieve the established objective;
- "*as if*" *frame* – it is used to observe what happens when the objective is reached, whether the means and resources have been used correctly or whether they can be optimized;
- *retroactive frame* – is used to obtain reverification of information related to particular situations or linguistic structures;

- *personal frame* – is used to obtain the influence of reaching a certain objective of the organization as a whole, on individuals, on different processes, whether these effects are positive or negative, whether they can be mitigated or not and to what extent.

The process of *guidance* is used in the effective management of crisis situations because: *certain constructions are added to verbal and non-verbal language functions which, by their use, can generate a certain response, the activities carried out and the decisions made have a certain degree of risk, any kind of conflict between employees is reflected in the decrease of efficiency and / or labor productivity* Guidance allows insertion of some linguistic constructions in the communication process, so that the actions of different individuals are directed towards obtaining a specific response (Iosif, 2013, p. 96).

### 3.2. Behavioral flexibility

*Behavioral flexibility is that variable without which no system can achieve and preserve a certain desired state* (Dilts & Lozier, 2000, p. 39), being also understood as *the totality of techniques used by an individual to achieve a particular purpose* (Bandler, 2008, p. 119). applying this procedure to the communication process helps to identify resistance in the communication process (Iosif, 2013, p. 92). also, it involves the ability to think positively and manage effectively stress and time.

The identification and termination of inefficient interpersonal relationships between employees or between them and work team lead, in the end, to the increase in *behavioral flexibility*. The higher the level of use of this process, the greater the ability of an individual to better adapt his/her behavior to the working environment factors in the organization so that he/she receives a specific response from another individual.

In the book "*Utilizarea performanta a programarii neurolingvistice in managementul firmei*" ("*Efficient use of neuro-linguistic programming in company management*"), Iosif C. M. says that *behavioral flexibility is that ability to change a particular goal if the intermediate or final results do not meet the expectations* (Iosif, 2013, p. 92), the purpose of using this method being that of getting as many solutions as possible. *Behavioral flexibility* is in necessary and direct connection with *sensory acuity, mirroring and rapport*.

On the one hand, in order to establish the *rapport* with an individual, certain elements relating to his or her verbal and non-verbal language must be identified,

including *sensory acuity*, and on the other hand the different behaviors of that individual must be *mirrored*. Thus, when the *rapport* is conceived, the behavior can be subtly modified so that it can be *guided* to achieve the established goals.

Through the role played by each employee, the information transfer is optimized and their *behavioral flexibility* and adaptability within the organization evolve. The more flexible an organizational system, the more it will have a greater influence on the achievement of objectives and the way tasks are achieved. *Behavioral flexibility* takes place in the mirror, and if something is wrong, the culprit is not something in the external (social) environment, but the process itself, in the inner environment.

This procedure is used to meet the established goals because it allows the optimal use of techniques of verbal and non-verbal communication in the organization, optimizing the interpersonal communication process and filtering resistance to change generating elements, *behavioral flexibility* thus providing both an immediate and stimulating response, depending on the conditions offered by the organizational internal environment, and a correct interpretation of the information received and the allocation of meanings.

#### **4. Discussion and Conclusions**

Managers are constantly concerned about motivation at work, all the more so as employees want more interaction, recognition and involvement in meeting their needs; under these circumstances, it is necessary to establish, according to the field of activity of each organization, a salary system (where clear award criteria have been established), the possibilities of promotion according to performance, a system of bonuses and rewards depending on the quality, quantity and conditions of the work done.

It is impossible to always go like clockwork; there will also be omissions but every cloud has a silver lining. Motivation and performance are in a controversial relation that - considering the multitude of variables that may interfere with them - needs to be studied on a representative set of subjects so as to allow the generalization of results. It will be found that investing in people turns out to be the safest way to guarantee the survival of the organization or to ensure its competitiveness and future; only sufficient motivation of human resources, either pecuniary or non-pecuniary, accompanied by a well-thought-out marketing policy, can ensure successful business prospects.

**References**

- [1] Andreas, S., & Faulkner, C. (2008). *NLP si succesul*. Bucuresti: Ed. Curtea Veche.
- [2] Bandler, R.W. (2008). *The secrets to giuk and lasting life with neurolinguistic programming*". Deerfield Beach: HCl.
- [3] Bandler, R.W. (1993). *Time for a change*. Capitola: Meta Publications Inc.
- [4] Bodenhamer, B.G., & Hall M.L. (2008). *Manual de utilizare a creierului*. Bucuresti: Ed. Excalibur.
- [5] Dilts, R.B. (2014). *Bazele programarii neuro-lingvistice*. Bucuresti: Ed. VIDIA.
- [6] Dilts, R.B., & Lozier, J.D. (2000). *Encyclopedia of systemic NLP and NLP new coding*. NLP University Press: Scotts Valley.
- [7] Iosif, C.M. (2013). *Utilizarea performanta a programarii neurolingvistice in managementul firmei*. Bucuresti: Ed. C.H. Beck.
- [8] Iosif, C.M., & Socaciu, T. (2010). *The use of sensory acuity techniques, of modeling, of anchoring, of calibration, within NLP for improving the activity in the organization* in *The Young Economists Journal*. No. 15. Univ. din Craiova: Facultatea de Economie si Administrarea Afacerilor.
- [9] Szekely, A. (2003). *NLP - calea succesului*. Bucuresti: Ed. Amaltea.
- [10] Vaknin, S. (2008). *The big book of NLP techniques*. Charlestone: BookSurge Publishing.