It was 2007 when I first began writing Meta Reflections on “Neurons” the primary egroup for Neuro-Semantics. Then in 2009 I began writing Meta-Coach Reflections. A year later, I decided it was time to support the Neuro-Semantic Trainers with a consistent set of Reflections as well. But this time, there was a difference, instead of writing all of the Reflections myself, Colin Cox, the first Master Trainer in Neuro-Semantics and Omar Salom agreed to co-write the Reflections with me. Along with them Alan Fayter who has begun the Master Trainer Track has also contributed posts and as you will see Lene Fjellheim, Femke Stuut, and Andrew Tham

There is a lot of valuable insights about training in the following posts. Many have to do with yourself as a trainer; others about the process of training, and yet others about specific patterns in the APG series.

These Reflections are offered as ongoing support for you — as a Licensed Neuro-Semantic Trainer.

To your highest and best!

L. Michael Hall
Trainers’ Reflections in 2011

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4) Using APG Filters when you Train (Omar Salom)
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NEW ACCESSING YOUR PERSONAL GENIUS PATTERN

With the new year, I thought I would offer you a new way to present the APG training and a new way to run the pattern of Accessing Your Personal Genius. So here goes. I designed the following pattern so that you can facilitate the process of your participants accessing their personal genius states step by step, pattern by pattern over a 3 day period.

In other words, you do not run the pattern as a single pattern, but as a 3-day journey as your participants experience one prerequisite after another of “genius.” One of the things I hope that you and your participants will experience with this new pattern is one of anticipation. “Ah, another element in the mix, what’s next?” So you will run this pattern one pattern at a time as you go through the APG training.

This means that you begin on Day 1 at the very beginning as you set the frames and inspire the vision of the training you invite your participants do Step 1. This sets the genius state that they will then be building up for the three days. Next, you run the Intentionality Pattern and after you do, you then have them run Step 2. Then run the Power Zone pattern and do Step 3, etc. So after each pattern, return to this pattern and do the next step. It will build up throughout the training so by the end, you will have done the Genius Pattern.

To run your APG training with this approach requires that you shift a couple patterns from the usual APG schedule. and from not doing the Genius Pattern on Day 3 at all. Instead you do it throughout. You run it as you build up the Genius state using each pattern and each new skill and resource that the participants access. Then on Day 3 when you have run all 13 patterns, you can review and refresh the Genius pattern below. It will be a great climax or crescendo to the training and (my hope is) that each person will have so practiced and rehearsed and built up one genius state that they will have that one really well developed and be able to build other ones as they choose.

The 3-Day Accessing Personal Genius Pattern

1) Identify the new Genius state of Excellence that you want.
   - What state of excellence do you want to develop?
   - What do you call this state?
   - What are you engaged in when in this state?

-4-
What is your focus in this engagement?
Contexts: When, where, and with whom?

2) Access your Intentional State about that State — Why? Intentionality Pattern
   Why is that state important for you?
   Why is that important? [Keep asking 7 times until you have a very strong intentional state.]

3) Access your Power Zone State — How? Power Zone Pattern
   What do you need to be able to do when in this state?
   What skills, competencies, and capabilities?
   What responses do you need to be able to perform this state?
   What mental, emotional, linguistic, and behavioral responses are required when you are in this state?
   Do you feel empowered, capable, and resourceful to perform these responses?
   To what extent? How fully do you own and appreciate your capacity for this?
   What will you do now and in the next week or two to develop these powers more?
   How do you most effectively express the genius state with these powers?

4) Access your Strongest sense of Self — Who? Self-Esteem Pattern
   Do you have permission to enter this state and perform from it?
   Who do you need to be in your identity to be in this state most effectively?
   What do you need to accept about yourself that will facilitate the development of this state?
   What gifts and aptitudes do you most appreciate about yourself?
   Are you fully and unconditionally valuable and important apart from what you do here?
   Do you feel fully free to be you when in this state?
   If not, what resource or belief would enable this for you?

5) Access rich and delightful Pleasures to bathe this state in. Pleasure Pattern
   How much fun do you get from this? What is your joy about being in this state?
   What are the key sensory-primary pleasures of this state?
   What meta-pleasures do you bathe this state in?
   How much pleasure do you want to endow this state?

6) Access the richest meanings that you can give to this state. Concepts pattern Meta-Yes Pattern
   What does this state mean to you? What else?
   What are some powerful beliefs you can add to this?
   Any beliefs that limit or hinder?
   What principles govern this state? How many principles do you know right now?
   How many more principles will you be learning in the next year?
   As you mind-to-muscle these principles — how much does that enrich the quality of the state?
7) Access Possibility thinking and feeling for this state.  
    Magic Question Pattern
    What are some of the wild possibilities that you believe in regarding this state?
    What if you wake up and experience this state with none of your former limitations?
    How could you add more creativity to this state?
    More playfulness?

8) Access Permission for the exclusiveness of the State.  
    Emotions Pattern
    Do you have full permission to be in this state?  Check.
    Do you have permission for the world to go away, self, others, time, etc.?  Check.

9) Access a Quality Control for the State.  
    Emotions / Concepts
    When you set all of these frames for this state, how is that for you?
    What is the quality of the state now?
    Does it have the full quality that you want it to have?
    How ecological is this?
    Are there any adjustments to make about this state?

10) Set your frame boundaries.  
    Meta-No Pattern/ Excuse Blowout
    As you step in and out of the state, how cleanly can you make your state shifts in and out?
    How many more times do you need to shift in and out until your body knows the state?
    Would a metaphor like a bubble of energy, or a state-gate dimensional shift, help in distinguishing “inside” and “outside?”
    As you practice making visual, auditory, and kinesthetic snapshots of this state, do you now have a well-grounded set of referents or snapshots so that you know that you can step back into this state at will?
    Are there any excuses left that you might use to mess up your Genius State?

11) Access your Executive Level of Choice.  
    Meta-Alignment / Spinning Icons
    Will the executive level of your mind take full responsibility to enable you to experience this state when you so choose or when all of the environmental cues are present?
    Will your creative mind keep making it richer?
    Are you fully aligned with this Genius State?
FEEDBACK
THE FOOD OF NEURO-SEMANTIC CHAMPIONS

How will you ever improve if you are not seeking out feedback? Who provides you with feedback on your training delivery? For all the years I competed internationally as an athlete I never had a personal coach. Someone who could tell me what I was doing wrong, what I needed to improve. Someone to identify the finer distinctions, that would contribute to my continued long term success. Who does that for you? Who can you rely on to provide you with feedback to improve your performance? And possibly, like me when I was an athlete, you may have nobody who can do that for you. Yet feedback ensures your consistent development as a trainer or athlete.

The solution for me was to video record each and every workout I did in the Gym or out in the field where I trained. I had no coach as I mentioned, so I would set aside time to review my technique. I would literally spend hours a week reviewing recordings of my trainings. Identifying what was not being done correctly, what was “off” by selecting fine details of limb movement etc. I would also keep a diary of each and every training session and record what went well and what needed improvement on my next session. I had no one around that could advise me of what I was doing wrong. Only my own awareness and willingness, to be critical and self-evaluative guided me to continuously improve.

As Neuro-Semantic Trainers we can be far distanced from one another and therefore not have the opportunity to receive qualified feedback on how to improve our training technique. Let’s assume you have no one else around and yet you want to improve your skill level as a trainer. I recommend you use the following techniques — assuming you actually want to improve!

After each training session you have, take time as soon as it has finished to reflect on what you did. Use these questions to guide you:
• What did I do well?
• What feedback did I receive from the audience?
• Where abouts in the delivery was I uncomfortable?
• Was there a question from the audience I struggled with?
• When did I experience a gap in the flow of my delivery?
• Did I have everything ready before the group arrived?
• Was I clear in my speech and vocal variety?
• Was I moving about too much?
• Was I on time? (Stop, starts and restarts)
• What do I need to do to take the delivery of this subject to an improved level?

Yes, this is a thorough review session and you will need to take the time to do this. It’s valuable time where you can reflect on what you did and did not do in your most recent training session. It’s important that you do this as soon as possible after the session. For many years I did this and continue to do so. Add some of your own questions to the list to make the session more relevant.

Some tools you could use to further your personal feedback are:
• Evaluate yourself against the Trainers Benchmarks of level 3 rather than level 2.5
• Re-attend NS Trainers training to reach a higher benchmark than the entry level of 2.5
• Video record a segment you have difficulty with and Personally review that critically.
• Have the selected video segment reviewed by others via private viewing on Youtube
• Use the audience feedback forms to guide your improvements.

I hope this Trainers Reflection will have prompted you to review what you do as a Trainer and you will aim to develop a continuous review strategy for your continued growth as a successful trainer.

You learn nothing from your successes and everything from your mistakes. Take time to review what you do, make appropriate adjustments to your training technique and continue to improve.

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WHEN YOU DEMONSTRATE

A great learning tool and especially for adult learning is that of demonstrating what you are talking about. Actually seeing a person skilled in a pattern or model provides a visual example of what the pattern looks and sounds like in real-time. And for the great majority of us, being present when a real life demonstration occurs enriches our learning and gives us a template for what to do when we’re turned loose to go do the exercise.

I remember the very first time I was learning “anchoring” as a tool or technique. I had read about it in *Frog into Prince* (1978), and as a psychologist, I had read the original works of Pavlov and felt that I really knew about linking some stimulus to a thought or feeling state. When the trainer told us to go practice, I felt pretty confident. And I wanted to go first! But my confidence was not well grounded and very quickly it was deflated.

In a group with two others, I asked for the person to think or feel something (I don’t remember the content any longer), I just asked. I asked with a matter-of-fact voice with no emphasis, no “sounding like” what I was asking for. Then with my right hand, I took my two fingers next to my thumb and touched the person’s leg just above the knee on his clothes. Then I “broke state” by asking what my subject had for breakfast, then I re-touched his pants. Nothing. No re-occurrence of state. No shift, no feeling.

I needed help! So calling an Assistant in the training over, the three of us who were all absolute novices explained our problem. I remember the smile that came over her face as we explained how “anchoring doesn’t work!” So she demonstrated. She worked with my client, she elicited a state, she used her voice, she touched the arm on the skin, and when she tested the anchor, *it worked!* And it was amazing! Wow! This is great.

*So if you want to be a highly effective trainer, being able to actually do what you are talking about—and demonstrating the process is absolutely critical.* Obviously, this one of the reasons we have benchmarked demonstrating and spend time on demonstrating in NSTT. It’s also one of the most important ways that you can *sell* yourself and your trainings when you do “Introductions” as evening Intros. or at a Business Breakfast. It’s one of the best things you can do when you present at a Conference— doing a demonstration is highly engaging and by it will convey your presence and personality.

Of course, when you do a demonstration—be sure to frame. Frame *what* you are going to do, frame *how* you are going to do it, *why* you are going to do it, and frame *the focus* that you want people to notice as you do it. Now a particularly interesting thing about *demonstrating* is that
when you demonstrate, you are not only working with the volunteer to achieve an outcome, but more important than that, you are demonstrating the process for achieving an outcome and using a particular model or pattern. That is, your first job is to demonstrate the pattern, not to get your subject’s outcome.

I italicized that last statement because this is where so many trainers get messed up. They use the elicitation question for the pattern, they ask questions of volunteers to make sure that the person volunteering is clear about the purpose for the pattern and has the conditions that fit the elicitation, and then they welcome the person to come up front. As such it is so easy to forget what you are doing and to think that you are there to complete the process and enable the person as your client to achieve his or her outcome. You are not.

Your job is just to demonstrate the process. You are teaching! You are enabling people to see what and how to do the process. Your client is actually the audience, not the volunteer. The volunteer may or may not reach the outcome; that’s not the point. If at the end of the demonstration you have walked through the steps, and showed how to use the pattern, you have succeeded. And if the volunteer did not get his or her outcome, simply note that and frame the demonstration as just that—a demonstration of the process. You may want to finish it with that person during the time of the exercise or you may provide a statement or two about what the person can do to complete it with someone else.

Next you will always want to ask, “Are there any questions about the process, about how to do this pattern?” If there are theoretical questions, this is not the time for them. Defer to later in the debrief. If there are objections to running the pattern, re-establish the elicitation question so that people relate the pattern to when and with what it is to be used. No pattern is good for everything! Every pattern is designed to be used in a specific context and your learners need to know that.

Recently in a Meta-Coach training I demonstrated using the Well-Formed Outcome Questions. So I called someone up and went through the process—asking only WFO questions. Afterwards, people asked, “Why didn’t you use an anchor when she said X?” “Why didn’t you go into the Matrix when she said Y?”

My answer? “I did not because I was demonstrating using Well-Formed Outcome questions. Yes, I could have done that if that was a coaching conversation. It wasn’t. It was simply enabling you to see how to ask WFO questions and the effect of those questions.”

Later when I demonstrated just using Axes of Change questions, I got similar questions, “Why didn’t you use ...or do ...or say at point X?” Because I was demonstrating Axes of Change questions. That’s why! Had I not framed it well enough? Probably not. I did frame the demonstration that I was going to do one thing and one thing only and that I would not do anything else ... and said that three times. Apparently, for at least one person, that was not enough times! To your excellence in your demonstrating!
USING APG AS FILTERS
AS YOU FACILITATE YOUR TRAINING

I have always thought that APG is the essence of Neuro-Semantics. If so, then that means it contains almost all of the elements that are necessary for a human being to function correctly. If we think of the Coach as a Facilitator, as somebody who makes the learning and development process easier for others, then I have come to realize that part of the language that we use might be semantically loaded due to the APG patterns that we use.

To give you an idea of what I’m describing, here a few examples that I want to share with you. I write these to invite you, as trainers, to play with these ideas during your training sessions:

Ownership of my Power Zone
“The objective is for you to own this process that you are learning. On a scale from 0 to 5, how much are you experiencing ownership of this new process?”
“These reactions that you have been experiencing . . . how can you use them to take full advantage of the opportunities in the following hours?”
“How much do you experience these new processes as your own?”

Applying Acceptance, Appreciation and Self-Esteem
“If using eyes of appreciation, you examined what you could do differently, what comes to mind?”
“Have you given yourself permission to accept that, maybe, this new material might need some effort on your part to develop the practices until you make it your own?”
“If you looked at yourself while doing the exercise from a perspective of appreciation and positive regard towards yourself, what do you discover?”

Meta-Yes/Meta-no
“Do the things that we have been working on make sense to you so far?”
“So far in the training, what old ideas are asking for a vigorous and spontaneous NO from you? What are the old beliefs and ways of thinking that could start vanishing in the horizon?”
“What new ideas for your workplace begin to appear in your awareness? Are they good, useful? Are you ready to embrace those ideas?”

Meta-stating Pleasure
“How much pleasure are you willing to endure during the next few hours of the training?”
“How much permission do you give yourselves to learn something pleasurably, to make a
pleasurable effort?”
“Before we begin this workshop, I would like to ask you something. Please remember a situation, or an event, or a specific activity that produces spontaneous pleasure in you . . . while you are reliving it again, please answer these questions in your minds. What does pleasure mean to you? What are the meanings that pop in into your head? Feel that intensely and imagine yourself going through this workshop with that sensation. Would you like to do it? Do you like it?”

Meta-stating troubling emotions
Here are some phrases that you can use depending on the circumstances that you are addressing with a participant:
“I give myself permission not to know . . . because . . .”
“I give myself permission to be confused . . . because . . .
“I give myself permission to ask a lot of questions because . . .”

Meta-stating Concepts
“So this is the way in which you understand the process of being a leader? Very well. If you now took a step back in your mind and you gave yourself permission to find another definition . . . your very own definition of what a leader is all about . . . What new useful ideas and concepts come to your mind?”
“If it were possible to give a different meaning to the concept that you have been using, what would a new definition be like? A more powerful, more useful definition that was capable of changing your life in a drastic and positive way?”

Mind to Muscle Pattern
“Okay, Tony, how are you understanding what I am saying? Can you put it in your own words?”
“And now, if this concept was something that you believed in, how would you express it? Do you like the sensation that you get when you say it out loud?”

“How decisive are you that you will use this new concept or belief?”
“What do you feel when we do this exercise? Do you like it?”
“If you imagine yourself tomorrow at your company, working in your daily activities, what specific action are you carrying out? Specifically?”

The language that we use and the meanings that we give it are directly related to the quality of our trainings. The content is not the only thing that counts. The language that we use to deliver and wrap our ideas in is even more important. For me, I believe that APG provides a paradigm that can nurture many of our interactions in the training processes in which we participate. So the next step is to translate the APG concepts into the framing language that we use as we ask questions or present
WHERE ARE ALL THE MASTER PRACTITIONERS?

To achieve growth as a Trainer there’s a pathway that we must each tread. The pathway I am writing about in this Trainer’s Reflection is the pathway we have each journeyed on to be a certified Neuro-Semantics Trainer. Along the way there were specific certification milestones we each needed to pass. They were the 3-day APG training in Meta States, the 7-day Neuro-Semantics-NLP Practitioner and the 13-15 day Neuro-Semantics-NLP Master Practitioner trainings, which then lead us to the 14 day Neuro-Semantics Trainers certification. This is the Neuro-Semantics Pathway of trainings which we have each fulfilled. It’s no different for those new to Neuro-Semantics, who also have the heart felt desire to become an Neuro-Semantics Trainer. Everyone of them will need to complete each of those Neuro-Semantics pillars of training to complete their Trainers journey also.

Globally I have observed a subtle trend which I believe threatens the continued growth of Neuro-Semantics. The trend is the loss of our Master Practitioner trainings. When did you last see a promotion for a Neuro-Semantics Master Practitioner training run by a Neuro-Semantic Trainer? Personally, outside of New Zealand – I have only seen one or 2 in the last couple of years. And Lena and I didn’t run one last year either. We most definitely are this year however.

So . . . where have all the Neuro-Semantics Master Practitioner Trainings gone? Why is that we have presently so few, if any, Master Practitioner (MP) trainings worldwide? If this MP training drought continues —what could this then lead to as Neuro-Semantics community?

I believe this is a serious issue that needs to be addressed for us as a community of Neuro-Semantics Trainers and Meta-Coaches. Without people being certified as MP’s we will not have fully certified Neuro-Semantics Trainers nor will we have Meta-Coach trainers. The Neuro-Semantic Pathway of trainings is incomplete without this critical and extensive training.

Possible Causes
Here’s my guess at why we have so few Master Practitioner Trainings:
• The training is of a long duration anywhere from 12-15 days long which makes it difficult to have people attend.

• The content is extensive and comprehensive which requires a high standard of delivery skill and knowledge of the content for a trainer to deliver it.
• The Neuro-Semantic Trainer may have only attended one (1) MP training ever—their own! And therefore they are not as familiar with the content as they need to be, to deliver it effectively.

• The monetary investment is greater than the shorter Neuro-Semantics trainings and may make it cost prohibitive for some and therefore they don’t promote this training and focus on promoting the shorter duration trainings.

• The Trainer is not aware of how to deliver the training as they have no daily Trainers Guide for the program which they could follow.

• The training requires extensive preparation and training design, which can be time consuming if starting out from having nothing prepared.

• A lack of overall confidence and competence limits them. Although they may want to deliver it in part or as a whole training, they don’t know how to do that. Even if they wanted to learn how to—where would they go to do that?

It’s very likely that you have your own reasons why you have not run a Neuro-Semantics’ Master Practitioner training. Perhaps I have mentioned yours in the list above. Either way, we need to resolve this situation and resolve it quickly.

My following 2 Trainers’ Reflections will be about how we as a community can rectify the current situation and have numerous Neuro-Semantics Master Practitioner trainings run globally within the next two years. It’s my hope that through this and my following 2 Reflections you will be empowered and inspired to deliver the Neuro-Semantics Master Practitioner certification.
∞-Valued Semantics

As a Neuro-Semantic Trainer, what distinguishes you from a NLP Trainer is that you know and include so much more about meaning—about semantics than does traditional and classic NLP. Meaning is certainly in and at the center of NLP, but most NLP trainers and thinkers miss it. I did for many years. Then I began studying Korzybski and through that have developed so much of Neuro-Semantics. To that end, I have begun a series of articles on Korzybski on Neurons ... so hopefully you are reading those. What I plan to do with many of my Trainer Reflections here is to offer you some deeper background to those articles as well as entertain questions from you as Trainers.

Yesterday I got a question from a Meta-Coach in China, someone on our Assist Team, who asked how is the Meta-States Model related to or connected with Neuro-Semantics and the creation of meaning. In some ways, the question tells me that either I did not do a very good job in communicating the essence of the APG training or that someone did not listen very carefully. Why? Because the meta-stating process is the meaning-making process!

You and I make meaning by taking what we represent and then meta-stating thoughts and feelings about it to set meaning-frames about it. And every time we do, we construct more layered meanings. If you don’t know that, you do not understand the heart of Neuro-Semantics.

Now in Neuro-Semantics, we make several distinctions:

• The Quality of the Meanings that we create. From futile, to trivial, to conventional, to unique, to sacred.

• The Kind of Meaning that we create. From representational meaning, editorial (sub-modality), to linguistic, to evaluative, to metaphorical, to perceptual (meta-programs), to intentional meanings.

Now I want to add yet another distinction:

• The Number of Meanings that we create. Do you create one and one only meaning? Can you create two meanings for something (either it means X or it means Y)? Can you create 3 or more? Can you create multiple meanings at will? How many meanings can you create?

Here is a new page that I have added to the Unleashing Potentials TM and to several other TM:
As Alfred Korzybski analyzed meaning in terms of its flexibility, he called for an $\infty$-valued semantics ($\infty$ is the symbol for infinity) to expand the limitations and rigidity of one-valued, two-valued, and three-valued semantics. Why? Because as a semantic class of life, meaning is our creation and therefore $\infty$-valued, that is there are $\infty$-valued degrees of conditionality in any word or event. Every level of semantics leads to certain semantic reactions (SR).

“In human regression or undevelopment, human symbols have degenerated to the values of signals effective with animals, the main difference being in the degree of conditionality.” (338). “Consciousness of abstracting produces complete conditionality in our conditional higher order reactions, and so must be the foundation on which a science of man or a theory of sanity and progress, must be built.” (339) “The $\infty$-valued semantics is the most general and includes the one-, two-, etc. and few-valued semantics as particular cases. The one-valued semantics of literal identifications are found only among animals, primitive people, infants, and the ‘mentally’ ill, although more or less serious traces of some identification are found in practically all of us, because these are embodied in the structure of our language...” (461)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valued Semantics</th>
<th>Significance and Semantic Reactions (SR)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\infty$-valued semantics</td>
<td>Multiordinal meanings: “At what level?” “In what dimension?” Flexibility in meanings, choice about the most useful, ecological, highest quality meaning that will serve the situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\infty$-valued semantics</td>
<td>Probabilistic meanings, since any word or event has $\infty$-valued meanings, meanings are determine by context and dimension, are probabilistic, to what extent is this or that particular meaning likely to be useful, true, productive?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many-valued semantics</td>
<td>Relativist meaning; every word or event has a great many meanings. SR: Skepticism, if everything is relativistic, there is no true meaning, it means whatever you want it to mean. End of arguments and conflicts, non-commitment as giving up the search for meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few-valued semantics</td>
<td>Conflictual meaning since a word or event has 3 or more meanings. SR: Arguments, debates. Search for the one true meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-valued semantics</td>
<td>Dichotomous meanings since a word or event has two meanings, it is either X or Y, a polarized view of life. SR: Either-or, black-or-white thinking, dualistic, dichotomy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-valued semantics</td>
<td>Identification “map is territory” meaning, a word or event has but one and only one meaning, failure to differentiate, confusion of levels. SR: Absolutist, finalist, fanatic. animalistic use of symbols as if signals rather than symbols. Words are things (“the thinghood of words”).</td>
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Reading this New Page
To read this new page, start at the bottom with the one-valued semantics and read upward. The ordinal number (1, 2, few (3-10), Multiple, etc.) valued-semantics is a phrase that describes the number of meanings a person is able to generate about something. If you have been through the Unleashing Potentials Self-Actualization workshop then you have been challenged to take any everyday thing and give it 7 meanings, then 20. I usually use a “wine bottle” as an example.

The expansiveness of a meaning-maker to make lots and lots of meanings and to know and to feel in your neurology that meaning is made, it is not externally real. It is a meaning-makers creation and that by expanding it— you can then choose the most useful, effective, productive, and enhancing meaning. This speaks to your ability to make meaning— to construct it. And if you can do that, then you will never be stuck! And what a gift that is to your participants, your clients, and your customers!

Within the first 3 levels is The Search for the One True Meaning. When we begin as meaning-makers, we are searching for the real meaning, the true meaning, the one meaning— as if our map can be absolutely true. But it cannot. It is just a map.

Beyond that we go through a stage of losing our grip on reality as we become relativistic— everybody has meanings, every meaning is equal, there are not meanings that are better than other meanings.

Eventually we get through that stage (well, for a great many people) and we realize that some meanings are more useful, practical, enhancing, empowering, etc. And that some meanings are toxic, stupid, ridiculous, counter-productive, etc.

There is a lot more to share with you about all of this. I would love to entertain your questions about this— send to me at meta@acsol.net. To your success as Neuro-Semantic Trainers!
MASTER PRACTITIONER CONSIDERATIONS

So let’s assume you have decided you want to run your first NS Master Practitioner (NSMP) certification training. Before you can do this there are a number of considerations you need to take into account before you’ll begin advertising or deliver your first day of NSMP training. I’ve listed below the 2 key considerations that I believe need to be addressed immediately.

• Who will attend?
• Where will your participants come from?

You’ll need to either have trained enough people from which you can invite them to attend or alternatively you’ll need to rely on those who have been trained by other trainers and would like to attend your NSMP. The best situation would be that you have trained enough people and you’re able to directly market your training to your past graduates. Hopefully you had already given these graduates an insight into the next level of training so it is no surprise to them when you promote your NSMP to them.

If you are relying on the graduates of other NS or NLP Trainers, you’ll need to use your collaborative Trainer networks. A collaborative approach is a wise decision as this can enhance your ability to recruit people into your NSMP training and the overall workload can be shared along with the costs and profits. Whether you decide to go it alone or form a collaborative partnership you will need to have enough participants who have completed the lower level training of no less than the 7 day NS-NLP Practitioner certification.

Delivery— Whole or Modular?
Will you deliver the training as an entire block of consecutive days being 12-15 days back to back? Or will you break it down into a modular form and present it as a combination of days run over a period of time?

Examples of the modular form, assuming you are running it as a 12 day training could be:

• Six days of training for block 1 and six days a month later for block 2 of 6 days.
• 4 modules of 3 days over a 2-3 month period.

I’m sure you get the idea and can come up with variations that best suit your area and the people you intend to approach. There are pros and cons of running an entire training in one block or
splitting it up into modules. You will need to decide what is the best approach for you. A couple of the key things to consider are:

The longer the block of training days you run, the less likely you will be able to recruit people onto it. It’s easier to attract attendance for a half day training compared to a training of 14 consecutive days. I’m not saying not to run a large block of training days. What I am saying is that you need to decide whether it is easier for people in your area to attend a shorter or longer series of days in training.

While running shorter blocks may be attractive to some it has its own problems as you may not be able to set a series of dates that suit everyone and you will need to decide what to do if some attend one block and unable to attend the next for sometime later. How will you record what they have and have not completed? How long will you allow them to go before completing the entire NSMP training? (1 - 2 years or more) Or will you put a “time-cap” on how long they are allowed to take to attend all the NSMP modules?

**Closing Thoughts**

The two considerations I have presented in this reflection are important to address if you are wanting to promote your first NSMP. I haven’t raised in this reflection the usual needs of booking a training venue, setting a price or having your manuals printed. As all this can be done once you have decided where the participants are going to come from and in what form will you present the training. Once you have decided that, you can then prepare your advertising and marketing for NSMP and set your price etc...

In my next reflection on NSMP I will present the content modules of what needs to presented and the timing variations for each of those modules.

Feel free to contact me directly should you have any questions you have about running a NSMP.
WHEN A COMPANY REQUEST A WORKSHOP
... AS A STARTING POINT

Executive Development #1

This article begins a series of articles on Executive Development processes and Coaching and on the way they are enriched by the Philosophy of facilitation practices and group training. Even though I train and facilitate groups, my self-definition is not that of a trainer. For more than 20 years I have sat down with top executives, watched them work with their teams, provided feedback, acted as personal counselor for more than one of them as I have developed Coaching processes. That is what my experience is all about and that is where my development lies and where I developed many professional opportunities for these reflections.

The following are some of the questions I frequently ask myself:

• What distinctions become necessary when we work with executives in their personal growth processes and in their executive development?
• How does the Neuro-Semantic model relate to Corporate World reality and what value does it add to the study of executives behavior?
• In what way does the self-actualization model give us background which is coherent enough to watch organizations, teams and individuals in their working sites, make their best effort to get achievements on any day?
• How can the Meta-Coaching model be used as a reference framework in order to develop effective participation in an executive development process and not only in Coaching programs?
• How can we use APG Psychology as a way of organizing our listening while trying to help an executive and to structure conversations that nourish on every one of these patterns in a conversational way– keeping relevance and business tone at the same time?

In this article, I would like to focus on an aspect I believe is very important if we want to work in executive development processes and cultural transformation and not simply teaching courses. I mean, the way we think and the way we design a training that people initially ask for. We are often invited to teach a workshop focused on simply teaching something or training a series of skills.

We know that training itself does not have a great impact on an organizational transformation process or on executive development; however, it can be part of a more comprehensive proposal we can design as we get acquainted with a group or with an organization.
If the first thing we are asked for is giving training or if training is the way of getting in, we need to be aware of the following aspects:

Before starting a workshop, it is important not only knowing what makes individuals ask what they are asking for, but also identifying specific cases occurring over and over again. It is quite useful to have our linguistic skills handy, skills such as accuracy and depending on context, we could identify the seven typical cases and their current and future consequences if these behaviors go on and on, as an example.

Based on those cases, we can design role plays, a combination of solution tools, corresponding to every case; something I implement in almost any training is the use of benchmarking and trying to introduce: “the description of ascending behaviors” in almost any conversation. Organizations are interested in tangible changes, and not so much in mere concepts.

A structure I try to keep handy on those initial trainings, almost without exception is “that of the miracle question” (meta-stating new possibilities); when we help participants identify new behaviors and different specific actions in the first session, the training character becomes more consulting than educational.

When we are preparing a workshop, we should focus and place our attention on the group and on what they say and do, and not on us as trainers. In other words, exercises we design should try to create more clarity in the participants’ minds and they should help them express themselves in many ways, and that way training will always give us some indication and a great deal of information about what is going on in the organization, about the style they have for problem-solving and about the frameworks they use over and over again when facing different situations.

Many times it will be very useful to make notes of our impressions, to write down specific moments during training and phrases that literally express frameworks and beliefs revealing the Matrix in which the team or the group we are working with lives. This is a great way of continuing a conversation with a client, after the workshop is over.

And finally, I believe that the name of the game is not contributing information so that participants learn; the name of the game is helping them review their experience and providing them with tools so they can build a custom “good theory” with our help, of course.

In the following articles, I will try to show a progressive methodology in order to develop it in an organization – starting with an initial training – continuous and highly effective processes, geared towards developing programs that are able to change culture and CEO’s business performance with their teams (meaning executive development).
WE TRAIN MEANING

When you are a trainer or when you train—what are you really doing? A technical definition identifies training as teaching—teaching a skill so people have that skill at ready access in their behavior. That’s what happens at the primary level. But there’s more!

What you really do is train meaning. A skill after all is an expression of some meaning. What does it mean? What is it? What does it do? What is it good for? What does it lead to? These are all questions about meaning, about the meaning of the skill. And if you reflect on those questions, they are questions about the context and the operation of the skill. We could also ask about the significance of the skill, its intention, purpose, and so on.

What do you train? Take the subject content of your training and step back and ask the meaning questions about it:

- Do you train NLP? You train the meaning and meaningfulness of the mind-body system, how it works, and how to take charge of it.
- Do you train APG? You train the meaning and meaningfulness of learning the Meta-States model and how to use it to create a “genius” state of full engagement of focus and concentration, one that allows you to step into a highly productive state and to be in its totally.

If you train meta-programs, then you are training the meaning of perceptual filters and points of view and how they influence our thinking, speaking, and responding. If you train people to master their emotions or any particular emotion, then in working with feelings, you are working with the somatic expressions of meanings.

Whether you know it or not, as a trainer you are always working with meanings. And most of meanings you work with are outside-of-consciousness; they are the frames that govern what we do and how we operate.

The other day I traveled from Hong Kong to Taiwan with Mandy Chai and Wilkie Choi and spoke to a couple of groups, one the ICF of Taiwan and the other an NLP group. While presenting the basic Meta-States Model and applying it to “personal genius,” after working with one man, another man in the audience raised his hand when I asked for questions. But he did not have a question. Instead he had a monologue that began providing an interpretation of the man and what he had experienced. I interrupted him.
“Okay, what you are now offering is not a question, but an interpretation of the gentleman we just observed; and so I’m going to interrupt you because that’s not what we do in NLP.”

In that intervention, I sought to set several frames. I classified his words as an “interpretation” and “outside the realm of activities in NLP” and “not a question.” And all of that was training meanings.

A little later, the same man (who raised his hand when the organizer asked who had no NLP training!) began another monologue. It was after another demonstration and hearing her say that she “cannot handle rejection,” he wanted to know what to do if she cannot handle rejection. I first interrupted him about making her the focus of his comments. He made his subject “general” and asked about if a person cannot do something. I heard his frame and I rejected it.

“She said she could not handle rejection” I commented. “It was words ... what she said ... that doesn’t mean that she cannot learn to handle it.”

And later I noted that those words are, in NLP, a modal operator of impossibility, and so just a linguistic map ... that’s all. Again, I was working with meaning—the meaning we give to something. Do we frame something in a deterministic way or do we frame something in a way that makes it solvable? How we frame determines how we then relate to something.

This now leads to the three considerations that we in Neuro-Semantics make about meaning:

1) The Quality of the Meaning. Is the meaning toxic, bland, mediocre, rich, robust, transformative?
2) The Code Richness of the Meaning. Meaning can be coded as a VAK code using only images, sounds, and sensations. It can also be coded linguistically or metaphorically, or in stories. We create meaning at multiple levels — first neurologically or somatically, then representationally, then through meta-stating layers of evaluations.
3) The Flexible Number of the Meaning. How many meanings can you give to the same thing? If only one, then you have confused map and territory. If only a few, you have little flexibility in reframing. If many, then you have greater range of flexibility.

And in Neuro-Semantics— we deal with meaning. We detect current meanings, we add rich and robust meaning to things; we invite the performance of meaning, and we enable people to suspend or eliminate meanings that are toxic and un-ecological. We deal with meaning because we work with meaning-makers! May you be a great and effective meaning-maker!
THE COMMUNITY  
THAT WE ARE CREATING  

“We can do so much more together than apart or alone.”

Recently I have been working with a number of NLP trainers on several different projects (a couple of books, conferences, supporting various journals). Doing so has made me aware of the uniqueness of the community we have been creating in Neuro-Semantics. In the field of NLP there are very few “communities” and almost all of them are “for profit” businesses. They are not actually true communities, they operate as someone’s business (for example, ABNLP, American Board of NLP, is Tad James’ company so that all fees go to him as his personal income).

Recently also I wrote a short article for the book, *Innovations in NLP, Volume I*, for the Neuro-Semantic Community. We have a section in that book on “Innovation Communities.” Shell Rose Charvet is writing on the LAB profile Community. And James Lawley is writing on the Clean Language Community. But neither of those, nor any other community, comes close to being the community that we have in Neuro-Semantics.

Then there has also been a number of interviews that I have given recently. In the last month I have been interviewed at Meta-Coaching twice, and I have responded to intensive interviews by two reporters and by one person who is doing a modeling project on leadership. So questions have arisen about what we are doing in Neuro-Semantics— who we are, how we are related, and the Community we have created.

The thing that seems to surprise most people is that the community is one based on association. When I tell them that everybody is free to associate in the community or not to associate, they ask, “Then what holds the community together? What creates the coherence or integrity of the community?”

And my answer? Vision! We have a vision. Those who are part of the Neuro-Semantic and Meta-Coach community have a vision about what we are doing, what we can do, and we have a set of values that unite us. It is our vision and values that make up the dynamic that holds us together. We see a future that we want to create together!

What is that vision? We want to create a future based on the models and tools that facilitate self-actualization that unleash the highest and best in ourselves and all who we influence. We want to spread the communication models and personal development models so that people can live more
meaningful lives that contribute and that make a difference. We have a vision of healthier people, families, companies, and countries. We have a vision about people learning how to get along better, collaborate, and do business in highly ethical ways.

At the heart of our vision is self-actualization— for ourselves, for our families, for those we work with, for our leaders, our countries.

There’s also something else. We have a belief. We believe that we can do so much more together than alone or apart. If there is any belief that really holds us together, it is this one. It is this belief that caused Bob and I to launch the society together originally. Having seen the divisiveness and “kingdom building” in the first and second generation NLP Trainers and in the way Richard Bandler treated people, I wanted to call together people who would rise above that miserly poverty-driven and scarcity-fearfulness to a much higher level of cooperation, collaboration, respect, giving honor to each other, acknowledging sources, etc. And so with that Neuro-Semantics as a community came together.

Why am I writing this now? Partly to encourage the many of you who have been through NSTT, who invested your time, money, energy, and effort to reach the benchmarks of Presentation and Training. Because even if all you wanted from NSTT was some top-notch skills in training and presenting, and have no intention of training NLP or Neuro-Semantics, my encouragement to you is to be a part of this community. Sure, you may not get anything from it. It may not mean anything on your resume. You may not use it for your credibility in whatever it is that you do.

But you have the unique opportunity that others do not have— and that is of being a contributing trainer member to this community. You can be a living example of the vision and values of Neuro-Semantics. You can help us do what we seek to do ... even if the training of NLP and Neuro-Semantics is not your focus.

We can do so much more together than alone or apart —speaks about being the kind of people who collaborate, support the larger vision, and counts themselves as “one of us.” If that makes sense to you, you can be a part. If you graduated and were licensed as a Neuro-Semantic Trainer you can downgrade to the M status (Modular Trainer) or TS status (Trainer Supporter).

Status

C — Certifying Trainer (alone, $500; in association with Institute, $350)
NC — Non-Certifying Trainer: $250
M — $100 per year.
TS — $50 per year
THE IMPORTANT MODELLING MODULE

Neuro-Semantic NLP Master Practitioner certification training and the modules in it are all brought together in the modelling project. It is the modelling project which will ultimately be the determining factor whether you have delivered a quality NS Meta-Master Practitioner training (NSMP). Unfortunately this is not the case, with a number of Master Practitioner (MP) graduates I have met from different countries. And they had not completed a modelling project while on their Master Practitioner training!

So let me reiterate my point. A modelling project and the skill sets required to successfully complete a modelling project “must” be completed in an NS-NLP Meta-Master Practitioner certification. If you are not doing this in your delivery of NSMP then you are not delivering this training in its entirety.

This gap in your participants learning will always come to light sooner or later. The NS Community is a tight knit community so it’s likely word will get out about what training your participants received from you. Some of your graduates will likely end up at NS Trainers training and there they will be asked what was covered in their Meta-Master Practitioner training and we will want to be told that they covered a modelling project in that training.

At the Heart of NS and NLP

Modelling is the foundational corner stone of NLP and it was through Dr. Michael Hall who was at the time modelling resilience that the discovery and confirmation of the Meta-States model was founded. It is modelling that will continue to grow the field of Neuro-Semantics and where new advancements will take place in further growing and developing NS. Should modelling cease within NS we are in great danger of stagnating and failing to grow.

The modelling project within an NS Meta-Master training will be no less than 2 days and as long as 3 - 4 days. My preference is that it is done while in the training and reviewed and debriefed as part of the training rather than completed away from the course which I know is the method used in some NLP trainings. You will need to deliver all of the content so the modelling project is successful. This will require you to deliver training in:

- Mind-lines
- Meta-Programs
- The Matrix Model
- The NLP representational strategy elicitation model
- Timelines
- The NLP TOTE mode
• The Meta States model
Because of the level of competency required to deliver the Meta-Master Practitioner content and especially the modelling project. I think this is contributing to the avoidance of either delivering it at all or only delivering it in part. What are these trainers replacing the modelling project with then? Now that’s a good question – I have heard of Trainers adding more days on Hypnosis, business, coaching, the DISC typing model, Myers and Briggs, the Enneagram or Spiral Dynamics and storytelling to name a few.
• Do you have the knowledge and confidence to run the modelling project?
• What knowledge gaps do you have that need to be filled so you can run the modelling project?
• Were you actually trained in modelling when you did your Master Practitioner Certification?

I’m not providing answers in this Trainers reflection about how to deliver the modelling project in a Master Practitioner. What I’m hoping is you will reflect on what you need to do so you can and will deliver the NS Meta-Master Practitioner certification in its entirety. Please feel free to contact me directly if you would like to know more about how to deliver the NS Meta-Master Practitioner training.
From: L. Michael Hall  
2011 Trainers Reflections #12  
March 22, 2011

HOLD A CONFERENCE

I changed my ticket during my last trip to China because Team Wong, our China sponsor wanted me to show up and do a keynote at a Conference he was sponsoring. First I had a question: “What is this Conference about and who will be there and what will they be wanting to hear or learn or receive from the conference? And what would you want me to present and what would be the desired outcome from the presentation?”

These were the beginning questions that I asked Mandy Chai. Then, as it turns out, I discovered that this would be the sixth Conference that Team has sponsored and the sixth that he uses to sell NLP and now Meta-Coach trainings in China. Hmmm, that got me thinking about how a Conference could be used to promote trainings.

When I arrived at the hotel, there were 750 to 800 people at the Conference this year. And the hotel was a very fancy and expensive Phoenix Hotel in Guangzhou China. There were 7 or more of us who made presentations and Chu’en Liu who mostly does the translations for me there was the Master of Ceremonies. And when I say “Master of Ceremonies” I mean he led songs, he told stories, he did introductions, and he warmed everybody up for the presenters. And there were 8 or 10 tables in the back of the big ballroom with 4 to 6 people on each table ready to talk about and sell the NLP courses. And after each speaker, a big cylinder full of 800 business cards was brought up on stage ... and the handle turned to mix up all of the cards ... and then each speaker would reach in, pick a card and hand to Team Wong who would read out the name of the person who just won a Training! The music built up the suspense, who would get it?

The results? This year there was something like 150 who signed up for the many various NLP courses and 20 signed up for the next Meta-Coach training. And, of course, with all of that excitement, with all of that conversation about the power and effectiveness of NLP, I’m sure there will be many others signing up later. And with his sales team of 30 or more people, Team will be contacting every one of them in the coming months. Now how about that for a way to help promote and sell trainings?

This year, Mandy Chai spoke on Friday night on APG— and during her two-hours, she spoke about meta-stating self-esteem and intentionality. I spoke about “Upgrading Leadership” and got to speak to those who already were leaders— business owners, managers, HR people, and those who wanted to become leaders and how to use Meta-Coaching as a leadership methodology.

The Conference format gave both Mandy and myself the opportunity to describe what it is (APG and
Meta-Coaching) and why it is important. As a side-note, both of us noted after the presentations that keynoting to nearly 800 is a very different experience from speaking to 30 or 60 or even 100. Hunting for eyes “to bring everybody in” (as we do in NSTT) is a whole different thing with that many!

Anyway, what do you think? How about you? What if you held a Conference? It doesn’t have to be that big. It doesn’t have to be at the top 5-star hotel. But, what if you did? What if you gathered other NLP trainers in your area ... and created a 1-day or 2-day or 3-day Conference on NLP? (Yes, this implies collaboration!)

If you do — you will want to set the rules and frames that will brand your way of presenting NLP and Neuro-Semantics.

• The way to sell is first and foremost—give people something that will enrich their lives!
• Create a very positive and exciting context, environment so that people have lots of fun, get to talk to well-informed NLP people, and get a sense of the value that NLP can have in their lives!
• Make promises without ever over-promising. Make sure you can over-deliver on every promise that you make.
• Bring in NLP people who are especially skilled in music and MC-ing so that the context creates the kind of states you want people in.
• Give away some things — trainings, books, CDs, etc.
• Hold some smaller workshops so that people can get a more intimate experience of the value of NLP and Neuro-Semantics.

When I was introduced to speak, Shu’en has a special surprise for me. He had written a song about Meta-Coaching. And so he sang it—and led everybody to sing it! I don’t recall the words, one line I do remember said, “My Coach is my strength and my shield!”
A NEURO-SEMANTIC APPROACH TO EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT #2

A working framework we need in order to approach executive development-related work (the Missing Piece)

When we speak about executive development, one thing becomes clear, namely, we are talking about development activities and these activities are mostly work-related. They are not classroom activities. We refer to growth while we work, not to additional activities. Work is the raw material for reflection-action and here is where managers have the possibility of growing.

It is imperative to understand the nature of non-manual work which is what executive work is. One of the most common confusions among executive development theoretical individuals is the way they see non-manual work. We cannot attribute the same meaning we give to manual work.

Manual workers’ productivity unit is time and movement. We speak about working force because workers work with their muscles. Non-manual workers such as executives have a different measurement unit. And what is that? Surprise--- it is conversation.

Also if we identify the executive work structure, we will have a better understanding of what I mean. Here as an example is what any executive activity involves:
- Requests from someone addressing somebody else
- Offerings from someone addressing somebody else
- A specific definition of agreements: Who does what? When?
- Definition and establishment of what events mean – before / during / after

What does all of these things tell us? The above list tells us that either every executive development activity involves certain conversational skills or they are made evident in the linguistic arena. Re-read the list with that in mind. When we write a report, when we write something in a computer, if this is “work”, it is because somebody asked for something, somebody offered something and an agreement was created; organizations are agreement networks.

What then are the executive opportunity areas and strengths? They are made evident in a relational way because working implies coordinating actions with others and co-creating meanings with others. Any development topic we start working on with a manager will generally be made
evident in his relationship with:
- himself
- his supervisors
- his team as a whole
- every member of his team
- his colleagues
- individuals in different areas or teams
- external customers and vendors

Now it is important to clarify that having a conversation and talking are two completely different phenomena. When we talk, we simply say things; when we have a conversation, we coordinate actions with others in order for things we want to occur, actually occur. Almost every problem a manager faces, reveals the necessity to open a well-formed conversation.

If a manager has a problem, he needs to start a conversation with somebody, with a specific individual or to ask him for something, offer him something, always looking for an agreement that is linguistically accurate. In other words, “problems” are solved by conversations.

When we are clear about those frameworks, because they might not seem so simple, we do not have any problems to create intervention designs. And it makes perfect sense to understand executive development from a more work-based learning perspective. Work-based learning makes us learn in the midst of practice by expressly examining the intersection of conversation quality and results.
TRAINERS MICRO-BLOGGING

In this reflection you will find 12 micro-blogs directly from my Facebook professional profile page. I know that some of you have been following these regular posts and also leaving comments. I have copy pasted and updated micro-blogs I have written on developing mastery which happens to be the subject I am presenting for a 1 day training, post the very First Neuro-Semantic Conference in Michael’s home town of Grand Junction, Colorado. It makes so much sense to be starting out our first Neuro-Semantic Conference in the home town of its originator and developer. Have you registered for this great event yet?

This Tuesday’s Neuro-Semantic Trainers’ Reflection has been written with a double purpose. Firstly it is to expose you to micro-blogging in the hope that you will begin to entertain the idea as being a possible avenue for you to present your thoughts on specific topics you have an interest in and capture an audience who is like minded.

The second purpose I have in mind is for you to use each of the posts as prompts to challenge you or guide you to extend yourself as a Neuro-Semantic Trainer and develop your level of mastery. I have also included all the video links which I have used to emphasise the key points raised in each post.

I hope you enjoy them as many others have and if you haven’t already you can follow them on Facebook. I regularly update them 2-3 times per week and make a total of 10 posts per topic. Currently I am making posts on attitude. I hope you enjoy the reflection.

Micro-Blogging on Mastery

**Mastery:** If you are serious about achieving excellence or mastery in what you do then you must have what it takes. What it takes is hard work, a will to succeed and a commitment to achieving personal excellence at every opportunity—which few are willing to do. Here’s an example of that level of commitment, dedication and the will to succeed even when faced with failure.


**Mastery:** If it was easy then everyone would be masterful at all they choose to do. It takes practice —practice and more practice. When everyone else has had enough you must still be practicing, trialing, making mistakes, reviewing, evaluating and improving continuously.
Deliberate practice, practice that contributes to developing your weaknesses, learning from your many mistakes and extending your capacity to achieve excellence.

**Mastery:** You cannot do it on your own. All the masters had someone who supported them, mentored them, coached them and directed them. As children they were guided by a significant person who directed them in how to improve, behave and assisted them in pursuit of their goal. When the child grew in skill they then sought out others to continue to challenge their child’s continued growth and achievement. You can not exclusively achieve mastery on your own.

**Mastery:** Ok let's say you want to be masterful at something. Say, the violin. So you practice 5 hours every week for 3 years = 780 hours and your friend invests 8 hours a week for the same 3 years = 1248 hours. By the time 3 years are up you have very little, if any chance to ever catch up with your friend and if you had what some call “natural talent” and they didn't at the time you both started. They have not only caught up with you but surpassed you, even though you had talent for the violin first!

**Mastery:** The temptation is to practice what you are already good at. This is not the way to achieve mastery. You must continue to work on developing your weaknesses. This requires you to practice what you are not good at until you are outstanding at it. It means you will be stretched to capacity as you make continual mistakes while refining & building your skill repertoire. What weaknesses do you need to further develop your skill level to achieve mastery?


**Mastery:** How much time do you dedicate towards mastery? Well the guideline is 10,000 hours or 1,000 hours a year which is 2.7 hours per day every day for 10 years! That’s also known as the 10 year rule. Some say that “An overnight success takes 10 years! What do you do in those hours? You practice, train, research, study, observe, evaluate and do mental rehearsal etc. It's not just the physical practice alone you fill the 2.7 hours with. You will pursue many other avenues that develop your skill base. Any less time dedicated to practice and it will take you much longer to gain mastery. How much time will you commit to practicing?

**Mastery:** I was reading about Mariana Pajon 10x World BMX Champion. She started racing when she was 4 years old and is now only 18. She has been racing for 14 years and trains approximately 6 hours a day and has broken nearly every bone in her body. She knows she has many more to break and says she doesn't care — she just wants to be biking!


**Mastery:** It’s about pushing the boundaries and extending the field you have mastered. It’s about breaking all previous limits that have been set before you. It’s about pushing yourself like know one before you ever has pushed themselves. There are those who desire to go further, faster and for longer than anyone else. To break the record for the highest and fastest freefall —
to fall faster than the sound barrier, is Felix Baumgartner’s mastery mission. Mastery is about living on the edge! In fact Mastery is only found on the edge of your comfort zone and beyond.

Mastery: Neuro-Semantic and NLP have a training called Master Practitioner. Since the early days of NLP we have been stuck with the title— Master Practitioner. It isn’t Mastery training, but learning new and additional extensions of models of NS-NLP. Mastery cannot be gained from any training. Knowledge and some experience can be— not mastery. Mastery is gained in applying your learning over time and the wisdom learnt from it.

Micro-Blogging on Winning:

WINNING: Is always the result of a perfect performance. That is — it’s perfect for you at that specific time. It is the end result of you doing the very best you can do now and will be the measure you will use to know whether you have or have not won on your future outings. Winning is not measured by the final competition score or but whether you have improved your performance on each and every time you perform.

WINNING: It requires all of you. Every single fiber within you will be called on to contribute to achieving a focused, perfect performance. It is the type of effort that is enduring and not time bound. This level of effort is totally relentless in the pursuit of personal perfection which leads to winning.

WINNING: It's about pushing yourself beyond your previous personal bests. It's about knowing what you've done to date and then setting and attaining new levels of personal performance, on a consistent basis. Each advancement of your personal best becomes a stepping stone towards the continuous pursuit of your ultimate goal.
TRAINERS WHO COACH

Not too long ago in China, I asked several questions of the group who came for Meta-Coach Training:

“How many of you are going to make Coaching your profession?”
“How here will have a private practice and make Executive Coaching or Personal Coaching your niche?”

And from what I have been able to detect, most people who are going into the field of Coaching in China, and perhaps most Asian countries, do not go into Coaching as a separate profession. They do not do so to become Personal Coaches, Life Coaches, or external Executive Coaches. Instead, the great majority are managers, leaders, and business owners and enter Coaching as a way to enrich and enhance their managerial and/or leadership skills.

This has certainly been the case with our first experiences in taking Meta-Coaching to Guangzhou China. The first time that I did Coaching Mastery in China (2010), I did most of the “Business” day materials that are in the training manual. Then I got feedback on that. I received feedback that the business materials were not necessary. The participants said they would rather spend time on organizational coaching. So the second time (2011) that is precisely what I did.

But then I discovered something else— something that surprised me. Most of the organizational coaches are also trainers. In fact, in our second group who came for Coaching Mastery, there were actually more trainers than managers or business owners. And those trainers were there to learn how to use coaching as both a management methodology and a training skill. They were mostly Trainers who wanted coaching as their methodology for working with groups, and hence they were people who were doing “group coaching.” When I realized that, I put the focus on group and team coaching. That led me to consider an old question in a fresh way:

What’s the difference between group to team coaching and training a group?
Is there a difference between what and how a Trainer works with a group and what and how a Coach works with a group? If so, what is the difference?

So I focused my attention to think through two sets of actions— what a trainer does and a coach does with a group. I thought I could list the activities they do in common and those they do differently. As I began making those lists, I realized that if with a group of 20 or 40 or even 60 people, a trainer and a group coach will set forth some statements to frame the context, purpose, design, format, etc. And both will ask for responses and questions. Perhaps it is style. A coach will be much more personable and a trainer will be more formal. But no, even that doesn’t always hold.
Eventually, about the only difference I could find between a Trainer and a Coach involves the size of the group. With a smaller group, training a skill and coaching to facilitate a discovery is pretty much the same thing. As a group grows, so do the group dynamics and so with that emergence, the nature of the interaction changes. Even a coach cannot “coach” a group of 200 like he or she would a group of 20—too many people to calibrate to!

From this, I developed a hypothesis. The idea is that a trainer who uses coaching methodology to train and a group coach who works with a group to unleash their highest and best skills are two descriptions of the same thing. And if that’s so (or even if it is not exactly so, but close), then it is still close enough to be without radical differences, then you will be a much better trainer with Meta-Coaching skills than without. This now gives us a key question:

- **How will you be a better Trainer with Coaching Skills?**
- **What will you get from Meta-Coaching as a Trainer that will take your skills to a new level?**

1) **Demonstrating.** You will be able to work much more effectively when you demonstrate the skills you are teaching. When you get a participant up front and you can create relationship by listening and supporting, you will create nearly instant rapport and get the best out of that person as you demonstrate. Your questions and meta-question will get to the heart of the skill and issue quicker. And your state-induction skills will be much more elegant.

2) **Answering Questions.** You will be able to carry on a learning-dialog with your audience at a much higher level with coaching skills. You will be able to coach the group to engage in an explorational conversation.

3) **Winning Support.** You will be able to be winsome with your people when you are one-on-one with them, when you are greeting and meeting, when you need to speak to someone privately, when you are meeting participants after the training.

4) **Handling Problems.** You will be able to coach a person or several person through conflicts and create resolutions that will be win/win with people.

5) **Selling Your Trainings.** The very skills of coaching are at the same time, selling skills: listening, supporting, questioning, meta-questioning, giving and receiving feedback, induction of state, framing, pattern detection, mind-lining (reframing), etc.

6) **Leadership.** Not all that surprising also is the fact that the coaching skills are simultaneously leadership skills. That’s why many CEOs, Senior Managers, Entrepreneurs, and Business Owners attend the Meta-Coach Trainings.

If you are a Trainer, I highly recommend that you make plans to attend *Coaching Mastery* (Module III of the Meta-Coach series). It will enrich you as a leader and trainer, it will enrich you presentations, it will empower you in dozens of ways and take your training skills to a whole new level.
BUILDING RELATIONAL MAPS
IN EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS #3

It is essential when we work with a company, whether it is in the process of organizational change or in executive development programs to understand that organizations are a web of conversations and that executives, being non-manual workers, need to remember that any problem requiring a solution is at the distance of one or more pending conversations with somebody.

By the same token, there is a basic difference between talking and having a conversation. When we speak, we simply say things, however, when we have a conversation, we try to coordinate actions for others in order to create clearly stated agreements. The above is based on the idea that trying to reach a goal means making things happen and that things happen because somebody asks for something, somebody offers something and agreements are created for action.

In this article, I would like to introduce a concept-tool that is closely related to the conversational topic and by that I mean what I like to call a relational map (Salom 2009). The relational map is a tool used for different purposes:

* Thinking in a strategic way about the conversational dimension of directive work.
* In order to identify critical skills, we need to develop a specific director in a project or group of projects, working from a different assumption that is not a traditional one. (In future articles regarding conceptualization, I will develop what I call "situational skills").
* In order to develop a success example recollection process throughout time, in a director's career and to help him identify solution recurrent patterns (whether they are useful or not).

One thing I have learned in the last two years is that even though an executive understands and applies opening conversations and designing agreements, his impact is a limited one if he is not clear about key projects he is involved in and even more so, who are the individuals with whom he needs to create a relational web in the mid and long-term.

Additionally, the director needs to understand and draw a chart of the relationships he needs to develop, not only in his key projects but also for his career development; having it mapped out and in writing is the first step towards creating a relational map.
The following are some of the questions we invite the executive to ask himself while he is creating a relational map:

* What individuals influence my career specifically?
  What individuals do not have a current influence, but could have a future influence? - Known or unknown individuals. eas and with what individuals specifically do I need to develop coordination activities for achieving results and to what projects does this correspond?

* With what individuals outside the organization do I need to coordinate actions in order to achieve results and keep business possibilities open?

* With what areas of the organization I do not have a direct relationship but they indirectly affect the speed and the impeccability of projects I am involved in?

Having the answers to the questions above in writing and maybe having created a chart in a graphic form, in such a way as to allow the director to have a wider and more systematic perspective of his work, we can identify:
* Specific examples of situations where the process with those individuals has been a fluid and highly effective one.
* Specific examples where we were not successful and the relationship has become a difficult one.

* Examples of situations where the thinking process has not enabled coordination actions to start

Upon having the above, we can identify the critical skills that are present and those that are absent, considering the context and the individual or group of individuals with whom this becomes evident. This situational aspect is a critical one because an individual is competent in something with somebody; an individual is not competent in a "void".

Once we have this information, we can make progress in more than one sense:

- Designing trainings based on cases, when we find common factors repeating themselves in teams.
  * Designing assessment processes, using the miracle question and the search for sensorial evidence in order to distinguish and contrast successful behaviors and unsuccessful ones, using as specific examples of the past what every participant brings into the training and a role play scheme, as a base. (I will elaborate on these methods on subsequent articles).

  * Designing individual trainings using one-to-one methodology /mind-to-muscle training.
  * Individual and team Coaching processes.
  * Etc.

Conversational skills and competences arising as necessary in concrete interactions give place to a custom design and to pertinent solutions. And they help us move in the traditional training modality, which has little effectiveness because it is general, especially when it deals with
executive systematic development.


THEN THERE WAS ONLY ONE!

Quite some time ago I wrote a Trainers Reflection on providing training for a group of only a few people who have registered for it. In that reflection I suggested that this was a practical way for you to start out running your first Neuro-Semantic trainings. Rather than wait for larger numbers to be in attendance, I recommended you start with as few as 2-3 people and even to deliver a training for just 1 person. Whether it is a large consecutive day training like Neuro-Semantic Meta-Master Practitioner certification or a shorter Neuro-Semantic Gateway training, I hope you’ll consider the option of running it with only a few in attendance.

In this Trainer’s Reflection I’d like to provide you with more details on how to do this successfully, in the hope that you would seriously consider hosting a training with only a few people on it. My approach is – “...it’s better to run the training with only 1 person on it rather than not run it at all.” I’m going to outline some of the considerations that Lena and I discuss when deciding whether we will or will not go ahead with a training - when we only have a small number registered for it.

So... to set the scene for you.

You only have 2-3 people who have registered for your training and you are considering whether to run it or not. These are the guidelines that I have used in the past and continue to use.

1: Get over yourself
I’ve met trainers who take it personally when they realise they have only 1-2 people register for their training. They have an attitude that they will not lower themselves to stand before such a small group and present to them. That they wouldn’t dare say publically they only had 1 or 2 people on their APG 3 day training! How do I know this? Because I have spoken with them and they have told me they’d never consider running a training with such low numbers in attendance. Me? – If at all possible, I definitely would run it!

2: Take a Long Term Approach
I have had people who attended a multiple day training where there was only them and myself on the training. That’s right – only 1 person in attendance! And... that 1 person generated many thousands of dollars of work in the months and years after that training. They had such a positive experience they continued on with future trainings, recommended people to other trainings and generated corporate training days. Take a long term approach towards running trainings with only 1 or more in attendance. Yes, it is possible that you may make a loss on a small training. I agree – that is possible. What I’ve found is when I have a view that is beyond the initial 1:1
training and I focus on providing a positive learning experience and maintain a professional relationship with them in the months after the training. Repeat business is highly likely.

3: Let Them Know
Inform them that you are willing to run the training and they are the only one on it. Ask them if they are ok with that. Promote the benefits they have in being the only person on the training i.e., personal attention to their specific learning needs. Give them the choice to go ahead with the training or to reschedule with another training date later in the year. Let them know the venue has changed (if this is so). Tell them that they will have your total attention and they will experience a rare opportunity to have an exclusive audience with you while in the training. I have had participants who cherished the opportunity to be the sole person on the training. They realised it was a rare opportunity to have me as a trainer - all to themselves. This will happen with you also when you choose to run a small sized training. It’s all about how you frame it up to them!

4: Adjust All Your Overheads
This requires you to make the necessary adjustments to your costs so it is possible to run the training from a financial basis. Cancel the training room you’ve booked and run the training at home. I have run trainings out of town in a Motel room that has a lounge area and kitchen attached. Rather than have private catering, provide food that you can prepare for them or they can help themselves to. Only you can decide whether you can afford to run your Neuro-Semantic training or not. I have run trainings and made a small financial loss or a substantial loss numbering in the thousands of dollars. What I know is that making a loss is rare and not the norm. Your decision needs to be balanced up against a number of things like possible ongoing work in the future. If possible make the necessary changes to trim back your overheads and hopefully you can still run the training.

5: Make Training Delivery Adjustments
Because you only have 1-2 people you will cover the material much faster. What was a 3 day training is likely to become a 2 or 2½ day training. The training day will be able to be shortened and so too will the length of the training. Let them know this also. I can’t tell you how much quicker it will be. What I do now is it will definitely be quicker. You don’t have the number of questions to deals with –you don’t have the time that a larger group requires.

So you will need to make some timing adjustments. What I also do is adjust the face to face delivery time. I present in no more than 90 minute chunks and give them a 10 minute break after each 90 minute session. I also prefer to mix the delivery up with a mix of videos, self-reflection, quite readings, interactive activities 1:1, another trainer (Lena) and inside outdoor discussions etc... to maintain the engagement between yourself and the content. They need an attention break from only hearing you. In a larger group they can hide within the group at times. With a 1:1 training the learning intensity for them is greater, as you are always focused on them and they on you. Make the appropriate changes to lighten the intensity by ensuring the training is enjoyable for them and you.
At the conclusion of the training I also recommend that they attend a larger training, where a large number of participants are in attendance as that will be a different experience for them also. Lena and I do not charge for re-attending any of our Neuro-Semantic Training Pathways programs i.e. APG, Practitioner, Coaching Essentials. In this way the cost of re-attending isn’t prohibitive and is often taken advantage of by past graduates of these programs.

6: Give Them All You Have
They deserve your best and nothing less. It takes a different skill set to be able to present for multiple days to only 1 person i.e., Neuro-Semantic Meta-Master Practitioner training. Whether you are presenting to 1 person or 100 you must give them your very best. There are different skill sets required depending on the size of the group. It also takes a different attitude and some are not able to motivate themselves to present to only 1 person. So... there’s the challenge and an opportunity for you to grow as a trainer. There’s also an opportunity for you to grow your Neuro-Semantic trainings. We all have to start somewhere and even after near 10 years of Neuro-Semantic trainings behind us, both Lena and I will and do deliver trainings to small groups.

I hope you will use these 6 guidelines to assist your future decision making in delivering a training which may only have 1 person on it. Remember: “That great things often have small beginnings!”
FACING AND SOLVING
THE PROBLEM OF SMALL TRAINING

I want to underscore that Colin wrote in the last Reflection when he said that you have to “get over yourself.” That is a great memorable quip and it was more! That description lies at the very heart of true success as a trainer. After all, as you heard us say at NSTT over and over: Training is never about you! It’s about those who have come to learn to become more skilled in something. So you really do have to get this one right if you want a solid foundation for your development as a trainer and your success in leading transformation in your trainings. What does this mean? It means getting your ego out of the way.

Now about doing a training for one person. If you do only have one or two or three participants, and you are new (in your first years as a trainer), I agree with Colin—do not cancel! So if you have gotten over yourself, here’s an additional idea. Turn your “training” into an Internship. I didn’t invent that idea. I actually know a couple of trainers who have “taught” NLP Prac. and Master Prac. as internships. They took on one to three persons and made it an internship which lasted a full year. Then the weekly meetings were intimate conversations and learnings, highly practical, built for higher level accountability than what a training can provide. And the result? Those who they took on in the internship learned the content at a much deeper and thorough level. Now that’s a way to develop high quality people who reflect what you can do for someone!

Now having built on that part of what Colin wrote, I want to push it to the other side and throw out a strong challenge. I especially want to throw down a challenge if you who have been in the training field for several years and you are still not getting more than a handful of people at your trainings.

You may very well be a great trainer, but apparently you suck at letting people know that!

Training skills are not the same as marketing and selling sells, building a business skills, entrepreneurial skills, collaboration skills, building networks of supportive people skills, etc. But (and this is a big But) as a trainer in NLP and Neuro-Semantics, you know how to learn, how to model skills, and how to integrate them— do you not? So put your learning passion and skills to good use. Learn these things!

I still hear too many trainers complain and fuss and sometimes blame (the economy, business people, themselves, lack of money, etc.) for why they have such small groups. That will never help; it will never solve the problem. First you have to acknowledge that you have a problem (not that you are a problem, but that you have a problem). Then you have to face the factors that are creating it and your role in it.
The solutions? Well, if you are not having the number of people at your trainings that you want—20 and up for your classes (which only then makes it commercially viable), then get yourself educated and upskilled with the skills you need! Learn what you need to learn! After all, you are a trainer. And that means you are a learner, someone with fabulous tools for modeling, learning, incorporating, embodying, mind-to-muscling, and turning into competencies.

A person who trains others to learn and develop and take their skills to the next level must be a person who is doing that for himself or herself. If you are not, that’s your problem. A trainer not reading, not learning, not attending workshops, not being coached for unleashing new possibilities, is a person who really does not believe in training! And the sad thing is that I’ve met lots of NLP trainers like that. I hope that such does not and will not ever characterize any Neuro-Semantic Trainer.

Here’s my challenge: Do you have a Professional Development Plan and are you working it and updating it on a regular basis? If I asked you, “What are you working on this year? What are three skills that you plan to become more competent in this year? What are you doing to become more competent in those skills?” do you have an answer?

A trainer told me the other day that he was taking Meta-Coaching because his demonstration skills was his weakest skills as a trainer. He said that he wanted to have more flexibility in front of an audience in working with people who came on stage so he could really provide excellent demonstrations of the patterns. He said that he knew that the coaching methodology would give him the ability to listen and support in that context and really question and induce state.

Are you video-taping your presentations and using them to benchmark your Presentation skills and/or demonstration skills, answer questions skills, etc.? Are you getting feedback on co-training, sequencing your energies, or working with teams in your trainings?

What do you need to learn about business, marketing, selling, etc.? We have lots of books, training manuals, and models in both NLP and Neuro-Semantics on these subjects. These are not areas that are beyond your intelligence, only perhaps beyond your desire or activity. Yet as a trainer, you know how to work on your attitude, your beliefs, your states, etc., do you not? And if you do not want to do these things yourself, then there’s another set of skills that will solve the problem—collaboration, partnership, delegation, etc.

Three newly licensed Meta-Coaches came up to me last night here in Hong Kong after the Graduation and told me about how they are joining together to create a Coaching company. I asked them about the roles that they would take with each other and a bit about how they would structure their collaborative partnership and was delighted to hear that they would do that. An excellent idea.

What’s your plans for expanding your trainings and your business this year? How much of your time every week are you or will you devote to working on your business?
From: L. Michael Hall
2011Trainers Reflections #19
May 10, 2011

TEACHING OR LEARNING?

I read the other day an interview with Helen Erickson, a daughter-in-law of Milton. The interviewer asked how Milton had influenced her. What she said set off inside myself several reflections.

“He [Milton] was so Socratic in his methods that I don’t think I’ll ever know for sure how he influenced me. He masterfully seeded ideas and let me discover them in my own time, so that I owned the knowledge.”

Now isn’t that a tremendous description of a self-actualizing trainer! Ideally, what a trainer does is to get people to become learners or discoverers on their own. That is what truly empowers a person, it enables them to discover things and to own their discoveries. And this is what people who come to our trainings genuinely want, is it not? Then she said this:

“I abandoned the concept of teaching years ago; I focus on learning. I know that teaching without learning has little lasting effect; focused on the educator teaching is often perceived by the leaner as trivial information. On the other hand, learning is contextual and ongoing. ... Seeding, direct and indirect suggestions, and reframing are extremely important techniques to help people learn.”

Now as a trainer, one of your core competencies is that of teaching. You present ideas, theories, understandings, beliefs, processes and you enable people to understand them. And as a Neuro-Semantic trainer you present the conceptual frameworks inherent in NLP and Neuro-Semantics and then seek to enable people to develop the requisite skills so that they can apply it to self so that it becomes part and parcel of their abilities.

Focus was the reflection that I came away with from the quotation from Helen Erickson. What is my focus as a trainer? Where is your focus? Is my focus on teaching or is it on learning? Focus on teaching and your orientation of your thinking and direction is on what you do, what you present, how you present it, etc. Conversely, focus on learning and you then create a very different orientation. Do that and your focus moves to what the participants, delegates, and audience are learning. And that’s a very different focus.

In reflecting on this, I typed out some distinctions that immediately came to mind between teaching and learning.
Two Orientations: Teaching Learning

Skills Yours 
Actions What you do (teach) Theirs 
What they do (learn) 
Direction What you put out What they take in 
Games Your Outer Game Their Inner Game 
Energy Energy put out in presentation Energy they expend in discovery

After I typed out these distinctions, I got thinking about my *core question* again. Is it: “Are people learning; are they having fun learning, what can I do to facilitate their learning?” Or could it be: “How brilliant was I today in my presentation? Did I impress them? Will they be talking about what a great trainer I am?”

So, what if you made it your job as a trainer to *facilitate learning and discovery*? What if the way you design your training, the way you present it, the way you use games, groups, teams, etc. within the training were all designed around *learning*— enabling and empowering people to become great learners? What if your goal and aim was that they become tremendously curious, playful, experimental, and practical? How would that change your focus?

We say in Neuro-Semantics that *framing is everything*. So here is a frame for your trainings that I believe would make a transformative difference and one that I recommend.
Within the processes that we carry out in the organizations, a tool that I have found particularly beneficial and innovative is the process that I call 'One-to-one' Mind to Muscle Training (Salom 2011). The 360º Evaluation Processes, which are part of any development effort, are a way in which the executives learn about their strengths and opportunity areas based on their own perspectives and those of their peers, bosses and subordinates. Such information is used to develop either coaching processes, for the training of the executive, or to develop corporate programs that cover common needs, amongst other things.

One of the processes that we, the Neuro-Semantics (NS) consultants, can offer and that brings an important added value is the 'One-to-one' mind to muscle training. I will now explain how to use it and integrate it in the development process of an executive:

• Let us suppose that the executive with whom we are working has already developed his relational map (See Trainers Reflections # 16, April 19/2011) and has found several interactions that are difficult for him to handle. He already knows what to do, but he needs to bring that understanding to the muscles.

• The NS Consultant identifies the behaviors that act as “triggers” for the client, by means of specific questions: What is it specifically that the other person does? What does he/she say? What gestures are present? Which are the facial expressions? All of this is done to find the “trigger”, but also the “complex equivalence” the customer has created.

• The NS consultant helps the client identify alternative meanings, by means of meta-questions, and by using mind-lines, until the most appropriate frames are found.

• The NS consultant learns the gestures, tones, phrases, etc. that the person with whom the customer interacts usually uses.

• A role playing begins in which the client practices new meanings and non-verbal equivalents and behaviors over and over; with the help of the NS consultant in simulations that practice different triggers. The process is repeated until the level of “congruency” between the meanings and the body expressions is satisfactory for the both of them.
• At the same time, all of the roleplaying is recorded (generally, between 4 and 7 different situations).

• At the end of the session (4 hours as an average), the new insights are reviewed and the emotions that accompany the client are explored, along with any new meaning that keeps emerging.

• During a second session (4 hours approximately, and it is advisable to do it the next day), the role-play videos are analyzed with the client and a college or a mentor chosen by the client. The purpose is for the client to reflect upon his/her experience from a meta-position so as to confirm new behaviors and meanings (the yesing pattern and the matrix detection and transformation patterns are used).

• A follow-up is given to the process during the next weeks, by looking for specific examples that the customer brings to the session.

Finally, this is the process that I believe could really add to the quality of learning that an executive can develop. And I don’t know of anyone in the market offering something like this. So in this regard Neuro-Semantics, as a model, gives a great advantage to anyone who wants to take Executive Development to the next level.
Trainer’s Reflection #21  
May 24th 2011  
Colin Cox (NZ) NS Master Trainer  

TRAINING MANUAL TIPS  

For more than 12 years I have been delivering trainings to the corporate business sector and numerous government departments both within New Zealand and internationally. I have recently aligned myself with three other training Companies and delivered trainings to their business clients as a collaborative approach, where I am adding value to their training business and their clients, in doing so creating a win-win for all involved.  

There is an expectation in the corporate sector that the content of the training will be of a high standard and that the presentation skills of the trainer will equally be of a high professional level. For this the client will pay handsomely and if the training goes well and everything meets the client’s expectations then repeat business is highly likely. The principle at play is a simple one, do a good job and you’ll likely be asked back. Do a sub-standard job and you will not be asked back! It’s that simple.  

From my experience the client is paying a large sum of money which includes picking up the bill for your international travel, accommodation and meals, not to mention the rate you charge for your services which could be as much as $3,000 - $5,000’s per day. What I want to focus on in this Trainers’ Reflection is a short fall I have observed by trainers and training companies worldwide who have tried to save on one of the valuable resources provided by the trainer, and that is the quality of the training manual given out to the participants.  

I recently heard a Learning and Development General Manager say of a training manual how she was disappointed with the poor quality of it and how she expected a much higher standard considering the huge financial investment her business was making. After seeing it myself I totally agreed with her.  

Here are some major points I’d like to present to you for you to consider before you next hand out your training manuals. Remember: I am targeting this reflection at the corporate business sector training specifically.  

Training Manual Tips:  
• The training manual will need to be printed in full color on every page. It will need to be printed on 100gsm paper.  
• Decide whether the resource is a training manual or a workbook or a combination of them both. This is important and will determine both the outlay and the delivery of the program.
• The contents page will accurately align with the pages in the manual and typing errors will be as minimal as possible, preferably error free.

• All our manuals are printed single sided so they can use the blank side to take notes that then correspond with the adjacent page.

• Font size used throughout to be no less than font size 11 and use no more than 3 styles throughout it which includes headings, sub-headings and italics.

• There will be no random blank spaces through the manual and the type fonts chosen within the manual will align with your website and other promotional material. This is often overlooked as a key consideration.

• The headings, sub-headings and bulleted points throughout the manual are the same.

• Page numbers and a footer are used throughout the manual.

• Clip art or photo’s are used to support key headings or titles and of course are high definition quality and in color, as are all diagrams and tables.

• Where necessary a bibliography and glossary are included at the back of the manual.

I’m sure I have missed something, but that is what has come to me at the time of writing. Finally the manual cover needs to be a 4-hole punch hard covered binder. I found a 4-hole is better than a 2 or 3 holed binder. The cover is to be in full colour and encapsulated (fully enclosed) with the cover stretched to all 4 edges and is to have a side cover and title also. Well... that’ll do for now.

**Closing:**

If you’re serious about fulfilling the expectations of a corporate client then you’ll need to have a training manual that is of a high standard and one that you are proud of. Participants take their manuals back to their offices, workstations and even back home with them. They’ll have people ask them what they learned and to show them what was covered in the training. Your manual is a promotional opportunity for you to have you and your training promoted long after you have completed the training.

Can you – hand on heart, say that your training manual is of a high standard and one that you are completely proud of? If not – what will you do about it?
GETTING THE EGO
OUT OF THE WAY

It’s no secret that we are often our own worst enemies and that the secret to our success is sometimes as simple as, “Just get out of your own way!” I recognized this in a trainer recently who came to one of the trainings. He knew that something, somehow he was creating an interference, but didn’t know what it was and therefore was not able to do anything about it. When he and I struck up a conversation during the break, I asked him if he had obtained from the training what he came for and he said that “no” he had not. That was all I needed to hear in order to begin diving in and heading straight for the center of his Matrix!

But I first got his permission. Not only did I ask what outcome he set for the training, I explored his intention and then his meta-intentions until I got a pretty high and strong one. Then pacing his values and visions, I dived in. I told him that I had been studying “blind spots” and learning how to find, expose, and address them, and suspected that with his training background, his understanding of NLP and Neuro-Semantics, the challenge was probably that of a blind-spot which, by definition, mean that he was blind to the very thing he was trying to become aware of.

“So what’s a person to do if that’s the case?” he asked and he asked with such intensity and commitment to his own development, I framed the needed intervention as a willingness to explore his frames-by-implication and the backside of his commitments and that when we begin to get close he would feel uncomfortable, then anxious, then some fear, maybe even dread. “Are you willing to embrace those emotions as they arise and not avoid them? Will you acknowledge them and use them to guide our direction as we move into areas that you might consider a shadow side or dark side?” He said he was.

So into his Matrix we went. I first grounded it in an actual time that he had recently become aware that “something was wrong with the world” (quoting a line from Morpheus). He had given a speech at a local club in his city and because he was one of three other speakers, he found himself unusually nervous as he gave a basic introduction to NLP and on a subject that he was very, very familiar with.

Getting his “first thought that comes to your mind as you are being in that situation, what are you thinking?” He gave me some politically correct statements: “This is a great opportunity.” “There’s a big crowd and this will help NLP and Neuro-Semantics develop here.” That kind of thing. “Okay, what else? What were some of the darker thoughts in the back of your mind that might have been stirring around back there?”

“What if I mess up? What if I don’t do a good job?”
“Okay, good, and what if you do mess up? Then what? What meaning would that have for you?”
“I wouldn’t like that at all! That would be disastrous for my business.”

“And the likelihood of your messing up so bad that it would be disastrous for your business?”
“Well not much.”

“Okay, so how strong were those thoughts of disaster?”
“Strong! Very strong. I felt my heart pounding.”

“Let’s say for the sake of exploration, that you mess up and it becomes disastrous for your business, so what? What would that mean to you?”
“Ahhhh ... it would mean that I’m not very competent as a trainer.”

“Hmmmm. One mess up and your lose your competency! Interesting, and if that is so, if that’s your frame about that, what do you believe about that? What belief holds that idea in place?”
“Well, that I have to do better and not mess up...”

(Interrupting) “Yes, that’s what you want to do... that’s about doing, but I didn’t ask about that. I want to know what it would mean to you, what you believe about not being competent as a trainer?”
“Ahhhh ... I don’t know. What do I believe about that? .... I think I believe that I have to always be competent, and that if I don’t people will see that and it will be the end of my business.”

“And what do you believe about being a competent trainer and training people in these tools of self-development and self-actualization? What do you believe this is about?”
“It’s about being good, about being skillful and competent. It’s about being recognized as skilled and able to do a good job...”

“So in the back of your mind, it’s about you? It’s about your reputation. It’s about what you can or cannot do, about what people think of you? Is that right?”
“Well, when you put it that way it sounds arrogant and I hate arrogance.”

“And ...” (Long pause)
“And? And ... well, I am not arrogant, I am trying to be as good as I can be ... and ...”

“And what does this say about the core question that your training answers? What core question are you trying to answer? (Pause) Could it be, ‘Do they see how skillfully competent I am?’”
“Are you saying that I shouldn’t be skilled or competent? Is that what you’re saying?”

“Is that your only other choice, if you don’t make the training about you, you think that you can be incompetent and forget about developing your skills? Is that the either-or choice that you’re considering right now?”
“(Long pause) ... No, I’m just being defensive. I was just feeling anxious about all of this, I guess my ego really is in the way, isn’t it?”
“I don’t know, is it? What do you think? If it is, how do you think it is in the way?”

“Because I’m focused on myself and not what I’m giving or the people who are there to receive it.”

“So are you ready for the paradox of success— that to succeed with people, you have to give people great learnings and experiences and tools and get your ego out of the way? Are you ready to change your core question to one about service and care and love for the people you serve?”

Post Script
As a Neuro-Semantic NLP Trainer, you began your NSTT training by using the Releasing Judgment pattern and then the Getting Your Ego out of the Way pattern. You established a Core Question, at least one, that would direct and govern your training. Success can sometimes create some strange paradoxical problems— like enjoying the success and then caring too much about yourself and your success. Success can be a big problem— it can ruin you. It can ruin your focus or the joyful delight of training. From time to time you might want to re-visit the patterns in your NSTT training manual so that you do not get in your own way. We all have far too much to accomplish to mess it up by believing in our PR!
Values into Action
An Exercise When working with Teams

In general, when an organization asks us to work for them, let’s say, in something intangible such as team values, we expect the two-day exercise to conclude with a series of phrases, full of unspecific verbs and nominalizations; in my opinion, the exercise ends up being a good wish list we like to call values/principles and we want them to rule the team destiny.

Last week, I met with a team of directors; it was a team of nine who were just starting to get to know each other. They had different educational backgrounds and they were part of a company who is trying to create organizational culture change.

On the first day, they worked with a colleague of mine who is a consultant; he took them mountain climbing, trying to create more familiarity and after that, he facilitated the process of writing the values of the company.

Next morning I showed up, invited by my collage in order to help them ground those values down and move the group to the next level. We had four hours for this activity and after thinking about it for a while, I thought about the following exercise and I would like to share it with this group. It is very simple and at the same time, it is highly productive if done properly.

In a team that is just being created and who wants to clarify the values that will guide their acting in practical terms, we can follow the procedure below. It is ideal for groups of no more than 10 individuals. The group developed a list of values. They would like those values to guide their behavior (this is done by consensus), so we developed the following steps:

1. Every team member answers the following questions individually:
   - What is my unique contribution, the talents I bring into this group? What does this group lose if I am not present? Where do I need help? How can they help me grow as an executive?

2. Then, every one takes turns and starts verbalizing the answers to those questions and through the NS consultant facilitation process, every one defines:
   - In what specific situations do they see themselves making these contributions? By doing what? By saying what?
   - With what individuals in this team precisely?
- They see what things being done and by whom (in the team), so that they feel helped, supported?
- What do they see themselves doing more frequently and with whom (in this team) on the next few days, so that they know they are moving in the direction suggested by the answers to their your questions?
- What do they see themselves doing less frequently and with whom (in this team) so that they know this exercise was a fruitful one?
- Participants state in what way actions that every one has proposed for himself, reflect or do not reflect values they agreed upon at the beginning of the exercise.
- Participants speak freely about what they learn about themselves, what they really value and what they learn from this team.
- Participants create a “collage” with charts, phrases, drawings and pictures and it must reflect how this team will look /and the new behaviors they will unleash, the next three months.

Session ends. At the end of the exercise, team members reported a high degree of satisfaction, expressed by comments such as: “very practical,” “we left with something concrete,” etc. I propose you do this exercise and watch the results and later on, you share them with us.
LEADING A COMPANY TO BECOME
A SELF-ACTUALIZING COMPANY

As you well know, after we Neuro-Semanticists launched the New Human Potential Movement in 2007, with every company that I work with, I plant suggestions about moving to become a Self-Actualizing Company. I hope you are doing that too! That is one reason why I wrote the book, Unleashing Leadership (2009). Ask me to speak to any group from any company, or at a public presentation where there are business people, and I will speak about a vision that I have— that we in Neuro-Semantics have— that you have, namely, of enabling companies and groups and communities to become so much more than they are today—to unleash their potentials for creating a culture that we describe as self-actualizing.

And no, this is not really new. For decades the leaders in business, in leadership studies, in management, etc. have been talking about a great many of the variables and factors that make up “self-actualization.” There is a whole page of these variables in Unleashing Leadership.

What is new, and what you and I have to offer that very, very few companies have, is a structure that embraces and explains all of the cutting-edge variables. We have a psychology that outframes all of the dynamic and revolutionary things that are happening with the “great companies,” the “excellent companies,” the companies that are the best places to work. We have the psychology of Maslow (who began the “new leadership” with his Theory Y of management, as articulated by Douglas McGregor, 1960 The Human Enterprise). We have Self-Actualization Psychology.

To that end we have several Self-Actualization Workshops that you and I can offer to businesses. After the Self-Leadership workshop (APG), there are four: Unleashing Vitality, Unleashing Potentials, Unleashing Creativity and Innovation, and Unleashing Leadership. The Training manual for Unleashing Leadership is now in its 10th edition.

Recently I had the wonderful opportunity to follow up a Unleashing Leadership I did with a company one year ago. I returned to South Africa and my opening question was:

Are you a better Leader this year than you were last year?

And because of the quality of the people there, several of them became completely engaged by that question so that throughout the day, they kept bringing it back up. They wanted to know how to measure being a better self-actualizing leader, how to benchmark it. And of course, using Self-Actualization Psychology, I had an answer. And you know it. Don’t you? What would you
I said, drawing the Self-Actualization Quadrants from the Meaning and Performance Axes, that the benchmark of the leader is the engagement level of the employees. The “pathway to self-actualization” for the individual in that model is the Engagement scale for a group or company. And yes, you can also read about this in the chapter on Engagement in Unleashing Leadership. 

The benchmark of the leader is the engagement level of the employees.

You know leaders are doing a good job by how engaged and passionate those following are.

I then essentially did “Day 3” from the training manual with 23 of the senior management team which included everybody from the C-suite (CEO, CFO, COO, etc.). I went over the indicators of a self-actualizing leader, manager, employee, and culture. That lead to several questions:

Where are you the most a self-actualizing company? Doing what? How do you know?
Where are you the least a self-actualizing company? Doing what? How do you know?
What changes do you need to make as a company to become a self-actualizing company?

We then spent 6 hours detailing out the changes that would be required. I was impressed! Here’s a group of leaders stepping up and accepting the self-actualization frames of what makes a great company. I introduced again the 3-Ps of the bottom lines of a Self-Actualization Company and the Hierarchy of Needs as a Business Model for employees, customers, leaders, investors, and company. What impressed me was that every single one of them were fully in agreement with the three Ps: Profit, People, and Passion as the purpose of the company. I think they had been thinking that way for years, they just did not have the overall structure or template that could embrace it. Now they do.

Are you training the Self-Actualization Workshops? The license for the first workshop, “Unleashing Potentials” requires some reading, some writing, and that you have experienced the workshop. You no longer have to do “the trainer’s day,” but there are some requirements like attending the workshop.

Why is all of this so important? It is important because if self-actualization doesn’t apply “at work,” then we are fooling ourselves. It’s important because most people spend the majority of their waking hours at work. It’s important because “business” is what makes the world go around, so the ability of people creating quality products, services, experiences, and information directly affects the quality of life. It’s important because via work most of us express our highest self-actualizing passions—our contributions that make a difference and that enable us to be at our highest and best. It’s important because via work people influence and lead other people and so the principles of self-actualizing management, leadership, and culture all apply.

Self-actualizing companies, cultures, families, and organizations is the next big coming wave and you are part of a community that specializes in self-actualization. Here’s to you actualizing your highest and your best as a trainer, a consultant, and a coach!
What Else Can We Do to Elevate Neuro-Semantic Trainer Skills?

I’ve been giving some serious thought about how Neuro-Semantic trainers are trained. We have an exceptional trainer’s certification training. At NS Trainers training (NSTT) everyone must present to a group of colleagues on one of the APG patterns—and do this numerous times. As they present they will be benchmarked against the core skills that are foundational in equipping them with the necessary competencies to be a good presenter. Some participants make the minimum benchmark of 2.5 across all the categories and there are those who exceed this mark and a few fall just short and require further development to reach the benchmark of 2.5.

I am both proud and pleased with how Michael and I, along with our co-presenters Omar and Lena have developed NSTT to date. Its improved in leaps and bounds since I first attended it as a participant when it was held in Sydney back in 2002. NSTT continues to be shaped with a relentless attitude of continuous improvement to offer the very best training for trainers of Neuro-Semantics. And it’s this frame of mind that compels me to write this Trainer’s reflection.

Are we doing enough to develop Neuro-Semantic trainers for the real world of training they’ll experience? Could we be doing more to assist new and existing trainers to realise a higher level of competence as a presenter? These and other questions have lead me to realise we may have overlooked a missing link and so I am using this brief trainer’s reflection to outline my thoughts and in doing so perhaps I’ll gain further clarity of my own thoughts and what we could do to take trainers training to the next level.

There’s quote that goes like this:

Nothing fails like success!

What this quote means to me is, you learn nothing from success and everything from failures, setbacks and disruptions of every kind. I think we’d all agree that it’s the setbacks we have in life, that we learn to develop personal resilience, patience, discipline and new strategies to overcome situations that have caused us either minor or extreme discomfort. It’s through these trialing experiences that we learn to rise above those situations that once caused us difficulties, and they have begun to be more run of the mill and we are able to address them with ease and comfort. In fact, we have learned to thrive in situations where we would have previously sunk and drowned.

There is a degree of this built into NSTT. I have seen skilled trainers wilt under the pressure of being benchmarked and begin to fade even more when they receive their score of a 1.5 or less! The stress of being benchmarked has unsettled many and for those who have adapted and risen to the demands. They have grown in skill and stature as a trainer and are better for the experience of the trials provided at NSTT.

In sport, trainers and coaches speak of this principle to improve their athlete’s success. They say “… we must train the way we are to compete…” They’ll also say “…Training must always be harder than the actual
competition...” When I am reminded of these principles and how they push the standard of a team or individual athlete to a higher level of excellence and achievement, then I wonder what we need to do to provide these principles either as part of our existing NSTT or in full as an advanced NS trainer’s training?

Capturing my previous thoughts where I said “…we learn nothing from our successes and everything from our failures.” And adding that to the following statement “…training must always be more difficult than the competition.”

With these principles in mind my thoughts are we need to integrate either in part or whole a number of reality based situations where the presenter needs to present in situations that would typically faze the presenter, unsettle them and even make them anxious as they present. And be bench marked at the same time. They need to be exposed to these situations often enough until they learn to respond appropriately and remain composed throughout the scenario as they present.

This would require a vast number of reality based scenarios that would be demanding for the presenter initially yet develop them to the point where they would be able to present to nearly any audience and under nearly any situation they may face. And doing all this while achieving the standard of a 4+ in all the NS trainer’s benchmarks.

Currently at NSTT, although there are stressors placed upon the presenter, they are presenting to the perfect audience and an audience who supports and desires their success to achieve. However, the world we live in and present to often provides audiences and situations that are less than perfect and it is this world I believe we must prepare our NS trainers for. And it is this level of training that I believe will assist in elevating an Neuro-Semantic Trainer to the next level and beyond a 4+ on the benchmarks.

I don’t have the room or time in this reflection to outline the 30+ reality based scenarios I have developed so far which I believe will train a presenter to extend their skill base to the next level of competency. I do know that there is currently no presentation skill training that offers the type of conditioning and skill development I am speaking of here.

The first pilot of this model will be in part presented at the Neuro-Semantic Leadership Team’s 3-day Presentation University training in Grand Junction in less than 7 days from now. I’ll let you know how it goes. So stay posted!
TRAINING BY DOING
WHAT YOU ARE TRAINING

On June 8th I was in South Africa and on the last day I had a full day before my plane left. So having a bit of time before my flight departed, I said yes to a business owner who had attended the Unleashing Leadership training the previous weekend. He had asked if I would come to his business and speak to his management team. I said I would. So he picked me up himself and we drove to downtown Pretoria where he then gave me a tour of his business. It is retail/wholesale products, groceries, etc., and he said that his biggest threat is the big super global stores that are coming into the area, stores like Wal-Mart.

Then I met with 20 of his managers and to my surprise, he wanted me to “speak” to them. “Okkkaaayy... and what do you want me to speak to them about?” I asked. And while he talked a lot in response to my question, what I ultimately discovered was that he really didn’t know. What he knew was that they needed motivation, attitude, communication, competency, etc. What he knew after having attended the Unleashing Leadership workshop was that he had failed them in terms of leadership and that the times were critical and they needed something. And he felt that I was that something. So he told them that he was bringing in “a motivational speaker.” Oh no!

When we went to the room where the 20 middle managers were, I was introduced to the group as I often am, as if I was some kind of miracle-worker from afar. I figured that either they were looking for great answers or anticipating that there were none and all I could offer was platitudes. I began with a statement and immediately followed it with a question:

“In every other area of life we lead best by asking questions. So demonstrating what I am speaking about, I have a question for you. Are all of you in this room right now, right here . . . are you a great team? Are you a high performance team? Do you love coming to work because of the people you get to work with and the fun you have?”

Silence ensued. I looked at each and every person slowly and deliberately. I looked at each other
with the eyes and face of anticipation that each one would answer. Then I asked another
question, using as common and down-to-earth-language:
“If a great performance team is 10 and 0 stands for you hate each other’s guts and want to
kill each other; where are you now. Call out some numbers.”

I waited. “5” one person called out. That was a very safe number to call out. And I thanked him.
“4” another said, then more “5s” then a “3” more “4s” ...
“Great. So you are a 3 to 5 team, right? Heads nodded up and down. So if you were to
become a level 6 team, what would it take? What has to change around here for you to
become a Level 6 Team? Call out some answers.”

Communication, better communication, knowing what’s going on, working together as a team,
attitude, respect, being diplomat, and so it went. And as the answers came, I wrote them as a list
on the flip chart in the front of the room and then thanking and acknowledging each person who
offered something. When the answers stopped, I paused, created a “pregnant pause” for
suspense, then summarized:
“So you know what to do! ... [pause] ... You know what needs to be done, don’t you? So
what’s stopping you? What’s going on so that you are not doing what you know to do? ...
[more pregnant pause].”

“Is it the case that you need to learn how to communicate better? Is it the case that you
need to take some time to become a group? What could you, as the leadership team here,
become the kind of team that would move to Level 6 and above?”

That opened things up and suddenly it became a dialogue and we, as a group, began really sharing
hopes, dreams, frustrations, fears, problems, struggles, etc. Suddenly they were asking me
intricate and intimate questions about how to handle the staff that they had to handle. Almost
without exception, I answered them with questions and then I stopped, and meta-communicated.
“Did you catch what I just did? Question: Did I give answers to you? Did I ask questions
that enabled you to create / find your own answers? How did that make you feel? If I had
played the ‘Answer Man,’ what would that have implied about you?”

That’s when a few of them got it. Aha! Leaders lead people to find and access their own
powers! They create more leaders! That’s the sign of a good leader, not the person who creates
more followers.

I tell this story because it was an ad hoc training, unplanned, one that I did not anticipate nor
prepared for. And it occurred because someone discovered at the Unleashing Leadership
training that they needed a whole new way. So stepping into this opportunity, I wanted to offer
not only a description and theory, but to be a model of how to do that.

Trainings are always for and about the people present. It is about what they need and what they
want, and if you and I are going to deliver that, we have to focus on that. We also have to get
through their expectations, assumptions, and past experiences. We have to get over ourselves
because as you well know by now, the training is never about you. It is always about them. And we deliver best, we present best when we demonstrate what we are talking about as we deliver it. This is not the easy path, but it is the path of being authentic, congruent, and powerful. May you be ever more powerful in this way.
HOW CAN WE OVERCOME THE 21-DAY SYNDROME AFTER AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE?

I just came back from the International Conference on Neuro-semantics, which took place from July 1 through July 3. On my way back home, I could not stop reflecting on the nature of such an event and on its importance. I would like to share some reflections as well as some simple and practical ideas, which might be useful for you who are reading this, when you attend a similar event in the future.

I believe that the last day of an international conference sometimes resembles December 31st: People say things in a sincere and honest way in the midst of genuine emotions they are experiencing; however, something happens (not every time and not necessarily) in the following 21 days… You start living it as a beautiful dream, as paradise, where you stop and charge your batteries every 12/18 months.

Is this a multiple personality disorder? Is it a personality dissociation phenomenon? Is it an intoxication produced by information overload? Is it the effect of confinement in the same place during several days, coexisting with the same individuals? Is it the consequence of using 3 different socks in 5 days? Or is it simply part of human nature and that is why, maybe monasteries and convents were invented? I don’t think so… What is it then? I don’t know.

But I can think of certain ideas and practices that might help us (I include myself, of course!) keep the International Conference and its flavor inside…

1. Before heading back to your country or to the city where you live, answer the following questions:
   a. What are the 2 specific and significant changes – that if I were able to make, would make my life move in the direction I want?
   b. What would be the small action, the simple action – that I could develop every day and that would help me achieve the aforementioned goal?
   c. What chart, phrase or symbol can I create so that it reminds me of those goals? – Something I can see every day, something memorable I have near me every day.

2. During your trip back home, remember different events that were significant for you during the Conference, whether they are in the order of occurrence or as they come to your mind.
3. Once you get to your place of origin, gather all the material and your notes and place them where you can see them every day, a place where you can stop during the day and simply check them and savoring the sensations associated to the event.

4. Design a micro-action, a small action every day, whose performance IS NOT possible not to carry out.

5. Discuss any concept with somebody every day, any idea, any practice you have learned in different workshops.

6. Write down the names and e-mails of individuals you contacted in a visible place and start contacting them one by one, at your own pace, but consistently. Place a check mark besides every name and try to get 15 check marks beside every name during the next 12 months.

7. Share with different individuals you met in different workshops and whom you trust, at least 6 experiences where you start applying what you have learned; try to use specific examples.

8. Identify concepts, processes and models that appealed to you especially and make your best effort to include them in simple and understandable language and share them with your conference colleagues who might be interested in them.

9. Identify concepts, ideas, tools that are not clear for you and ask your colleagues about them.

10. E-mail the speakers and tell them about your experiences, share information regarding their topic with them and ask them for their opinion and for some tips.

11. Start thinking now about the next NS International Conference. If you had to make a presentation of a relevant topic, one that represents a passion for you, namely trying to solve a frequent human problem, what would that be? And in a calm and unwary way, start making notes.

12. Think about a significant change, in your image, in your way of communicating, in your way of solving problems, in your way of working, etc., that you would like to share during lunch and during breaks in the next international conference and start working on it.

13. Write down the date of the next conference in your calendar and start counting the days that keep you away from that event.

14. Set yourself the goal of developing your persuasion skills; in other words, bringing the individual, encouraging him/her to come and get acquainted with the Neuro-semantics model.

15. Enjoy yourself in the process.
*! Special Announcement !*

It is with special delight to announce that we have inducted two more Neuro-Semantic Trainers into the Leadership Team— Alan Fayter of New Zealand and Femke Stuut of the US/ Netherlands. On the second evening of the First International Neuro-Semantic Conference we made the announcement and welcomed them into the team of those now guiding and leading this movement.

In terms of the movement that we have started, we are looking for more Trainers to step up to leadership both locally, nationally in the Institutes, and internationally. And as time moves on we would love to have each of the areas of focus in Neuro-Semantics (Coaching, Training, the Diplomas, etc.) with its own leadership team. So if you are wanting to step to leadership and be groomed for leadership as you touch the minds and hearts of people and bring out the best in people— there is a place for you.

**USING THE MIND-TO-MUSCLE PATTERN WITH A GROUP**

**Question:**
- Can you run the Mind-to-Muscle pattern with a group?
- If you can, how would you do that?
- Have you ever done that?

Yes you can! One of the processes I did the first of June with a group of 55 middle managers was the Mind-to-Muscle pattern. We had six divisions within the company present: Sales, Marketing, Research and Development, Business solutions (including IT and HR), Finance, and Quality. I asked them to gather around into groups and identify the critical success factors for their group.
- What factors are absolutely to their success?
- After that, what are the gaps and the possible solutions?

That was the preparation, after that I detailed out the Mind-to-Muscle pattern at the individual level with the group in order to drive home the point about closing the knowing-doing gap. My emphasis was on following-through on what we know and creating into an active initiative style of taking action on what we know.
- “So what about groups? Can groups similarly get into a state of knowing but not doing?
- Can a team of people create a culture of procrastination and avoidance of taking effective action?”
The questions were obviously rhetorical and designed to open up an awareness of the need for a group to also mind-to-muscle great principles into an active initiative style. So I next asked the teams to get together for 30 minutes and write out a mind-to-muscle set of statements from a principle that they all knew and intellectually understood to what they, as a group, could believe, make a group decision about, create the emotional intelligence mood for their group to operate from, and then a set of action statements, “the one thing we as a group will do this week to make this real is....”

As the groups were doing that, I walked around among the tables and circles of chairs to see how they were doing and to nudge them along the process. I used a coaching methodology as I asked questions, “What principle are you working on?” “Is that the most powerful principle for your area? How would that change things?” “How would you feel if that was fully lived?” And so on.

With the results that came in—I was impressed! The groups really labored and sweated coming up with their statements, writing, crossing out, debating, coming up with new statements, getting the words just right ... until they had taken one principle that articulated a critical success factor and detailed it into a statement that they whole group had created and now had made as a group action plan.

Then with that I did a summary. In fact, I announced that it was a “summary!” I did that to relieve them from the fact that I was about to “run a pattern” and “induce them into a state” and use “hypnotic language with them.” They didn’t need to know that.

“Okay, let me see if I can summarize what you have done in your different departments that all are designed to contribute to the smooth running and functioning of X (the name of the company). What you have done is identify some really critical success factors and as you look at one of the key ones that your group has co-created, you have put your finger on a principle that you know and believe in. And when you think about believing this principle and together making a group decision, ‘Yes, this is what we are doing to do!’ you can begin to feel again all of the emotions that this brings to you because you know how important it is and the value it adds and how it activates you into being at your very best. And so I didn’t hear everything that your group said as you identified the next steps that these feelings will move you to, but I’m sure that you do, or you can scan down the list on your papers ... and realize that this will turn things around so that you take your performance to a new level of excellence. ... So what do you think? Do you like this?”

So there you go—here is one way that you can run the Mind-to-Muscle pattern with a group and help them close the knowing-doing gap.

From: Lene Fjellheim
At the moment of this writing, I’m sitting in the Airport of Grand Junction and reflecting on the last three weeks of learning and training and my first visit to Michael Hall’s hometown. Last year in January The Leadership Team met up in San Francisco where we decided on arranging the First International Neuro-Semantics Conference in Grand Junction June 2011: Actualizing Excellence!

As a member of The Leadership Team I was invited to join the Presentation University run by Michael Hall and Colin Cox before the Conference and there I encountered my first witnessing of magic. As we practiced our presentations skills and got specific sensory based feedback we saw our blind spots and were able to refine our presentations. We were presenting under pressure and disturbances to be able to maintain focus. One of the frames presented that made a difference for me was, “I have an important message and I am the one to give it.”

After Presentation University we had our annual Leadership Summit meeting and Femke Stuut and Alan Fayter were invited and accepted to contribute in the team, to support and build the Neuro-Semantics community. I am proud to be on this team together with actualizing people from all over the world, South Africa, New Zealand, Mexico, USA, Hong Kong, Belgium, Netherlands and myself from Norway.

Actualizing Excellence in coaching, business and personal development was the theme of the First ISNS Conference and as it was a huge success from the first minute. Why? Because everybody there contributed to make the most of it. I heard several participants talking about how they felt they were pioneers and how special and magic it was to have the Conference in Michael Hall’s hometown.

All the presenters were participants as well, and during the weekend bonds were made between people that wants to live their lives with meaning and turn this into performance. Like one of the participants, Irena O’Brian said, “Concentrate on one person at the time and it's like a web that will grow bigger and bigger and make a huge difference in other people's life.” Having the luxury of being with people that take ownership for their choices in life and genuinely wanting to make the best of our their time, gives energy and hope when reality hits.

Presentations covered so many interesting subjects within personal development, personal and business coaching as well as great tips for how to build your training and coaching business that several had a difficult time deciding which workshop to attend and wished they could be two
places at the time.

Every evening there was a couple of hours for informal and wonderful conversations over a drink to discuss the learnings and meet up with old and new friends. I really felt what Michael has been talking about in every training I have attended—we are indeed a community. 2013 will be your next chance to join us. It will be in Kuala Lumpur, June 12-14, and I charge you to block the dates in your calendar so that you can experience and participate in making magic moments.

New Challenges!

I became an NS trainer in 2004 and have since run 29 NLP Practitioner, 11 Master Practitioner and 9 Coaching Genius trainings in Norway. When I attended my first ACMC in London in 2005 everything changed for me. Before then I had coached for 3 years using NLP methodology and patterns and had had lots of great conversations. When I learned the methodology of Axis of Change my coaching sessions changed completely and the results of my coachees increased rapidly. In the following years I have integrated more and more from the learnings of ACMC and every time I revisit I pick up more distinctions to be applied.

Last year I became PCMC, Professional Certified Meta Coach, and started the same year my three year internship to become a Meta-Coach Trainer. After having been a team leader I hosted an ACMC training in Oslo in February this year and then got the opportunity to co-train with Michael here in Colorado after the conference.

Did I do mistakes? Oh yes—I already have a long list of what I will do differently next time. Yet I got the opportunity to practice, to go from Mind-to-Muscle (M2M) and to learn from the master. And that's how I learn—by stepping up, being challenged, doing mistakes, getting feedback and then integrate learnings in the next opportunity.

There are several NS trainers in the process of becoming Meta-Coach Trainers and yet we need more of you to step up so that we can have trainings all around the world and aid people to Self-Actualize. If you're an NS Trainer and run trainings in NLP/NS you already have your market for hosting and running ACMC trainings and I challenge you to step up for your PCMC and Meta-Coach Trainer path. You will grow as a coach, trainer and leader and will be supported by Michael, the Leadership Team, and the community. Because in this community we want people to step up, reach for their potential and become an ambassador for ISNS. So how about it? When will you email Michael and say, "I'm ready"?

Magic occurred numbers time during the training as participants coached each other and created sacred moments. anchors like “How Fascinating!” for realizations, “How Fantastic!” for aha experiences and “Meta High-Five!” for celebrations set good frames. The last day participants stood up and told of their change of beliefs and how this training changed their outlook on life—magical moments I feel so privileged to be invited to listen to. And at the formal Ceremony when the team leaders stepped up and shared their stories and wishes for the group—once again many magic moments.
My flight leaves now and I'm headed back to my family and my every day life. I once again want to thank those of you that attended the conference and the trainings and are looking forward to seeing new and old faces in Kuala Lumpur in 2013.

Meta High-Five!

From: L. Michael Hall
A REAL LEADER

A real leader leads people. He or she does not lead machines or processes. And why not? Because you can’t lead machines or processes! When it comes to leadership, it is people that you people. You lead their minds and hearts. You lead them into the future from the present. You lead them by inspiring a bright future that bridges the gap between the present state and the desired state. When it comes to machines, a person manages the machine’s activities, maintenance, use, etc. But not so with people. People can hardly be managed at all and if you do find a way to manage them, they will resent you for it! And in the long term, all your techniques, manipulations, games, control, etc. will fail. Witness what’s happening in the Middle Eastern Countries.

So, a real leader leads people and leads them by bringing out the best in them via empowering them to be their best selves—to learn how to do self-leadership and to become leaders. The circle completes, leaders create the next-generation leaders! So are you doing that? Have you begun? Are you ready for this as a stretch goal?

Question: Do you want to be a leader? Great! Then get out of yourself, get over yourself, and spend time with people—listening to their heart, hearing their hopes, dreams, fears, worries, doubts, etc. Then co-create with them solutions that will bridge the now—then gap, the gap between aspiration—and innovation. That’s what a leader does. A leader traffics in the future and returns to the now with a vision about how to go “back to the future” with a group of people for an inspiring purpose.

So great leadership, like great coaching, is not about you, it is only through you. If you are too busy, too important, too self-absorbed to step out from behind your ego, your status, your greatness, your busyness and so on—you are not yet ready for leadership. You still have a lot of growing up to do. You have a lot of transcending your own ego, reputation, and lower-needs. And, of course, all of this applies directly and powerfully to trainers.

How? Well, as a leader of the minds and hearts of people, as a thought leader who provides information and as an experiential leader who sets up exercises, drills, and experiences to empower people to run their own brains, manage their own states, actualize their potentials, discover their possibilities, etc., you have to care more about people than your performances. Self-absorbed trainers who dance onto the stage, prance about with their slick presentations, their astonishing Power Point presentations, and who end with a dazzle that gets people applauding and saying how great the trainer is are not real leaders. They are self-absorbed actors needing attention and applause for their insecure egos.
Recently I discovered an aspect of leadership that most of us are blind to—the need of a leader to intentionally and consciously groom other leaders. The insight came to me during the Neuro-Semantic Conference when some trainers (who are solid and effective trainers in their own right) told me that they were looking for some acknowledgment and recognition from some of the trainers who were more experienced and who had been at it for more years than they. The structure of their experience was this: They looked up to the more experienced trainers. And because they did, they looked upon them as mentors and so they wanted an encouraging word, a bit of feedback, a little bit of wisdom that would help them take the next step or stretch them with a statement that would say essentially, “I believe in you! You have greatness yet to be unleashed!” And when they didn’t get that, they felt disappointed.

I say this is a blind-spot in many (if not most) trainers, because a good trainer will still feel that he or she is oneself still in progress and nowhere near one’s own potentials. So to turn around to those who are up and coming, the next leaders, may even strike one as something that a person is just not ready for. That’s why this may strike you as surprising, even shocking. “They’re looking to me?”

Yet if you have been training for some years, have some experiences of success behind you, then you can bet that there are new trainers and aspiring trainings looking up to you. Do you realize that? And if I now mention it to you, do you discount it or yourself? And if so, then it is now your opportunity to begin developing a whole new set of skills—the skills for grooming new leaders! Skills for identifying them, spending time enabling them to take their next level of development.

So here’s my challenge to you: Set a goal within yourself to make it your objective to not only lead but to be a developer of leaders. Think more widely and expansively than just yourself. Perhaps the greatest act of leadership you may ever do is that of developing, grooming, and turning loose great leaders from among those you train and coach! When I interviewed Graham Richardson in April and asked him the why question, “Why do you do what you do? Why Executive Coaching?” his answer was quick and succinct: “To turn loose great leaders into the world.” May you and I do the same as well!

From: L. Michael Hall
UNDERMINING MASTERY
BY CONTAMINATING MODELS

When I listened to Colin presenting the Five Keys to Master as the Post-Conference presentation, one of the places my mind went on several occasions was to how we humans, and especially myself, undermine mastery. Now let me juxtaposed that with something that occurred during the Conference. With so many Meta-Coaches and Trainers present, one thing that I talked to many of them about was about various people in the Neuro-Semantic community who seem to always be seduced by new models and then trying to combine them with Neuro-Semantics.

Now because they are forever exploring other models, the way they undermine mastery is that they do not spend the time and effort to fully understand Neuro-Semantic NLP. And so when they try to combine the two or more models, their inadequate knowledge only makes the attempted merger all that more ineffective. What a great way to undermine your mastery! What a great way to stay for years, even for decades, at a superficial level of understanding and competency. Always chase the next “new thing” and cut short learning Neuro-Semantics in depth.

Now in the field of NLP this seduction has actually been very intense and explains why there is a severe leadership deficiency in the field. People may have been training Pract. And Master Pract. For years—even decades, but they keep contaminating it by adding non-NLP things to it—Myers-Briggs, the Inneagram, Huna, EFT, falsely so-called “quantum psychology,” Wilbur’s Integral transpersonal psychology, and so on. I have seen descriptions of “NLP Practitioner” courses with each of these things in it and many more.

When I see this kind of thing, my first question is always: “When do they have time to introduce these non-NLP models and what are they leaving out to be able to do that?” Even with extending the Practitioner to 10 or 14 days (which is my preference) I still cannot cover everything even in the Meta-NLP training manual in a thorough way. So what are these others leaving out? And the answer is that they are probably leaving out all of the things that they don’t know and don’t have a good understanding about.

The fact is, the NLP model is a fully functional model in and of itself. As a communication model, it has just about everything you need for training effectively, enabling someone to become effective in business, life, relationships, health, etc. And this is even more true of Neuro-Semantics. Within it are all the essential processes for modeling any experience and actualizing your highest meanings and values into your best performances. So what else do you need?
When I wrote that last question, I wrote it as a rhetorical question: *What else do you need?* But on second thought, let me know put it as a true question, one in which I’m looking for some answers. What else do you need? Perhaps it is the case that you are simply unaware of how the Neuro-Semantic NLP models addresses various aspects of human functioning, thinking, emoting, relating, doing business, etc. Or perhaps there are some areas in which the models do not yet have a response. Whatever the case, I’d like to know what people are looking for.

Another possibility is that a person has expectations of a model that neither it nor any other model could satisfy. I’m now thinking about someone wanting a “get rich quick” model. If that’s what you want, then we do not have that in Neuro-Semantics or NLP. If that’s what you want, go to where the money is and just take it. Of course, you may then end up in prison, or shot, or worse.

An old English statement, one that’s been around for centuries, goes like this: “Beware of the man of one book.” And that, of course, applies to women. The saying highlights the power of concentration, of focus, of staying with one thing until you know it inside-out.

Now while I didn’t set out to do that, that has been a key factor for me throughout life. When I first entered the field of psychology, I studied and read everything Freud wrote. I did that exclusively seeking to understand myself and others. When I had a solid understanding of psychoanalysis, I move on. My next stop was with Adler and Individual Psychology. I only studied Adlerian psychology for a whole year before I got interested in TA (Transactional Analysis), that was 1978. In 1980 I moved to Cognitive psychology and focused on that until 1986-7, that’s when I found NLP. And because NLP is itself a cognitive-behavioral model, that has become my focus for the past twenty-four years.

The point is that if mastery requires focus, concentration, and persistence, we undermine it if we are forever jumping around tasting this, tasting that, and never settling in to give our full focus on something. We undermine mastery if we are never giving ourselves fully and completely to one model but always trying to see how it matches another one. The story of mastery in any person’s life is one of persistent focus. May you be one of those who walk the path of mastery!
The Need for Another Trainers Level

If you’re reading this Neuro-Semantics Trainers’ Reflection it’s because you’re on the Neuro-Semantics Trainers’ egroup. To be able to achieve that you need to have attended Neuro-Semantics Trainers Training at some stage. You’re therefore familiar with the level of skills development, trainers benchmarking and the need to reach a 2.5 across the trainer skill sets of group rapport, engagement, framing, induction of state and semantic space etc... Like you I have passed through Neuro-Semantics Trainers Training also.

I have attended NSTT, both as participant and as co-presenter with Michael at seven NSTT’s with my eighth this year in Hong Kong this coming October. I’ve witnessed a lot of growth in the content and delivery of this program and how this continued growth has positively raised the level of trainers graduating from NSTT over the 9 years I have been involved with Neuro-Semantics.

With the Neuro-Semantics Master Trainer pathway formalised a new level of competency in training delivery was confirmed and the question arose in my mind – “How do we provide another level of Advanced Trainers training to graduate a person from NSTT onto the Master Trainer level?” And it was this question that has lead both Michael and I and the Neuro-Semantics Leadership team to finalise a training that could do just that – take our Neuro-Semantics Trainers to the next level.

If our organisational strap line as Neuro-Semanticists’ is “Actualising Excellence,” than how are we promoting that as Neuro-Semantics Trainers? Are we seeking development stretch goals for ourselves as trainers? What exactly is the next level of competency for those trainers who graduate from NSTT? Is there a gateway training for those who wish to pursue the Neuro-Semantics Master trainer certification? And so these questions and many others related to this topic gained momentum within me and in partnership with Michael we have trialed the next level of training for those who wish to do just that as a trainer, an actualise your excellence.

The live trial of this advanced Neuro-Semantics Trainers Training program entitled Presentation University was undertaken in Grand Junction prior to our first ever Neuro-Semantics Conference. The trial program was attended by the Neuro-Semantics Leadership team who were put through intensive exercises, evaluations, and coaching over 3-days that stretched them attitudinally and behaviourally. It consisted of breaking through identified limitations and pushing each of them to break new ground in how they would approach their presentations in future.

Remember that this group was a group of very competent and highly skilled Neuro-Semantics trainers prior to attending this training. Could we provide them with enough challenges that would further promote their growth, while also accommodating each of their individual needs as an experienced trainer? There would be no better crucible to test an advanced Neuro-Semantics trainers training program than with the group that was asked to attend.
Did we achieve the goal we had set? The goal of providing a training that would take our Neuro-Semantics Trainers to the next level and if they chose, to move onto the Neuro-Semantics Master trainer certification? The short answer *Yes, absolutely we did!* The feedback we received from the Leadership Team was that it was a great success. It challenged all who attended and each found a new level of development as a presenter and trainer. As expected there is some further fine tuning necessary to enhance the program, which would take the training to a full 5-day advanced Neuro-Semantics Trainers Training.

This advanced Neuro-Semantics Trainers Training will be released in 2012. It is not for the faint hearted—we know this from experience. It is a program for those who know they need to be pushed, teased, prompted and critiqued to take their trainer and presentation skills to the next level. It’s a training that will give you the impetus to pursue the Neuro-Semantics Master trainer certification. It’s a training that will play a vital part in you actualising your excellence as a trainer, taking you above and beyond your Neuro-Semantics Trainers Training.

This reflection was to bring our advanced Neuro-Semantics trainers training to your awareness. To let you know that this training will be available next year. I know there is a demand for it. Are you interested? Would you like to know more? If so contact either Michael or myself directly.

To your highest and best...

Colin Cox  
Neuro-Semantics Master Trainer (ISNS)  
[colin@ignition.org.nz](mailto:colin@ignition.org.nz)
MASTERY AND PREPARATION

Here’s a powerful way to undermine your development of excellence and pursuit of mastery: wait until the last minute to prepare. This is a formula for how to stay superficial, shallow, and a light-weight as a trainer and presenter. Avoid, by all means, taking the time and putting in the effort of study and preparation in view of a long-term goal. Adopt a belief like one of these:

“I work better under pressure.”
“I’ve always been able to ace tests and things by cramming at the last minute.”
“I’m best at speaking off-the-cuff in the moment.”

Now as a trainer if you decide to begin making presentations or workshops at Conferences, the call for papers will typically come out six to nine months prior to the Conference. That’s when you write your proposal of subject, title, 100-word description, workshop objectives, etc. That is also when you should begin your preparations and continue for several weeks. That’s what I do. I always take two weeks, get the full preparations done, then write the final proposal and send it in. When I send it in, the workshop or presentation or keynote is done. I know specifically what I will present and I have worked out the details of the plan for how I will present the materials.

Having done that, then I can let it simmer in the back of my mind for the next six-months. From that point, I can read in certain areas, I can write some notes on my outline, I can think through the exercise or demonstration that I plan to do. In other words, once the work is done, after that I give myself a period of months for the refinements. This process provides several benefits. At the top of the list is that it completely eliminates the “stress” that occurs at an unconscious level of knowing when you know that you still have to get prepared for the Conference. And that frees your mind to be more present in what you are doing.

Ah yes, preparation—the breakfast of champions. The daily, focused preparation that establishes the foundation for excellence. Now I write this as a challenge to those of you who wait, and wait, and put off, and procrastinate about your preparations. And you know who you are! When you do that, you are cheating yourself, and you are cheating those who you will present to. When you do that, you doom yourself to stay on the surface and to not develop the depth of understanding that’s required if you want to develop true excellence.

If you go to a Conference and you are still “working on your presentation” and worse, if you are sitting in the back of someone else’s presentation working on yours (!!), then you are missing out on the value of measured, scheduled, and step-by-step preparation. Oh, yes, did I mention that you will have to expand your meta-program to procedures to do this? Did I mention that you will
have to expand your meta-program to one of proactivity? Ah yes, there is a structure to the excellence of long-term preparation. And did I mention that you might have to expand your time meta-program from in-time to through-time so that you can sequence things and make time for the in-depth preparation?

You can be a weekend-athlete by preparing at the last minute, *but you cannot be a high quality athlete or expert if you live your life that way*. So what will it be?

- Do you know how to create a plan or strategy for long-term planning for a training, a workshop, a conference keynote? If not, then make that your first step.

- Do you have the meta-program flexibility so that after you consider the options of what to present, to then sit down and work out a procedure for the workshop that you select? Are you ready to create that kind of flexibility? That might be the next step in your plan.

- Do you have the beliefs that support you in planning your preparations and preparing your plans? Are there beliefs that limit you from this that need to be changed?

- Have you created the genius focus state of engagement on studying, thinking, preparing, etc.? If not, are you ready to do that? Do you need a Meta-Coach to coach you through the process?

The inescapable fact is that *mastery requires preparation*— lots of preparation, scheduled, and disciplined preparation. Finally, what are your personal internal neuro-semantics about the word or idea of *preparation*? Does your psycho-logics love preparation? Does the term *preparation* excite you? Delight you? Do you look forward to the preparation time as much as to the delivery time? Do you work as hard and intense during your preparations as during the “show time” of when the day of delivery comes?

I recently re-read what Tim Goodenough and Mike Cooper wrote about “Work Ethic” in their book, *In the Zone*. They found that a strong work ethic is one of the foundational facets of the top athletes and they found that in the practices, the drills, the times in-between the games the top athletes worked as hard and intensely as on the day of the big game. How about you?

To your highest and best Preparations for Excellence!

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**2011 Trainers’ Reflections #34**

**Guest Author: Andrew Tham**
THE SEVEN SINS
NLP TRAINERS COMMIT

What explains succeeding at getting people to NLP and Neuro-Semantic trainings? Michael asked me to identify what I’m doing and in thinking about it, I realized that maybe part of the secret is what I was not doing. What I was not doing was just common sense to me so, for me, it didn't make sense that other NLP Trainers didn't know about it already.

During the first 2 years of my career as a NLP Trainer, with my supportive wife and enlightened colleague, Fiona, I discovered by trial and error that there are certain “sins” that if a person commits these, it will make succeeding at operating a Training center harder. It was when I began to consistently avoid committing any of these sins that I began to attract and retain more students. So perhaps that’s the answer.

I’m also glad to say that many of my students have become close friends of mine. Perhaps that’s a secret! So anyway, in the spirit of contribution, I humbly present THE 7 SINS of NLP TRAINERS. Here are “sins” to avoid committing!

1) NOT UNDERGOING THE SELF-ACTUALIZATION PROCESS
One of the formative experiences of my life was attending the first Self-Actualization workshop, then the title was Ultimate Self-Actualization Workshop (USAW, and now Unleashing Potentials) and becoming a licensed Self-Actualization Trainer. After running 4 batches of USAW, I began to mind-to-muscle many of the positive aspects of the Crucible Experience, truly a transformational experience on how to be great without suffering greatly. I urge all NS Trainers to attend USAW and become a licensed Self-Actualization Trainer.

2) NOT DELIVERING SERVANT LEADERSHIP
Some people think that the P in NLP stands for Profit. If it should stand for anything, P should stand for People. While a NLP Trainer can be in a position of Leadership, it should be Servant Leadership (a concept developed by Robert K. Greenleaf) where skills such as Listening,
Empathy, Healing, Awareness, Stewardship, and Commitment to People Development are important. All my students get a free re-sit on the same program in future. And all of them have a lifetime learning warranty giving them 'free' coaching from me in future for the price of a cup of good coffee. Servant Leadership could also help you to collaborate better with other trainers and organizers.

3) NOT LEARNING & APPLYING MARKETING CONCEPTS
A NLP Trainer who can't sell well is one without a well-formed income. All NLP Trainers should spend 50% of their learning time on learning more about marketing. From Jay Abraham I have learned and applied many marketing concepts such as 3 ways to grow a business by increasing the number of customers, increasing the average transaction value, and increasing the number of transactions.

4) NOT NEGOTIATING WITH POWERFUL BELIEFS
In my early years as a NLP Trainer, I agreed to conduct certain trainings which I later regretted taking up due either to unethical organizers or unready participants. What you may find most useful to protect your reputation and interest is to have the ability to say “NO!” when your radar picks up certain danger signals, especially when your minimum terms (BATNA— Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement) have not been met. For more on BATNA, refer to Roger Fisher and Donald Trump.

5) NOT USING LOGICAL LEVELS & META-STATES TO FRAME LEARNING
While NLP stresses the primacy of the movie mind experience, I have found that using logical levels and meta-states to anchor and frame learning and marketing to be so much more effective than using meta-modalities. Credit to Robert Dilts and L. Michael Hall for teaching us about using belief and value systems to influence people emotionally and with integrity.

6) NOT DELIVERING TRAINING WITH PRACTICAL APPLICATION
Too many NLP Trainers present NLP two levels too high on the ladder of abstraction. How do I know? Many practitioners trained by other NLP Trainers come to see me to re-attend the entire practitioner program. One of the formative experiences of my life was attending Tony Robbins’ Date With Destiny’ (DWD) Seminar. I learned so much as a participant, trainer and organizer on how to anchor and frame practical learning in memorable and eventful ways. Some NS Trainers go on to attend other NLP Train The Trainer programs after NSTT. While that may be good, a better idea could be to attend DWD for a different kind of experience. Between NSTT and DWD, I learned all that I needed to present in a practical way.

7) NOT HAVING LINGUISTIC VERSATILITY
From Kofi Annan, I have learned that 'suffering anywhere concerns people everywhere' and what better way to start helping others than by learning to speak fluently in more than one language. Kofi speaks 5 languages, and I can deliver NLP training in English, Malay and Cantonese. This linguistic versatility could help you to collaborate with other trainers and organizers. You could triple your market share. Sounds too simple? Maybe, but I have found that it works!
As you can see by now, the *heart of NLP* was and still is about modelling the best people in their fields. I found the following quotation by Ralph. W. Sockman to be a guiding principle:

“In all living there is a certain narrowness of application which leads to breadth of power. We have to concentrate on a thing in order to master it. Then we must be broad enough not to be narrowed by our specialties.”

To your best, Andrew Tham, Malaysia  
Certified Trainer of Neuro-Semantics, NLP & Competency Education
Is the Devil in the Detail?

The “Devil is in the detail” idiom, refers to the importance of your success is found in paying attention to the details. Even the most minute details become important to those wanting to achieve a high level of competence.

As you learn a complex co-ordinated skill, your primary focus initially, will be targeted towards learning the major components of that skill. However if you wish to gain a greater level of accomplishment you will need to gain further insight into what you are not doing correctly to take your skill level to a higher level of proficiency. To do this you will need to shift your focus from being focussed on the gross and more obvious components of the skill, towards being conscious of the finer and more minute details. This approach is a consistent strategy used by those who do achieve mastery.

As Neuro-Semantic Trainers you will have achieved a level of mastery of the foundational skills required to deliver training. Yet, to achieve a greater level of proficiency you must begin to focus on the details of what you do. What details do I recommend you focus on? Well ... here are some questions for you to consider so you can begin to focus on those finer details that I believe truly make the difference in your continued growth as a Neuro-Semantic Trainer:

**Front of the Room Setup**
Do you have bags, props, cables, cords or even table clothes that need to be straightened, removed or put elsewhere, tied down or covered? Does the front of the room speak well of you? What meanings could an audience make of the appearance of the front of the room that could undermine your training?

**Room Peripherals**
Do you have irrelevant pictures, posters or wall adornments that are not connected to the topic you are presenting that need to be removed, straightened or covered? Are the walls of the room cluttered, messy or too attention grabbing?

**Registration Desk**
Is it tidy, clean and everything in order? Are there items on it that have nothing to do with the registration process that need to be removed? Is everything at the registration desk that needs to be there to make the process a smooth and enjoyable experience prior to your training?

**Facial Expressions**
How aware are you of your facial expressions and the alignment they have with what you are saying? Are you aware of any micro facial expressions that detract from what you are saying? Do these micro movements show incongruence in your message?

**Physical Gesturing**
Are you aware of what your feet, hands and arms are doing? Are they in sequence with your words as you speak? Or are they slightly out of synch? Are they too large or small? Is the speed of your gesturing exactly right to support what you are saying? Are you moving too little or too much?

**Voice**
Is your volume too loud or too quiet for the room and size of audience you are presenting to? Are you squeezing the appropriate words to achieve the meaning or state you are wanting to convey? Are you squeezing words too long or not long enough? Is the pace of your voice too fast or slow. Are you enunciating your words clearly or do you have specific words blending together inaudibly?

**Closing Thoughts**
Although I have given you some areas which you can begin to focus on, the list above is not complete. You could consider more closely your timing, story-telling, humour, rapport, training manuals, your dress, marketing material, the way you sit or stand and how you respond to questions etc. The scrutiny of all you do is vast, yet rewarding, as you make the appropriate adjustments to how you present.

The devil is in the detail, as a saying, reminds me to be more aware of the smallest of things that need correction to further guide me towards a higher level of competency as an Neuro-Semantic Trainer. In my opinion, it is the meticulous attention to detail and the consistent scrutiny of your presentations, that will support your development as a trainer who wishes actualise their potential.

Colin Cox
Neuro-Semantic Master Trainer
[www.colncox.co.nz](http://www.colncox.co.nz)
THE PURITY OF A SYSTEM

If you don’t have a system, the next best choice is to be eclectic and take a little bit of this from one place, a little bit of that from another, and put them together into a mix and hope that they don’t collide with each other too much or create confusion or chaos for your participants. Eclecticism is a great choice when a field is still under construction, when key theorists are still putting theories and possibilities together about how a particular domain works. It is not so good when there is a workable system, especially one that is systemic. And that’s where I have a great message for you, and maybe a shocking one.

The NLP System

Is NLP a system? Yes, you bet. Some 10 years ago I put together a page that defined it as a system—a system with a theoretical base (foundation, framework), variables as elements and components within that system, guidelines or heuristics for how to use the variables and apply the theories (even make hypothesis and test them), and then the resulting patterns or processes as practical applications.

So yes, NLP is a system and that’s why I find it so incredibly frustrating to see NLP trainers who should know better add a bit of Myers-Briggs, add a bit of Taylor-Johnson, or DISC, or Enneagram, or so-called Quantum this or that, or Huna, or any other of a dozen non-NLP pieces to it. Doing that contaminates the system. Doing that prevents one from working with the fundamental NLP model systemically. Doing that leaves open with a hodge-podge of glued together bits so that one operates as if from a “grab bag of tricks” instead of a systematic approach based on a solid theoretical foundation.

And what is the theoretical foundation of NLP? Hello Korzybski and Bateson! “The map is not the territory,” human beings make abstractions (draw conclusions) from their experiences and invent mental maps for navigating the world and as they do, their actions, responses and emotions are functions of those maps. Meet a person at his or her map of the world, match it, seek to understand it, and then offer a new strategy if they want one. Simple and profound! And yes, the majority of traditionally trained NLP trainers do not know this! Shocking but true. They have been poorly trained and so their trainings are low quality as we have all seen.

The Meta-States System

Is the Meta-States model a system in and of itself? Yes, you bet it is! It also has a theoretical framework (the operation of reflexivity, the meta-move to transcend one state to another, that sets a higher frame, that governs the system back down into neurology), it has variables,
guidelines, and it leads to hundreds of Meta-State patterns and processes. The page I created ten years ago contrasted NLP and Meta-State systems in these terms.

The Neuro-Semantic System
Yes, another system and yes, one that works perfectly well as an integrated and holistic system in and of itself. Why? Because it fully incorporates the NLP and Meta-State systems. Its framework now goes to two mechanisms as fundamental functions of the human mind-body-emotion system: meaning (semantics) and performance (neurology). And that’s why the full system incorporates and makes practical the Self-Actualization Psychology of Abraham Maslow and why the Self-Actualization models and workshops are now at the center of the system.

The Meta-Coaching System
Yes, you guessed it— another fully integrated system that embraces and holds together all of the previous systems and gives practical application in terms of one of the newest modalities— coaching. As such a well-trained and certified Meta-Coach has within his or her possession all of the distinctions to facilitate performance, developmental, and transformational coaching. He or she needs no other models.

Yet in our field there is the seductive temptation to opt for more options! “Enough is just not enough, I want more.” For some this drive is driven by a fear, “What if I’m missing out on something?” And so there are Meta-Coaches, there are Neuro-Semantic NLP trainers who, not satisfied with a full-fledged system, are always out there searching for the newest, the latest, the most sensational, the most expensive, the next guru, etc. Sad.

Sad because it means that they will be a mediocre Meta-Coach or Neuro-Semantic Trainer and a master of nothing. Sad because they will not be employing the 10,000-hour rule (the 10-year rule) for mastery and so not persisting and not developing depth and quality in their knowledge or skill level. They will stay mediocre at best and fail to develop any real expertise at worse. Is that what you want? I hope not.

With a fully integrative system like the systems we have in Neuro-Semantic NLP, you really do not need to go elsewhere! One of the genuine pleasures I now have been experiencing is that given I’m in my 25th year with NLP (1986 to 2011), my 15th year with Meta-States (1996-2011), and my 10th year with Meta-Coaching (2001-2011) I now have the pleasure of seeing and experiencing the systemic interfaces between the models and patterns. And I’m beginning to use the materials systemically in a way that would have been impossible a few years ago.

So my encouragement to you, my challenge to you, my invitation to you— Refuse to be seduced by the shallow temptation to jump ship and chase the latest fad and stay committed to the path of mastery of learning to think and work systemically within Neuro-Semantics. Do that and there is the magic of peak experiences awaiting you!
NEURO-SEMANTICS AS A SYSTEM

The point of the previous Trainers’ Reflection (#35) is that if we have a complete system in Neuro-Semantic NLP, then we don’t need to be eclectic. And the fact is—we do! The NLP Model and the Neuro-Semantic Model is a consistent, thorough, and systemic approach to working with people. That’s precisely why you do not serve yourself, or your participants, well when you drag in bits and pieces from other models, whether it is the Enneagram, EMDR, Thought-Field, etc. Actually, when you do that, you are demonstrating that you don’t fully understand the richness of the Neuro-Semantic NLP Model and how to use it systemically and systematically.

From The Sourcebook of Magic, Volume II, here is some information for understanding the systemic nature of this field. It is under the section, “NLP and Neuro-Semantics as Models” and focuses on the nature of a true model, model with a capital M.

“Because we present NLP and Neuro-Semantics as models, a legitimate and profitable exploration can be had by questioning what a model is and what are the necessary and sufficient elements that make up a model.

- What does it take to have a full model?
- How is NLP a model?
- How is Meta-States and Neuro-Semantics a model?

As a model, NLP grew our of numerous models that preceded it as the co-developers enriched the former models and constructed a model about the structure of experience. And this development of model building and refinement now continues with Neuro-Semantics. The key to the Neuro-Semantic updating and re-modeling of NLP has been driven by the going meta process. The discovery of the Meta-States Model has enabled the remodeling of many of the facets and patterns in NLP. What happened is that we identified numerous meta-domains within NLP. For example, the discovery that sub-modalities were not sub, but actually the cinematic features of the representations, hence meta-modalities.

Nor is the process complete. Thinking more strategically and systemically about the models that we now have will enable us in the months and years to come to create more comprehensive models and refine the ones we have.
NLP and Neuro-Semantics Compared

The Necessary and Sufficient Pieces that Comprise a Model

1) A Theory:
   A theoretical background, foundation, hypothesis, etc. that offers an explanatory model for how the model or system works, the governing ideas and how to test and refine the ideas in order to create new applications.
   Ideas that can be tested and falsified
   Answers *Why* Questions
   Epistemology

2) Variables and Elements:
   The pieces and parts that make up the components of the model.
   Answers the *What* Questions.
   *What* elements are absolutely necessary and sufficient to make the model work? *What* processes?

3) The Guiding and Operational Principles:
   The “laws” or principles (presuppositions) that define and articulate the mechanisms that make it work and how to use them in a methodological, systematic, and systemic way.
   This gives one the ability to keep refining the model.
   Answers the *How* questions:
   *How* does the model work? *What* processes, mechanisms govern it?

4) The Technologies or Patterns:
   The specific tools that provide immediate application for using the Model or System to achieve something.
   Answers *how to* questions:
   *How* do you reframe meaning? Etc.

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THE NEURO-SEMANTIC BRAND

As a licensed Neuro-Semantic Trainer, you have a great brand that you can present and sell. Whether you organize and sponsor public trainings or whether you sell yourself as a trainer and your trainings within organizations, you have an international brand that you can present. So do so. This will increase your credibility, the value of your training products and experiences, and raise the significance of the training.

- How aware are you of this?
- How skilled are you in presenting the Neuro-Semantic Brand?

I realized this after I did some recent interviews. I was interviewed last month by the editor of an NLP Journal and then I did a skype interview for an Association, the NLP Association of Canada. Then over the past six months I have been collaborating with Shelle Rose Charvet on the book, Innovations in NLP, Volume I. The past two months we have been going through the editing process and for the section in the book, “Innovative Communities” I have been shocked by the fact that there are so few communities. In fact, Neuro-Semantics stands out as really the only true community in this field. This has reminded me again, in a pretty shocking way, that what you and I have in Neuro-Semantics is truly unique and special in the field of NLP.

Here’s a test. Ask a thoughtful and ethical NLP practitioner anywhere around the world what they would wish for the field that would improve things for them and make their job of selling their trainings, and they will say this:

A unified front, more leadership among the NLP trainers and writers, trainers who would get along with each other, a positive image of NLP, the disappearance of the negative PR, an international association, international standards for what NLP is and what’s required, for consistency, new developments in the field, etc.

How about that! When I heard people say such and when several interviewers shared that with me, I realized that what they long for, we have! What a great many, if not the majority of NLP practitioners around the world, want is what you and I have in Neuro-Semantics! Somehow, however, I often forget that. I suppose I get caught up in various projects and forget what we have already created that is unique in this field. Yet every time I am reminded of this, feelings of
appreciation flood my heart and I have one of those momentary peak experiences of delight regarding what we have done together and are doing.

Here is what we have that is truly unique in the field of NLP.

• We have a united front — we present a consistent message and we do that in spite of all of the differences from having Neuro-Semantic people in 38 countries. And as we have more and more Institutes and Institutes using the basic format of the primary website, a level of consistency is created that is the envy of the rest of NLP!

• We have a focused and intentional leadership and we are grooming leadership from the ground up. It begins with trainers cooperating and launching Institutes; it shows up in trainers collaborating as they work together to promote Neuro-Semantics in their country. It shows up in grooming local leaders for practice groups.

• We have a positive image. We have an image of applying NLP to ourselves and using it to mind-to-muscle and implement what we know. It is an expression of the reflexivity that is modeled in the Meta-States Model and leads to “apply to self” as the heart of our practice. We have an ethical code, an accountability structure, a focus on meaningful performance (meaning and performance) as the structure of self-actualization, etc.

• We have an International Association. And today the only actual “community” in the field of NLP. There are several virtual communities built around a single model and person (LAB profile group; Clean Language group) and there are some Projects (Research Recognition and Promotion, Research Conference) and some national Associations, but no communities.

• We have international standards for identifying what does and does not belong within the model and trainings, benchmarked competencies, a way to benchmark competencies, and processes for maintaining quality.

Our Neuro-Semantic Brand involves all of this and more:

• An International Association of Institutes. When you sell your training, the experience your participants receive is an international training, recognized around the world.

• Presented by Ethical Professionals. You have and operate by a code of ethics for training, consulting, and coaching. You live within an accountability structure so that people dissatisfied with services have a way to bring a complaint.

• Living the principles and models we train. Professional training ought to different from mere teaching and lecturing as it requires that those who present should live and apply to self.

And the good news— we have just started!
From: L. Michael Hall  
2011 Trainers Reflections #39  
Sept. 20, 2011

I just received word that Colin’s lap-top was stolen this week and not having everything backed up, he has lost lots and lots of his work. So I’m writing the Reflection again this week.

COLLABORATIVE SUCCESS

I’m often asked how I can write so much, do so many trainings, and get so much done. Part of the answer is collaboration. I collaborate with others.

For those of you who know the story of the beginning of Neuro-Semantics know how Bob and I collaborated for a number of years and wrote four books before we ever met! We had never actually seen each other and yet had communicated by phone and email and wrote four books. And that was just the beginning. We collaborated on the website, the first society, the international society, and much more. Recently we collaborated on the re-editing and publishing of one of our first books.

This year I collaborated with Shelle Rose Charvet and we recently completed the new book, Innovations in NLP, Volume I. We collaborated in brainstorming the idea, working out a plan, and then executing that plan to bring together 24 contributors (including Bob Bodenhamer) to create 17 chapters. That book is being completed now and will be published in November just in time for the Book Launch at the NLP Conference in London. We have invited all of the contributors to be there. This is the very first book that is a collaboration of NLP trainers. Never before in the 36 year history of NLP has this happened.

For that book I wrote to both Richard Bander and John Grinder and invited them to contribute. The answer I got: “No.” John, in fact, felt offended, “Hall,” he wrote, “Who are these contributors?” he demanded to know! So I wrote back and told him. “No, bad idea.” Okaaaayyy if you don’t want to play, that’s okay. I didn’t say that, I just thought it. Steve Andreas was invited. “No, never.” Shelle made that invitation. “Why not?” “Because Michael Hall and Richard Bolstad are involved.” She followed up. “Okay, and why does that stop you?” the answer is that Richard Bolstad and I offended Steve Andreas in 1998 in our articles in Anchor Point when we took a different view than his. “Okay, if you don’t want to play...” I thought again.
To collaborate — ah yes, to collaborate—if you are going to step up to collaboration you have to get your ego out of the way, you have to use NLP on yourself and release the past, you have to forgive those who have trespassed against you. If you think only about yourself, only about your success, your money, your reputation and you cannot bring out the best in others, well you are collaboratively incapacitated. Oh, by the way, I told Shelle, “Ask Steve if he has used the Forgiveness Pattern that he invented and added to NLP on himself?” She laughed.

To be able to develop and use the capacity to collaborate you have to take second-position, think about others, think long-term instead of just this quarter, this year, and this decade. You have to think systemically rather than linearly. You have to take the whole system into account and not just your little part— and you and I are part of the NLP system, the Neuro-Semantic System, the Human Potential Movement System, the health and ecology of human life on planet earth system.

*The capacity to collaborate is an expression of high Emotional Intelligence.* If you have low E.Q. then you have limited ability to think of others, collaborate, get along, do conflict resolution, and create win/win negotiations. And lots of people do suffer from a diminished capacity in terms of collaboration. They are *collaboratively incapacitated*. Instead of “playing well with others,” if they don’t get their way, they pout, they blame, they avoid, they criticize, they bad-mouth. They are poor team players. That’s because they think win/lose. That is, they have a semantic belief frame that interprets every victory or benefit or success that someone else receives or experiences takes away from them. They experience it as a diminishing of them, as a threat to their fragile ego.

When I collaborate I know that things will not all be “my way.” I will have to give a little in order to receive. And that’s good. And as I give in on things and work through things with others so that they can win and we can win, that makes me more human, more kind, more compassion. To collaborate is to break the guru myth, the little-dictator or tyrant myth and to know and practice the truth—that we are not alone, we are together in this and that together we can do so much more than alone or apart.

So here’s to you being unleashed from any form of collaborative incapacity that you might have, to becoming a great team player, and to contributing to the larger community so that together we can make a much bigger impact in our world!
TRAINING PRECISION

Question: In all of the trainings that you do, how much do you focus on precision? How much do you stand out as a trainer of precision and clarity? Have you built a reputation so that you are recognized as someone who can cut to the heart of something with definitive precision?

I’m asking because of the experience I’ve had here in Brazil during the last few days. I am here in Belo Horizonte where the 9th PNL Congress was held this year. I did the keynote presentation on Friday night on Changing Beliefs with Neuro-Semantics. And prior to that, I conducted 3 days of the wealth creation training, Inside-Out Wealth. We had 80 plus at the Wealth Training and then 110 or something at the Congress, so most people heard me for 3 full days (plus those who took APG in Rio de Janeiro last year).

Then I got stuck here in the hotel! I felt like Tom Hanks in the movie, Terminal, where he was stuck in an airport for 4 months. A big festival in Rio forced me to stay here, all of the flights were full. Anyway, here I am and almost no one speaks English, and my Portuguese is limited to hi, good morning, and meta-high five! Also after my part, they folded up the translator’s booth and the translators left! So I could smile, hug, give a thumbs up, but that was about it. Only two or three people could speak a bit of English with me. One was a young man I met in Rio and this was his very first NLP experience.

He found me in his search for wealth creation and then he discovered NLP and then he did a very fast exploration of the world of NLP on the web which for the most part turned him off. His technical IT background made him very skeptical of all of the outrageous claims and especially all of the Woo-Woo NLP that’s out there. But he liked Neuro-Semantics—“solid, empirical, factual, realistic, practical” were his words to me when I asked him about his impression.

So during the past weekend, he attended the other presentations at the Congress and then debriefed with me about what he had heard. First and foremost he said, “They are so different from you.” “You are precise, you give examples, you make it practical, you take questions, you give references from where you quote, you admit when you don’t know something.”

“So if that’s my style and approach, what about the others?” He then told me about some of them being “fluffy and up in the air” as they talked about energy, “feeling the energy in the room.”
accessing the energy fields of those you work with, spirituality, people’s enneagram, the signs of your horoscope, and so on—all kinds of things that have nothing to do with NLP.

This is not my first time for offering this critique on the field of NLP. I began writing about this with Bob Bodenhamer in 1996; that was when we wrote about “The Downside of NLP.” So why bring it up again? Because if there’s anything to undermine NLP worldwide and reduce it to a little New Age cult, it is this. And to do that violates the foundations and original vision of NLP.

At the beginning, NLP was about modeling, about the precise and specific structure that allowed some world-class communicators to speak with clients and create incredible change. So the first model was a precision model— The Meta-Model of Language in Therapy. That was the original title and described in full in The Structure of Magic, Volumes I and II. True enough, those are not easy books to read. That’s why, in 1997, when Richard Bandler asked me to co-author with him a 25-year update on The Meta-Model, I sought to both summarize the history of the Meta-Model and put that model into a much more readable form. And I think I did. It is now the book Communication Magic (2001, previously titled, The Secrets of Magic, 1997).

The foundational essence of NLP and Neuro-Semantic NLP is the specificity and precision of the Meta-Model. And if there’s any weakness in NLP worldwide it is how little training and how poor the training is in the Meta-Model. Many trainers, not knowing the model themselves, introduce it for 30 minutes or so or two hours and then go on to do something more exciting. That’s a real tragedy and shame. It’s a scandal. If you as a trainer or practitioner cannot hear language and recognize structure and respond in a way that transforms you and others—you are not even at the practitioner level of competency.

The solution? Learn the Meta-Model distinctions and how to use those linguistic distinctions for framing and reframing. Do something radical like memorize Mind-Lines (2005) so that you can know how to use the linguistic model of NLP when you carry on a conversation with people.

Yes, it takes discipline, focus, and persistence. You will not learn it in a day; not even in a week! Use deliberate practice until you develop a basic competence, and then expertise and you will find your framing skills growing exponentially. Do that, and you will begin building a reputation for precision and clarity.

Want the book?

Communication Magic, $25 plus shipping.
Mention this Reflection, $20.

From: Colin Cox
2011 Trainers' Reflections #41
Currently we have in New Zealand (NZ) the Rugby World Cup (RWC). Although having never played the game of rugby myself, I have over the years been involved in the mental and physical preparation of rugby players at a national level. Rugby is the leading game here in NZ and our national team are called the All Blacks. With the RWC being played over 6 weeks and represented by 20 countries, the sport and the ups and downs of individual players, coaches and teams is on the news daily. As the competition moves into the quarter finals with only 4 of the original teams remaining the pressure to perform and win becomes more intense as each team pursues the goal of being one of the 2 teams to play in the final and ultimately to be world champion.

One of the stand out qualities of a world champion is the ability to perform consistently. That is – to time and time again front up and face the demands of international competition and perform consistently, both mentally and physically, irrespective of what happens on or away from the competitive arena. While some players can achieve global success once or twice in a sporting career, there are those who dominate their sport because they consistently perform at a level that redefines excellence.

Consistency of delivery is a necessary component for trainers who wish to pursue Mastery. The ability to time and time again step up and present at a consistent level of capability will define you as a trainer. The consistency I am speaking of is spread across all of the benchmarks we develop at our Neuro-Semantic Trainer’s training. To be able to consistently perform at no less than a 2.5 is a minimum standard set for NS Trainer’s training. Yet this must not be the ceiling but an open door, hopefully one that you want to step through in pursuit of the next level of consistent benchmarking, taking you from a 2.5 to a 3.0, 3.5 and 4.0+ on the Trainers benchmarks.

I have seen trainers who have a fluctuating ability when presenting. They may be good in one area and yet poor in another throughout their presentation. Others may have a good day and a bad or mediocre day – yet neither of these trainers have achieved consistency. I have watched as a Trainer is asked to repeat the same delivery they just presented and they cannot repeat it as they just did minutes ago! Your ability to be consistent and to be progressively improving towards being masterful as a Trainer is a necessary step towards your success.

All core trainer skills need to be addressed should you want to be a trainer who is consistent in what the way they present. They also know what works and they will keep what works and use it consistently and not change it for change’s sake. The desire to be different and a need for doing things differently each time you present will undermine your ability to be consistent. Once you are aware that a specific technique works i.e., opening training frames, out framing, splintering comments – keep them and use them consistently.
Here are seven questions you can use to reflect on your ability to be increasingly more consistent in your delivery:

- What area of my training do I need to be more consistent with?
- Am I able to repeat the same training twice and be “near” identical?
- Do I “believe” that being consistent in my voice quality, vocabulary, hand gestures, PowerPoint slides, opening comments, closings, references, use of metaphors will positively enhance my ability as a trainer?
- Where do I lack consistency when I train?
- Can I tell the same joke or story the same every time?
- Am I consciously aware of what does and does not work my presentation?
- What do I need to be more consistent with when opening my trainings i.e. room set up, opening music, meeting and greetings, opening slides of my PowerPoint etc...?

Your training success is dependent on your ability to be consistent when you present. Although your training content, audience, venue and time may change, you must identify what is to remain consistent in your presentations. By doing so you will further develop as a respected and much sought after trainer.
I had the privilege of keynoting at the PNL Conference in Brazil again this year. They asked me to address the subject of Belief Change. So I delivered The Neuro-Semantic Approach to Belief Change. For those who might want it, I have attached the PowerPoint presentation. Afterwards, I had a long conversation with a leading NLP Trainer about “beliefs.” He found it shocking that beliefs were not just VAK representations. So I wrote the following and plan to put it out on Neurons in a couple weeks. If you do the process in the following and have feedback about it, do write to me.

BELIEFS ARE SENTENCES

Think of a belief, something that you believe that’s important to you, that makes your life richer and more enhanced. Examples of beliefs that I wrote when I thought about this are these:

- I believe that human experiences have a structure that can be discovered and modeled.
- I believe the map is not the territory. My mental models are just that, models.
- I believe that people are innately creative and have all the resources they need to live life effectively and healthily in solving their problems.
- I believe that people have a lot more potential than they actualize.
- I believe that I can find a way to become financially independent.
- I believe that we can do much more together than alone or apart.
- I believe that if I support with care and listen with presence, clients will tell them the real problem and the solution.
- I believe that my value as a human being is unconditional and absolute.

What do you believe? You have thousands of beliefs—yes, thousands. Maybe tens-of-thousands. You have beliefs about yourself, your value, your skills, your relationships, your purpose. You have beliefs about others, about human nature, about emotions, about fear, about anger, etc. You have beliefs about money, budgeting, saving, working, career development, communication, criticism, rejection, etc.

Task
Now write down a few of your best beliefs. Write out one to ten of your most highly valued beliefs, those that make your life fuller and more enjoyable. After you’ve completed this task, now step back and notice the words you used to express your belief. Here’s my prediction—
your words are not see-hear-feel words, not sensory-based words (the VAK of NLP). Your words include conceptual words, abstract words, evaluative words, and nominalizations.

**The Point**
All of this brings me to my point: **Beliefs are sentences. Beliefs are coded in language and cannot be coded in sensory-based representations.** Is that a bold assertion! Yes, indeed! And yes, it goes against the way Bandler and Grinder presented “beliefs” when they first created NLP. Okay, here’s my challenge: **Try to disprove it.**

To do that, all you have to do is to identify a belief that is *just* a picture, some sounds, sensations, smells and tastes. Present sensory-based information, brute facts about something *without* any conceptual terms without introducing interpretations, explanations, or concepts.

Since you have identified a set of very powerfully positive beliefs that enriches your life, begin with one of those. See if that belief can be stated, can be coded with *just see-hear-feel words.* See if you can denormalize all of the nominalizations and bring the “belief” down to a mere set of sensory-based terms. I bet you can’t! I tried to do it with this one and completely failed to state it in pure see-hear-feel terms:

I believe that my value as a human being is unconditional and absolute.

**The Structure of a Belief**
There’s a reason for this:

Beliefs are *confirmations* about another “thought” which is coded in see-hear-feel terms limitation. The *thought* is at the first level, the *belief* is at a higher level to the thought.

The *primary level thought* is made up of the VAK, the brute facts that you can see, hear, feel, smell, and taste. The “belief” is made up of conceptual terms, nominalizations at a meta-level and so is a meta-state of confirmation or validation of the thought that you believe. The *belief* does *not* occur “out there,” the facts do, but that only makes up a *thought*. The *belief* is a second-thought, a thought of confirmation by which you validate the first-level thought that it is real, true, and the way it is.

When you say confirmations *about* the first-level thought, “That’s real.” “That’s true.” “That’s the way it is.”, then regardless of your reasoning that led you to that confirmation, regardless of your convincer strategy (what convinces you that it is real), you thereby bring a state of confirmation to the thought. And presto! the *thought* becomes something more, it becomes a *belief*. In Meta-States, we recognize a belief as a meta-state or as a gestalt state of several meta-states.

Now yes, you can certainly *represent* things with see-hear-feel terms. You can encode facts with sensory-based language. But what does it mean? So what? What’s the point? **To make your point you have to construct a concept about the facts.** You have to take the brute facts of the senses and make some assertion about them—some conclusion, interpretation, or explanation.
Brute Sensory-based Facts: Visually: bright, red strawberries in a dish.
When strawberries bitten into, juice flows out.
Face of person smiling.
Auditorially: sound of biting into strawberry
and person saying, “hmmmmm.”
Olfactorially: smell of strawberries.

Question: Is that a belief? If it is, what does the person who plays that movie in his or her mind actually believe?
We have the facts, but they mean what? What do you believe about eating ripe juicy strawberries? Do you believe they are good? Delicious? A reward? The good life? A source of an allergy? Sweet? Going to give you gas?

Now the little movie of the brute facts certainly suggests and invites us to draw some conclusions: “I believe that biting into strawberries are good.” It implies that. It sets you up and primes you to believe that. Yet is that little movie the code of a belief? No. What do you actually believe about eating ripe strawberries? We don’t know. You could believe any one of those ideas or concepts or none of them. The meaning you give as to what is real, true, and valid to you about this is not seen in the movie. All we see and hear in the movie is eating and “hmmmmm.” But what does the sound “hmmmmm” mean? Good, pleasure, reward, luxury, health, treat, I’ll pay for this later with allergic symptoms, etc.?

If we add “hmmmmm good” to the movie, we have added an evaluative term, a concept. And “good” implies a standard, a criterion—good for what? Good by what standard or values? And this movie is about as simple as they come. What movie did you make for your highly valued positive belief?

So what?
• You can much more easily change a representational thought than a belief thought.
• Beliefs are made out of VAK details and a sentence by which you interpret, explain, and draw conclusions about the representation.
• Beliefs are changed at the meta-level, not the primary level.

VAK–Plus
Recently an especially intelligent NLP Trainer who I highly respect heard me say that a belief is a sentence and questioned me for more than an hour on how that could be.
“If there are visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements in a belief!” he said.

“Yes, within a belief you will find some pictures, sounds, sensations and other sensory representations, but these do not make up the structure of a belief.” I responded. “Yes I know that statement is NLP heresy!” I further admitted.

And while I didn’t say so, I could have said that I had been making this statement for years (back to the mid-1990s). And yes, I have made that argument in Mind-Lines, Meta-States, Winning the Inner Game (Frame Games), and other books and articles.

So yes, while beliefs involve sensory representations, just sights, sounds, and sensations by themselves do not a belief make. Belief require the VAK plus language that provides an explanation, interpretation, evaluation, and understanding of the VAK.

And this explains why you cannot change beliefs by merely changing the VAK. Yes, I know of the old out-dated NLP so-called belief change pattern based on changing sub-modalities. I learned it directly from Richard Bandler in the late 1980s. And I also know that when Bob Bodenhamer and I began challenging this in 1996, when we asked trainer after trainer, almost no one ever made that pattern work. The story is told in Sub-Modalities Going Meta (chapters 8 and 9).
This, for me, explains why Robert Dilts invented a different Belief Change pattern and why it is basically a Meta-
Stating Pattern. His *Museum of Old Beliefs Pattern* essentially meta-states an old belief with several resourceful
states:

- Ecology: Is it limiting?
- Doubt: Are you absolutely sure? Could you be wrong?
- Oldness, Antiquation: Is this an old belief? Maybe a belief from childhood?
- Release: Are you ready to let this belief go?

Once you access these states and anchor them spatially—you can step into them in different spots and use them so
they become the frame—the meta-state about the old belief. You take the old limiting belief into each of these and
let them change the old belief until you are ready to release it. That opens space so that you can then step into an
*Openness to considering* a new more empowering belief.

That’s one way to do it. In Neuro-Semantics we have an even more direct approach: access the state of dis-
validation (dis-confirmation) to weaken the old belief and then access the state of validation (confirmation) and say
“Yes, this is true, this is real, this is the way it is.” Or, if you are not ready for that, “Yes, I *would like* to validate
this as true, real, and the way reality is.” The disconfirmation is not to the belief directly, but to its ecology. Is it

**The Bottom Line**

You have to use words to create a belief because beliefs are more than merely the sights, sounds, and sensations of
the world—they are part of your Neuro-Semantic landscape. In your mind, you not only represent information,
you confirm and validate information as your map about what is real. And when you do that, you create something
much more powerful than a mere thought, you create a belief. And that belief operates as a command to your
nervous systems—which your neurology will do the best it can to actualize. That’s why and how your belief
because self-fulfilling prophesy. They operate in your neuro-semantics as self-organizing attractors and so make
up the structure of your matrix of frames.

**References**


*Sub-Modalities Going Meta,* see chapters 8 and 9 on “Beliefs.”

Check out [www.neurosemantics.com](http://www.neurosemantics.com) Articles. Several articles on Beliefs.
Teaching to Learn and Grow

Of all of the Neuro-Semantics Trainers in the world, there don’t seem to be that many actually running Neuro-Semantics certification courses. Part of the problem lies in that a lot of trainers may be nervous about getting out there and running APG, Practitioner and Master Prac. After graduating NSTT and the wonderfully supportive environment there, we return home to day to day reality. Many might feel overwhelmed that they have to jump straight in and run long certification courses (all-or-nothing thinking) with materials they may not have a lot of deep understanding with; and that’s ok, after all mastery is a 10 year trip at least. So as an exercise, step back in your mind and say “I give myself permission to start small”.

Whew, that takes the pressure off and negates that self imposed modal operator of necessity from the first paragraph! Every trainer starts small. Every trainer has to learn the materials in depth. And the secret is that the best way to learn is to teach! This holds true for many domains, and has proven itself as fact for me time and again.

You can start by giving free talks to business and community groups about one small aspect of NLP or NS (e.g. physical rapport, eye accessing cues or sensory predicates). Groups are constantly on the lookout for speakers for their member meetings. You might only need to speak for 40 minutes or an hour and they’d jump at the chance of a speaker for free. Come up with a catchy title; ‘Mind Reading by Eye Movements’ or ‘The Secret Language of Persuasion’. The win for you is the presentation practice, the networking and paid work that often comes out of it.

Starting in this way (and I still do it) does a number of things. You increase your confidence and competence as a presenter; you learn the material in-depth; you fully integrate it – giving you those lovely “Aha!” moments; you make business connections; and build a resource of teaching materials. Before long you’ll notice that you have almost all the lesson plans and teaching materials to run Practitioner! And if you can do that why not Master Prac? We could even frame longer courses as easier because Michael has written all of the materials and manuals and they are already to download from the Trainers website.

The only difference between running a short talk and a long course is the extra importance of pre-framing a longer course and planning continuity to tie all of the learnings together. Spend the first morning of a multi day training setting overall frames; this can save you from a lot of headaches down the track! I know this from personal experience; only last month I fumbled my way through a 5 day block of a training due to poor planning and framing on my part – I’m still learning, it was great feedback for me and I was able to avoid those problems on the next block.
Before you know it you’ll be certifying practitioners and putting people on the Meta-Coach pathway. In the process you’ll deepen your own understandings and become an active member of the world ISNS community.

To your Training Success!
TRAINING PRECISION

Greetings from the middle of the NSTT Boot Camp which we’re conducting here in Hong Kong, 2011! The really good thing is the numbers we have here— 42 are in the course and they represent 14 countries and we have a number of them who already are NLP Certified Trainers.

We have
- 6 from South Africa
- 4 from Egypt
- 4 from Australia
- 13 from Hong Kong / China
Then one from Malaysia, Taiwan, Philippines, Jordan, Japan, Indonesia, Netherlands, Singapore, Canada, Macau.

Now one of the challenges that I see here in most, but not all, is the lack of precision in thinking and speaking. Of course, this is actually typical and usual, so I’m not speaking about a brand new problem that has just emerged or one that has uniquely emerged with this group. I have seen it each year and yet as we keep tightening the benchmarks and make ever-new distinctions, the lack of precision becomes more and more clear.

How do I know there is a lack of precision? It shows up as trainers are presenting APG patterns. Now as you know, a prerequisite is attending APG and so 95% have (4 have not). Now if I have said it once, I’ve said it dozens and dozens of times, most people need to attend APG 3 or more times before they begin to think about presenting it!

Yet the problem is deeper and more pervasive. The problem is about the lack of precision for how to handle patterns and distinctions in general. Most do not seem to fully understand or appreciate that Mastery is in the Details! And if you do not know the step-by-step details of a pattern or the defining distinctions of a pattern—you cannot frame it and you cannot teach it in a way that will transfer to others.

It is only by knowing the elicitation question, the distinctions, and the process of the pattern inside-out before you can truly teach it. Otherwise, what are you teaching? What are you training into neurology and transferring back to life outside the training environment? So we are having lots of fun “torturing” people with the same questions over and over:

- What are the steps of the pattern?
- How many are there?
- What is the first step, the elicitation question, that grounds the pattern?
- What are the two or three key distinctions of the pattern?
- How are you going to set those distinctions that make the difference as frames?
Do you know how to transition from step one to step two, etc.?

One of the things I’m taking from this experience is that in the next few weeks I will be updating the APG manual ... to make it ever so much more specific, precise, and structured with all of these distinctions. So look for the update in the VIP section for Trainers.

I’m also learning that we simply have to use the processes which we set up more intentionally and in a more disciplined way. The procedure that we set up in 2007 is that only a Neuro-Semantic Trainer can recommend a person that they have trained to go to NSTT. What this process does is make sure that the people showing up at NSTT are fully ready. So as a Licensed Neuro-Semantic Trainer—you who are reading this are the ones who are to be looking for possible leaders and trainers and talk to them and help groom them to rise up to be the leader that they can be. And one way to do that, is to talk to them about NSTT and write a “Letter of Recommendation” for them.

In that way, NSTT is an by-invitation only training. It is not opened to everyone, only those who have met the qualifications and have been recommended for their leadership potentials. Then we can let them know what will happen and what to prepare themselves for. Then we can have ever increasing more qualified people showing up at NSTT.

I’m beginning to appreciate with a whole new perspective just how unique and special the precision that is required in training is. It is not common. Many people just are not capable of stepping up to it. Yet if a person truly wants to train with high quality, with excellence, and with an expertise that sets them apart as an expert—precision in language, in distinctions, in calibration, in patterning, and so on — is required!

And how do you learn that level of precision? Practice, feedback, practice, more feedback, deliberate practice and years upon years of it! It’s not easy, but it is fun. It is not easy, but it can be a passion and delight.

I’m also learning more and more about how to work with co-trainers and a team of benchmarkers for creating new trainers who can respect and value the importance of precision in pattern details and distinctions. If it is challenging at the level of those working on their training and platform skills, it is probably more challenging to the team leaders and benchmarkers. So for example, this year, we have spent hours upon hours going over and over the benchmarks, what they are, the sub-skills, the behaviors, the range of behaviors, etc.

So as this goes to print — we had 19 do their final presentations today— 17 reached the passing grade of 2.5, we have 17 more to do their final presentation tomorrow. We have been seeing the trainers who came here go through incredible transformation in their skills and knowledge in the past week ... and talk about a convincer! I understand there are scores and scores of pictures being posted on Facebook so see us there!

From: L. Michael Hall
DISMISSING PARTICIPANTS

• How do you dismiss a participant from your training and why?
• What would be among the reasons for doing so?
• What are the processes for doing so? The dangers? The potentials?

I bring up this subject now because in each of the past two trainings, I have had to dismiss participants. So here are some stories and some lessons. At NSTT, the day when Colin and Lena arrived (Day 3), they saw me begin to gently confront a lady in the group and Colin later said that he was wondering about my state and why I was challenging her so much. Later he found out that for 3 days, she was asking irrelevant questions, making speeches that were beside any point of the training, giving her team headaches in various ways, and demonstrating in many ways that she definitely was not ready for an advanced training.

By the time Colin and Lena arrived, I was ready to ask her to leave because I didn’t think that she would be able to handle the benchmarking let alone even come close to meeting the rigorous standards of the training. Then Lena discovered that she was in her team! And when she did not do the group process of writing down her own Matrix Belief Frames for receiving feedback, and so when partnered up with another person, was totally unable to give the other participant even a mediocre experience, Lena had to step in and do it herself. Then when the lady sat back, supposedly watching Lena, she was on the phone with someone! I approached, instructed her to hang up the phone, “This is not the time or place for that!” She made lots of arguments about why she needed to answer the phone and talk during the training!

Later I talked with Colin, Lena, Mandy and some team leaders and sent the message to her that we wanted to talk with her the next day before the session of Day 4, at 8:30 am. She sent back a message that she would not be coming back. She was withdrawing. Our thought was to set some boundaries and hold her accountable so that we could check on her readiness for the training. So I asked a message be sent to encourage her to come so we could talk it out anyway and support her. No response, except we found out that she immediately cut Colin out of her facebook page!

The second person was in China. He had attended some of APG and some of Meta-Coaching before and came again. But on Day 1 he asked his first irrelevant question in the morning: “Dr. Michael, last year X was the translator was a guy, but this year is a woman, I am watching her more than you. Should I watch you or her?” Now this got giggles and laughter from everybody. I answered it succinctly and seriously, “Watch me, Listen to her.” End of story. I then said, “I have been talking about being ruthlessly compassionate, so let me demonstrate.” I then looked at him and said, “Now I consider that question an irrelevant question; it was not good or useful for the group.”
In the afternoon he fell asleep. After 30 minutes, I said, “Somebody please wake X up.” He was stirred to awake up. Five minutes later I was giving instructions for a on-the-spot coaching session between Person A and Person B. He was Person A. While giving instructions, he was on an iphone or ipad or some machine punching away. I called him name. No response. Two more calls. Finally someone elbowed him and he looked up. “Whatever you on doing on that machine, put it down. Listen to these instructions.” That’s when the second irrelevant question occurred. “You did not set the frame that I couldn’t sleep in the training. Why didn’t you set that frame?!” Lots of laughter broke out!

As you can imagine, that response told me lots of things. Not only he had not heard the instructions and wasn’t ready but he was doing what he did before and what I had heard from his time in APG, he was playing the role of Clown and getting lots of attention and creating lots of drama. I didn’t want to take time at that moment to give the instructions all over again. So I pointed to Person B and asked him to find a team leader to work with.

When he began complaining that other “lecturers allow me to sleep in the training” and that I did not set the frame that explicitly forbid sleeping (!), I asked this person to go to the back and talk to one of the staff persons. He refused and began to argue. So I said, “I am going to ask you to leave; you are demonstrating that you are not ready for this advanced training.” Now he began demanding his money back and folded his arms saying that he would not move until they bring his money to him!

So for the next hour or so, he refused to budge from his chair, several team leaders around him, Mandy Chai sitting next to him, trying to persuade him to just stand up, go to the back and talk. All the while 42 Meta-Coaches were doing exercises, the whistle was being blown at various times, then the debriefing, then finally the afternoon break.

Learnings
So when, why, and how do you dismiss a participant? Set a series of questions in your mind so that you can make a clear and value-based decision. Here are some of mine:

1) Is the person ready for the training?
   My objective in training is to provide the very best information for participants so that they can become their best selves and unleash their best potentials. So I consider that anything that interferes with that objective needs to be addressed. If that interference is in me, that needs to be dealt with; if it is in a participant, that needs to be dealt with. If the person is just not ready for whatever reason, then that person is not ready. If that person is not able to stay present, focus on the content and process, and get value from the presentation, he or she needs to leave and not return until they are able. Does the person have the required readings or courses to actually be there?

2) How disruptive a person is to the rest of the group?
   How much time, energy, and focus does the person require of me and the team? How much does that take away from others? Proportionally how much time is being given to
one person who is the “squeaky wheel” and is that worth the time and attention taken away from others? Does it cheat them from what they should rightly expect in the training?

3) **How able is the person to make adjustments in order to stay in the training?**
   If we talk with the person privately and make some requests about behaviors and interactions, and set up some consequences, what is the likelihood that the person will shift his or her behavior and be able to stay with the training as a learner? How many chances are we willing to give the person before it is time to ask that person to leave?

4) **Can I use the experience with the person to demonstrate or model something that corresponds to the training content?**
   Sometimes the very behaviors that are disruptive are behaviors that the knowledge content and skills of the training could be applied to and used to demonstrate how to deal with that person. If so, is that a good choice at this time and place?

It’s never fun or desirable to dismiss a participant although in these cases, the others breathed a sigh of relief and thanked us for holding a firm stance. Several others felt bad for them and wanted to rescue them. So that initiated numerous conversations. May you have the firmness and the compassion to dismiss participants for their own good and the wellfare of everybody else!
Questions When Training

Colin has pointed out many times that when training “it’s all about them” (the participants) and that as soon as a trainer’s ego gets in the way it becomes about the training, not the trainer. At NSTT we gain insights as to what frames to carry as a trainer and practice anchoring states of compassion, caring, fun, confidence, etc, in ourselves.

And we practice purposeful state elicitation for the audience. In a good training we ideally want the participants to experience many states, but all under the umbrella of feeling safe, smart and able to learn. And it’s the trainer’s responsibility to make sure this happens.

I was co-training a while ago and had one of those “aha!” moments while listing to my co-presenter. My “aha!” was around what frames are set when we ask questions. My co-presenter was talking about neurology and asked the question “Who’s heard of the enteric nervous system?” I had no idea myself, and from the deathly silence that filled the pause before he told us, neither did anyone else. It reminded me of being at school and being asked a question in class when I didn’t know the answer; I felt dumb! The feeling I got from my co-trainer was one of superiority and it certainly cooled the atmosphere of the training at that moment.

My learning was to ask questions of participants only when they already know the answer; i.e. “so what representational system did you notice there? That’s right!” it might seem strange but this kind of questioning allows participants to feel they ‘know stuff’ and encourages interaction and rapport with the trainer. As a rule of thumb, ask questions about what you’ve already taught. And when talking about a new or complex subject, just tell people the info! In the situation I described earlier, a simple rephrasing to “the nervous system of our digestive system is the enteric nervous system and...” etc., would have left me (and more importantly; the participants) feeling a whole lot different in that moment... perhaps curious rather than dumb.

Answering questions is fun too. I’ve had the experience of explaining something and then immediately or soon after someone asks a question that I thought I’d just covered! Perhaps an egocentric trainer would say “we’ve just covered that” and dismiss it, but there are a number of other explanations; maybe the person zoned out for a while, maybe they were writing something and missed what I said... or maybe (because the ‘meaning of a communication is the response it gets’) I didn’t explain it well enough or, say it loud or clear enough!
Meta-Coach training has certainly helped me with skills with questions as frames and if as a trainer you want to continue learning – get ACMC under your belt!

*The enteric nervous system is the nervous system of the digestive system and along with the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems, constitutes the autonomic nervous system.
BENCHMARKS FOR PRESENTATION SKILLS

During this year’s 2011– NSTT in Hong Kong, I came up with a new way of benchmarking the presenting and training skills. I based the new form on a continuum line, one running from 0 to 3.5 and below it I put the full list of the sub-skills that comprise the competency under consideration. Also, I have attached the new form (in a PDF file) so that you can use these benchmarks in gauging yourself in terms of your public speaking skills. Also, I have done the same for the Meta-Coach core competencies and will be sending that out to the Coaches egroup.

This new form for benchmarking is based on a continuum line so that when someone benchmarks your presentation, it is easier to see where on the scale you are primarily operating. As with the other benchmarks, the 2.5 mark indicates that you are operating at a sufficient level and are able to “get by” as a presenter or trainer. It is just the beginning point. A full 3.0 mark indicates full competence. This is the point at which you can apply for the Master Trainer track which then occurs when you can hit all seven skills at a solid 3.5.

Now the key to these benchmarks is the amount of marks at 3 and above. How many do you need? At NSTT this year, when Colin and I were benchmarking those in training, as well as Lena Gray who is in the Master Trainer track, is that in a 30 minute presentation, we are looking for 7 to 10 examples of each of the sub-skills at the 3.0 mark and above.

Now if you are thinking, “That’s a lot!” you are right! It is. This means that as a trainer you do not just get engagement once, or group rapport just at the beginning, or that you frame when you begin, or that from time to time you use your voice and choreography of semantic space in a particularly effective way, but that you do all of these continually throughout your presentation. It is not the case that you do it, check it off, and can then forget it. No. Having modeled and identified the skills of presenters who are actually at the expert level, these are the communication skills that they use all the time.

“Is that even possible?” you may be wondering. And if so, then the answer is, “Yes, definitely.” You ought to see the benchmarking papers after the first 30 minutes of one of Colin’s presentations! I did two of them at NSTT—2011 Hong Kong and both times the benchmark papers were absolutely full and there were definitely 7 to 10 marks of examples of the skills repeatedly being done. And I give you my word that I looked for every below 3.0 behavior that I could find so that I could have something to tease him about! :)}
Now as an aside, during the past year I have benchmarked 3 NLP “Master Trainers” and did so 7 times ... and every single time, not a one of them even scored a full 2.5 on these benchmarks. After the first one, I thought, “Well, maybe I”m being hard; or maybe the person is having an off-day.” And true enough, both of those can happen to anyone. So I sought to be more conscious and as fair as I could be, and yet these so-called “Master Trainers” were not even as good as the basic Competency Level of our Neuro-Semantic Trainers!

But that’s really not a big surprise. After all, Neuro-Semantic NLP is the one and only Trainers’ Training that has benchmarks and uses benchmarks for scaling and measuring effectiveness in presenting. Every other Trainers’ Training in the field of NLP does not use benchmarks, they measure it by time (how long you’ve been around), by money (if you have paid for the Master Trainer certification!), and by number of Prac. and Master Pracs. conducted. And yet none of that actually measures mastery in training. After all a person could keep practicing what they erroneously learned and if they don’t have benchmarks and someone trained to objectively benchmark the behaviors, they would have little way of knowing where they stand. Further, the fact is, most of the people teaching and training Trainers’ Training could not meet the Neuro-Semantic benchmarks for competence (3.0) let alone the Master Trainer level!

This week I fly to London for the annual NLP Conference and I will have the privilege to sit in several workshops by many of the most well-known NLP Trainers and you can bet I’ll have my benchmark sheet with me and again, see how well they do by these standards. Having done that many times before, I can tell you that the Trainer’s Boot Camp of Neuro-Semantics is the most rigorous and has the highest standards of any of those in the world.

So with that in mind, there’s nothing that you can do for your continual Professional Development as a Trainer than to revisit NSTT every 3 or 4 years. Many years ago, we decided to keep that at a 25% of the door price to encourage ongoing development and the development of the Neuro-Semantic Community. Next one? July–August, 2012 in my hometown of GJ Colorado.
CALLING FOR COLLABORATION  
IN THE FIELD OF NLP

That’s what we did! By envisioning and creating the book *Innovations in NLP—Volume I*, we called for (and we actually demonstrated) collaboration in the field of NLP. That was my goal, my aim, my intention, and my dream. And it happened this past weekend in London at the annual NLP Conference. And at this moment I think that what we started may indeed begin to operate as a powerful self-organizing attractor in this field. That is, it may just provide a first step, a model, a template for what collaboration among us could look like and how it can actually work.

After the launch of the book—the tossing with glasses of wine and the book signing by the 14 co-authors who were present—6 people came up to me and asked, “What do I have to do to be a contributor in Volume II?” How about that? By creating a forum (the book) where people could contribute and be recognized for their contributions, people now want to give! They want to offer what their gifts, passions, experiences leads them to give. Without the forum, that would not (has not) happened.

Collaboration does not require that we all agree with each other. It only requires that we respect the highest and best in each other. It does not require that we adopt the same style, the same methodology, or even the same values. Collaboration does not squashing individuality or uniqueness. But it does require the ability to take second position, to think of others, and to be able to celebrate the excellence and skills in others even if it does not fit us. Thinking about that, it means really a grown-up, mature attitude rather than a childish or teenage-ish one-up-manship.

Because collaboration requires people mature enough to think about someone other than oneself, collaboration is a measurement or benchmark on the maturity of a movement or a people. And maybe that’s been the problem with the field of NLP, its been in its baby and adolescent stage of development, and is only now becoming mature enough to move beyond that.

Now early in the development of the book Shelle and I decided that we would give all of the profits and proceeds that we would make from the book to *NLP Research and Recognition Project* ([www.NLPRandR.com](http://www.NLPRandR.com)). And there were reasons why. First and foremost, we did not want anyone contributing to fuss and fume that we are somehow making money off of their contributions! Second, if we tried to let every contributor receive some of the profits, we did not want to burden the publisher with trying to figure out how to split the profits among 24 people! Third, we wanted to support the R-and-R Project because it also is helping to create collaboration in the field. And Richard Liotti, trained twice as a NLP and Neuro-Semantic NLP Trainer is part of the R-and-R
Project.

There are also other activities going on helping collaboration in NLP: The NLP Research Conference that’s now being held annually in the UK (at which I will be one of the keynote speakers in 2012); The Conferences that are held in various countries (UK, Brazil, Canada, Australia, etc.); IASH Conference held every other year for applications of studies in Health; etc. So it is happening, and I sense that there are more and more signs of NLP people wanting to see and experience more collaboration.

What does all of this mean for Neuro-Semantics? A lot. After all, we are currently the only group of NLP-people who have a full-fledged community and are working together for something bigger and bolder than just our own businesses (at least most of us are). We have a stated vision and mission beyond ourselves; we have settled the basic “standards” question that still plagues the rest of NLP, and we even have a formalized process for how to manage/ police ourselves when someone is misbehaving ethically and doing what every professional field would consider harm.

At the forum in London, the question of Standards came up and the panel disagreed with each other about whether there should even be standards. One person argued that if we have standards, we standardize which means we reduce things to the least common denominator. My response to that is:

“So you would not want medical doctors, or dentists, to have standards of practice? Do you think that requiring standards of accountants, electricians, and lawyers reduces their skills and makes them less proficient?”

Part of the discussion was also about what constitutes standards. Is it knowledge, is it exposure to various models and patterns, is it experience, is it skills? My response is, “Yes!” A person ought to be knowledgeable and have sufficient content knowledge about the field (hence our 22 page questionnaire for trainers). And yes a person ought to have experience in using and applying the knowledge, and yes also a way to validate the person has the actual competency or skill.

This brought up another question, “What constitutes NLP?” and that really sent minds spinning! “What should characterize someone who is an ‘NLP Practitioner?’” “What should a ‘NLP Practitioner’ be able to do as a practitioner?” My response in part is this:

“A NLP Practitioner ought to be able to recognize meta-model the language of conversations (his or her own and that of others), do so to access resourceful states (for self and others), frame and reframe ideas so that they bring out one’s best, and manage one’s self in relationships, health, finances, and business to be able to achieve one’s goals in an ecological, ethical, and congruent way. If one cannot do that, one hasn’t learned the basics of the NLP Communication Model.”

Attached is a 51 second video of the Book Launch by Mandy Chai who was there in London with me. By the way, Mandy said she really learned some things about “the field of NLP” and I’ve asked her to write about it to you— let’s hope she does.
In 2004, Las Vegas magician-comedian Mac King staged the world’s largest ever game of “whisper down the lane”, also known as broken telephone. King whispered “Mac King is a comedy magic genius” to the first of 600 participants. That first person then whispered it to the second person, and the second person to the third, and so on. One hour and 614 whispers round the auditorium later, the final player whispers back to King the phrase he has heard: “Macaroni cantaloupe knows the future”.

From genius to cantaloupe in just one hour! That’s the danger when whispering down the lane: inaccuracies can creep in and you end up with something completely different than what you started with. As trainers -- when training the Accessing Personal Genius training -- we are, in a way, “whispering down the lane”. We are sharing with our participants the intricacies of all the patterns and how they tie together to bring forth a genius state. We got it whispered to us and now it is our job to deliver this message as purely and accurately as possible.

During the latest Accessing Personal Genius training I taught, I worked together with Irena O’Brien. She has taken the APG once, got her certification as a NS trainer, and resourced with me during the training I taught in Toronto last year. This year, we agreed for her to step up and train half of the patterns. During the training, however, we discovered she didn’t know some of the patterns as intimately as she needed to able to deliver all the important distinctions of those patterns. The question then became how to deal with this.

Irena dealt with it in a graceful and glorious manner. I was so very impressed with her approach to our discovery. She allowed me to step in when needed, and showed the group her own learning process. She didn’t feel the need to hide the fact that she didn’t know certain things, in order to be seen as “perfect”. Nor did she take it personally when I stepped in to guide the process. Instead, she shared relevant and engaging stories and shared of her own experience with meta-stating. This is how we danced the entire training. What a humbling display of “failure is the road to mastery”, and what a tremendously powerful message she sent to the group! That, to me, is what being a trainer is all about.

It dawned on me during this training, how vital it is to get up close and personal with each and every one of the patterns in order to teach it. As trainers, I strongly believe we need to make sure that we fully understand what the steps are and why they’re there. That way we can gauge where someone is in the process. As an example, one of the patterns I had a hard time when I just started out was Meta-Stating Troubling Emotions. I took my first Accessing Personal Genius training with Wassili Zafiris, and I assisted in his training about 7 times. Every time I learnt something new, another aspect of the APG. Wassili would ask participants about their troubling emotion, and then he’d ask “how
do you respond internally to that emotions” or “what’s behind that emotion”. I didn’t get it at first. Why was he asking that question? I knew that it was to get a physical response, indicating that someone has hit upon the troubling emotion, but I didn’t really had a felt experience of it. And so whenever I asked that question, I would get stuck. People who I was practicing on, would get stuck. Until I got it.

To this day, I am grateful for Wassili holding the learning space for me. Now, when I teach meta-stating troubling emotions, I make sure I spend some time with each of the participants to see how they’re faring. Last year, when I was training in Toronto, I overheard one of the participants talking about anger as his troubling emotions. Throughout the training I had seen him express his anger freely. Feeling anger was not the problem! So I asked him this one question: What’s behind the anger? Tears filled his eyes, and he replied: “I feel sad” “Do you have permission to feel this sadness?” “Hell, no!” And so we could work on transforming that. Another example of this happened last week. One of the participants talked about frustration. Again, I’d seen her get frustrated and express this, so I got curious as to what was behind that emotion. So I asked her: “What’s behind that emotion?” The answer was helplessness. We worked on meta-stating that and then today Irena and I got the following testimonial from her:

“I wanted to share with you the positive impact of the Accessing Personal Genius course in my life relating with my 14 year old daughter, Lisa. For the past 6 to 12 months or so, I was feeling very frustrated with my daughter’s approach to her school work. It’s a long story and I will spare you the details. What’s important is that during the Meta Stating of negative emotions pattern – I experienced a profound shift physically, emotionally and intellectually. Going into the process, I knew that “frustration” is not an emotion I enjoy being in – I had no idea though that I held it as “intolerable” and that it was really a cover for “helplessness” -- then allowing that in – and really giving it permission to be there – I still have difficulty believing how it physically/emotionally changed me. Anyways, for the last 7 days, while my husband has been away golfing, Lisa and I have been on our own together – it’s been report card and parent/teacher interview week –which had the potential for being an emotional disaster for the two of us – instead it’s been a fantastic week – I have not had the frustration or helpless feeling at all – instead I have acceptance, patience and most of all, when I look at Lisa I see her as a daughter that I love (always have) and as a girl so internally driven. Before the course, I had been “looking” at her as a source of that helpless/frustration feeling and of course she felt that “look” but this week she felt the positive emotions from her Mom. We were driving and she said to me –“ Mom, I can’t believe how well we’ve gotten along this week – I was really dreading this week together. “ WOW!!! Lisa has been looking at me – with that what the hell happened to you look – and a part of me – are wondering – is that other lady going to be back – hopefully not – I do believe in lasting change and time will tell – but wow, what a quantum leap forward for me and my relating with Lisa. FANTASTIC. Thank-you for sharing these patterns via your trainings, they are beyond valuable – I guess that makes them meta valuable!”

As trainers, we hold the power to bring Neurosemantics and Meta-States to the world. We hold the power to transform lives and multiply fantastic experiences like the lady above. This depends on the quality of our work. For that, we need to hone our skills. To learn, we need repetition and high quality feedback. Expert trainers have the opportunity to advance this by helping out trainers who are new and still learning. I advise beginning trainers to take the APG multiple times, so that you can get truly familiar with your work.
Yes, it takes dedication and putting the hours in. The reward of doing so is tremendous. I feel both blessed and humbled to be able to help transform someone’s life. Isn’t that why we’ve all become NS trainers in the first place?
REDESIGNING NLP PRAC.

“If I were to re-design NLP Prac. I would put the Meta-Program Model right up front.” That’s what I said the other day, and after hearing myself say that, I thought, “Well, why not?” Then talking to Mandy Chai on our trip that took us from China to Taiwan and the Post-ICF Conference, I had the opportunity to talk out-loud what that re-design of Prac. would entail, the effect it would have, and why it might be a really valuable choice.

Question: Why begin with Meta-Programs? Answer: the reasoning is this— if our meta-programs are our thinking patterns and if they govern how we use our attention, what we pay attention to, sort for, and “perceive,” then a person’s meta-programs either helpfully support a person to learn and understand NLP or unhelpfully undermines learning, understanding, comprehension, and use of the NLP Communication Model. After all, when you and I communicate, we communicate from, through, and within our thinking patterns. So in the end, these thinking patterns govern how we think, perceive, what we pay attention to, what we notice, what we delete, and therefore the quality of our communications.

I got thinking about all of this as I noticed that some people in the Meta-Coaching track have such a terrible and horrible and painful time trying to learn the NLP Communication model. When I sit with them as a benchmarker last week, and even finally suggested a question that they could ask, sometimes the person didn’t recognize why that question would be useful. This past week I noticed that two or three persons, even though I repeated the question two or three times, still could not “say” it. When they did, it worked wonders and they were utterly surprised. “How did that do that?” they later asked.

For them, the matching and the detailing meta-programs would have guided their thinking and enabled them to use the Meta-Model precision questions. But they were operating from mismatching and global meta-programs. So that got me thinking.

Maybe before we teach the Precision Questions, the Matrix Questions, the Meta-Questions, etc., maybe the person needs to be trained in flexibility about various meta-programs. Maybe they need more direct work with the thinking pattern that’s governing their attention so that they can then use the tools.

If we did re-design Practitioner training, then what would NLP Prac. be like? Here is an overview of DAY 1 of NLP Practitioner if we identified the meta-program that they need in thinking in order to use the models, patterns, and tools of NLP.
Another thing that I like about this is something that Mandy brought up. She said that this would truly set aside the Neuro-Semantic way and style of presenting NLP Practitioner ("Meta-NLP") making it really unique from how Pract. is traditionally trained by NLP Trainers. And by beginning with the implied meta-programs that govern the various facets of the Practitioner course, I believe that this would deepen the training to create higher qualified practitioners.

To train Pract. in this manner would give people experiences of each of the meta-programs as you go through Practitioner training. Then when you talk about the Meta-Programs, people would already have a deep experiential understanding of it.

To give this a go, I sat down and re-designed the Prac. Training Manual to see what if this would work, and to my delight, it does! As I put the new design together I realized something else: To train Pract. in this way actually is a very Neuro-Semantic thing. Doing it this way means you are setting the thinking/perceiving frames prior to training a particular model or pattern thereby making it much easier to learn.

On Day 1 of Meta-NLP or Coaching Essentials you introduce the idea of a Meta-Program as a thinking pattern, then you present two of them — the Representational Meta-Program of VAK and the Scale Meta-Program of Global–Specific. Then most of the first three or four hours works with these two meta-programs and the content of the languages of the mind that enables us to “run our own brain.” Thereafter, from time to time, you highlight another meta-program or two, and then use various practices that, by implication, gives people experience in expanding their meta-programs.

We all know that when a person gets “stuck” with some aspect of NLP and it “doesn’t make sense” to them, it is because they cannot “think” in terms of it via some meta-program. So this approach enables you to deal with the background frame (the meta-program) directly and when you do, the NLP content is more easily learned.
What’s the bottom-line? The bottom line is that I have re-designed Meta-NLP for Practitioner Training so that it is Meta-Program based Practitioner Course. It is now available so if you need it now, write to me. Otherwise, it will be on the VIP area for Trainers in a week or so.
Impromptu Speeches

Ever been asked if you could say a few words at a special occasion, dinner party, family reunion, nominations ceremonies, student certifications, funerals or a work meeting? And you haven’t been given any prior warning! You’re completely unprepared and possibly you’re in a state of uneasiness about not having the opportunity to prepare what you are about to say? It could also be a situation where it is indeed an important occasion, which further adds to the intensity of stress for you. Perhaps... they asked you to speak to the group because they know that you speak for a living! After all, you’re a Neuro-Semantic Trainer with experience and training in presenting to small and large groups – right?

What do you do? What will successfully get you through this moment without you embarrassing yourself and possibly the person who asked you to speak? Even better, how can you use this moment to further present yourself as a professional confident speaker, trainer, manager or leader?

Here are 5 key points you can use to lessen the emotional intensity of the situation and maximise the opportunity when you are asked to make an impromptu speech. I’ll assume that you have graciously accepted the request to speak and you have only a few minutes before you are to step before and present to the audience.

**Tip 1: Get the details**
When you’ve been asked to speak ask that person what they would like you to say. What is the purpose, reason, intention, motive they wish you to project to the audience. Doing this, will narrow down what is and is not relevant for you to say to the group. Ask how long you are to speak for. Will anyone be speaking after you or before you and if so what about? Get these basic details sorted so you can then focus on what you need to do to achieve the objective set for you.

**Tip 2: State Maintenance:**
You must maintain a state of being calm, present, relaxed and focused with clarity of mind. Step out of and away from that initial primary response of being angst, uneasy, tense or being stressed about being asked to speak. Regain your composure, centre yourself and demonstrate total state management. It makes no sense to lose your mind, become confused and get nervous when you’ve been asked to make a speech suddenly. Managing your state in this manner will allow you to prepare what you are going to say in the little time available plus when you are speaking you will better be able to present what it is that you are saying with clarity and composure.

**Tip 3: Trust Yourself**
This is an important frame to hold in mind: Trust Yourself!

Are you aware that you have daily made spur of the moment comments and communicated to others and you reply to them with no preparation what so ever? Are you aware you also make these impromptu presentations regularly, from when a stranger asks you for directions, a workmate asks how your weekend was or your Manager asks you what happened yesterday at the staff luncheon? You reply in these instances with no time to prepare and you remain in a composed state as you reply. Think about how often you do make impromptu speeches and realise how often you do this and trust yourself!

**Tip 4: Decide what you will say first and how you will close.**
Take a quick moment to decide what you’re opening will be. This will be easier for you to do if you have followed tip 1.

Will you start with a quote, the purpose of the meeting or why the audience is gathered? Will you leverage off what an earlier speaker has said? Will you summarise the experience or open with a relevant quote? Decide how you will open and also how you will close off your speech. What would be both meaningful and relevant for the moment you and the audience are in?

Being an NS Trainer allows you to draw on your experience as a trainer and you may choose to open your ‘spur of the moment speech with a tried and proven opening you know would be the perfect lead in for the main point you wish to make as well as use an ending you know would be appropriate.

**Tip 5: Make no mention of how you were surprised to be asked to speak.**
This tip I hope, is self explanatory. The audience does not need to know you are caught by surprise! They do not need to hear how you are nervous or lack composure because of the request for you to speak. Not only does it not instil confidence in the audience it also reflects negatively on the person who asked you to speak. The audience want to hear from you direction, inspiration, hope, congratulations from the words you say and not how you are or are not in the right state and unprepared to present to them.

**Summary:**
An impromptu speech is a great test of your ability to rise to the occasion and make a positive impact to audience. You do this well and you will have enhanced your ability as a speaker who is well versed in the art of public speaking. Spur of the moment presentations will test your ability to speak in the moment and require you to draw on your experience as a trainer. It’s a steep learning curve and a quick one. You’ll know whether you did well or not and hopefully you would have learned a lot about your ability as a trainer and speaker. Embrace the opportunity offered to you when asked to speak unprepared, it’ll add to your ability and development as an effective trainer.

*From: L. Michael Hall*
*2011 Trainers’ Reflections #52*
DISTINGUISHING NEURO-SEMANTIC NLP

If you have been training NLP and Neuro-Semantics, then I’m sure that you have been asked numerous times, “So what’s the difference between NLP and Neuro-Semantics?” Or, you may have been challenged on whether the difference is real and sufficient enough to be truly a real difference.

Now there are a couple articles on www.neurosemantics.com that answers that question in some depth. There is also the new book, *Neuro-Semantics: Actualizing Meaning and Performance* (2012). For me, I always like to contrast what NLP modeled and what Neuro-Semantics modeled.

**NLP modeled** representational consciousness and so gave us a very powerful Communication Model regarding how we represent information, learn, and can change our mind at this primary level. **Neuro-Semantics modeled** self-reflexive consciousness and so provides a very powerful model of the unconscious mind, the mind that reflects on itself layer upon layering creating the psycho-logical levels of the mind.

Now true enough, NLP via Robert Dilts had identified a small handful of these psycho-logical levels which he put into a hierarchical form, the Neuro-Logical Levels assuming that each level was distinction and separate and that they did not mix up. But Dilts’ work never explored self-reflexivity, never modeled the mechanisms creating these psycho-logical levels, and never mapped out more than just a few (beliefs, values, identity, purpose, mission). So the Neuro-Logical Levels has entered much of NLP (but not the Grinder or the Bandler camps!) as the only attempt to deal with meta-levels.

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While this begins to distinguish NLP and Neuro-Semantics, it is only the beginning. Because the Meta-States Model maps out self-reflexivity and how we are forever stepping back from ourselves, and from our thoughts-emotions (states) to generate more and more levels and states, there is depth within us. And it is within this depth that provides the keys to a human being and how effective NLP patterns work. This depth speaks about what’s “in the back of the mind” which is what you want to
know and discover as you help a person discover his or her own mental maps. That’s because the next-level up thought-emotion sets the frame for the person and his or her experience. And if you don’t know that, you don’t know what is setting the frame in his or her neuro-semantic reality. So we ask meta-questions to flush out these levels.

That’s what we do when we coach, consult, train, mentor, and do therapy. This also provides a way to model experience that the great majority of NLP people still don’t know about! By modeling the meta-levels of how a person structures experience, we are able to see the experience as a system—and then be able to work systemically with that person. Doing this on an experience enables us to see how it works. And doing that, we can then explain every effective NLP pattern.

Take “The Phobia Cure” pattern that we more simply call The Movie Rewind Pattern. And why? Because that describes the process within the experience. And by looking at how the pattern influences one’s self-reflexive consciousness, you can see why the pattern works as it does. It utilizes new meta-programs for re-processing a remembered-event that has been creating intense fear. By stepping back from the remembered-event on the screen (Stepping Out Meta-Program) and stepping into a place of control (control booth) (Responsibility Meta-Program of Choice), one can Reflect rather than React (Reflection MP).

Using the Meta-States Model enables you to identify the more resourceful frames that are set at a meta-level to the remembered-experience. What frames? Here is a list: Acceptance rather than rejection and fight; Observation without judgment; Distance, Closing with pleasure, Rewinding to scramble the images or to color the past with the future pleasure, etc.

NLP rightly focuses on how language works in our neurology (neuro-linguistics) and how changing words can change neurological responses. Yet because the language part of NLP, the Meta-Model, is hard and challenging to most NLP Trainers, many down play it or skip it altogether. Instead they focus on the primary level of the VAK and the editorial level of “sub-modalities.” As a result they miss meaning almost entirely. They only part of meaning that they focus on is reframing which they mean the Sleight of Mouth patterns (hence missing the 7 directions for reframing that Mind-Lines based on Meta-States remodeled).

Meaning is the central focus of Neuro-Semantics. Nor do we limit meaning to just representations, just cinematic features of mental movies, just to language, we know that “it is meaning all the way up.” And so up the levels of meaning we go—associative meanings, metaphorical meanings, intentional meanings, decisions, permissions, etc.

If you haven’t ordered your copy of Neuro-Semantics: Actualizing Meaning and Performance (2012), see the offers that have been sent out on Neurons.

From: L. Michael Hall
2011 Trainers’ Reflections #53
Dec . 27, 2011
ARE YOU READY FOR SELF-LEADERSHIP?

Leadership begins with self-leadership. After all, if you can’t lead yourself, what makes you think you can lead others? If you can’t set a direction for your life, set frames of meaning that excite you with a vision and mission in life, identify where you want to go and begin to launch out in that direction, and solve the problems that come along (the foundational leadership skills)— what makes you think you can lead a group of people in doing those very things?

This is one of the key reasons why we emphasize self-leadership in Neuro-Semantics and why several trainers even use the title, Self-Leadership for APG trainings. The first time I became aware of this is when I talked with Colin and Lena in New Zealand and discovered that they had re-named Access Your Personal Genius as Self-Leadership. It makes sense. Today when I have the opportunity to train APG, I regularly make comments about how the different patterns are also patterns of, and prerequisites for, self-leadership.

Then the other day I was thinking about another subject, one that comes up a lot whenever we discuss excellence, expertise, or mastery. Yet it is a subject that many people, even leaders, have a lot of trouble with. Yet without it, you will be less effective, less likely to persevere, less likely to be resilient, etc. I began thinking about it because several people had commented in the same week about how “disciplined” I was about writing, exercising, and training. My first thought was, “Disciplined? Why do you call it that? It’s not discipline, it’s passion. It’s not discipline. That’s the wrong word.”

That’s how I began chewing on the idea of “discipline” and what it must mean to myself and others. As I thought about my immediate aversion to calling what I do as discipline, I began wondering about my aversion. As I considered it, I realized that when I think of discipline the first thoughts that come to mind are— rigid, controlled, work, effort and then other words, unpleasant, hard, undesirable, etc. No wonder I feel an aversion to using the term discipline. Later I made a comment to some of our team leaders at a training about this and their comment was:

“But you read at least 30 minutes every day, you exercise every day, you follow a strict schedule at Meta-Coaching and APG, you write at least 30 minutes everyday.”

“Yes, that’s kind of true. I have set a goal of reading and writing 30 minutes everyday regardless of what else is going on. But that’s because I believe “Regularity is the key to consistency.” And yes, I follow a process in the trainings but not because it is strict, but because it has proven to be a most effective process.”

That’s when, by taking second position to them and running a thought-experiment, I began realizing that—from the outside—what I do probably looks like work, effort, struggle, etc. But from the inside, from my perspective— it is my passion, my fun, my privilege. On the inside I set a goal and
follow-up to actualize it and in pursuing that vision I invest my time and effort, I persevere, am methodical and rigorous as I manage my time and energy. So while on the inside I’m just getting to do what I want, from the outside that looks like discipline.

And then I realized that this is self-leadership and self-management. What looks like “discipline” is just me getting myself to set goals and then follow-up by managing my time, energy, mind, money, relationships, etc.

- Discipline is just a structure, or a procedure, or a plan that allows you to make real what you envision.
- Discipline is just the methodology that allows me to stay on track, persist, and follow-through.
- Discipline is simply the actualization of the meanings that I have created and committed myself to.
- Discipline is moving out on the performance axes and making real and actual what I created as I move up on the meaning axes to frame a great meaning for myself.
- Discipline is just self-leadership now activating my managerial part so that I can effectively manage the process.

Given all of this, are you ready for self-leadership? Are you ready to use your meaning-making skills and create authentic goals that excite your passions? Are you ready to make an executive commitment to yourself and your passions? Are you willing to lead yourself and follow your own lead? Are you willing to create a plan and follow that plan, to persevere in the methodology that you have set? Are you willing to be accountable to yourself (and others) so that you are true to your word and live in the integrity of doing what you say? If so then your self-leadership will endow you with a “discipline” and will evoke others to begin telling you, “You are so disciplined! You ought to lighten up and enjoy life, do something just for fun!” And, of course, you could correct their misunderstandings or you could say, “Is it okay to enjoy the fun of the discipline of following my passion?”