

# Developing Tomorrow's Leaders: Applying Neuro-Linguistic Programming Techniques in Public Affairs Education and Human Resources Development

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**Abstract:** Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP) is a fast-growing educational, mentoring and coaching tool which embodies extensive applications in business school environments and public sector organisational contexts. Practitioners of NLP are excited by the prospect that this tool may assist to promote excellent performance and the expression of constructive leadership in various professional public affairs contexts; NLP techniques focus on reframing mind-sets positively, by taking cognisance of the sensory awareness functions of individuals, thus enhancing the flexibility to deal with evolving dynamics in the world we operate in. NLP can theoretically be infused in contemporary learning and teaching approaches to improve personal-professional development. It may enrich and innovate traditional methods, thereby increasing the extent of cognitive absorption (and comprehension) of complex managerial theorems and solving leadership quagmires. By emphasising the visual, auditory and kinaesthetic sensory functions, learning capabilities may be enhanced, and desired personal, inter-personal and organisational outcomes may be achieved to a greater extent. In other words, it may serve to reinforce efficient communication in organisations, hence establishing and maintaining high-level rapport between parties. In this paper, initial extrapolations are made from extensive desktop (secondary) research on NLP techniques in teaching and learning and mentoring and coaching, focusing on *process over content*. The above postulate is based on limited observations made by tracking a cohort of senior business students over a period of one year. The case example used is a Public Sector Accountancy module, which is traditionally viewed with apprehension because of the perceived 'difficulty' of such subject matter. Subsequently, an applied research phase is prefigured which should *practically* explore the impact of the introduction of NLP as a tool in teaching and learning at institutions of higher education and practical mentoring and coaching processes; therefore, engaging in an extensive longitudinal research voyage.

**Keywords:** Auditory, Emotional intelligence, Neuro-linguistic Programming, Sensory awareness

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## 1. Introduction

Across the world, among many organisational settings, therapeutic environments, education and training endeavours and informal human social interaction gatherings, NLP principles have been applied with notable measures of success – often without conscious intent – to modulate successful human behaviour and to facilitate excellent achievements. In many cases, extraordinary individual personal-professional leadership acumen has been attributed to NLP. It is often remarked that certain individuals have a "knack" for such-and-such, which seems to render them successful in their pursuits. They may have achieved success in sales and marketing, others may be heralded as charismatic leaders with an ability to motivate and enthuse. Such individuals are admired and envied.

Consequently, it may be postulated that if such behaviour or actions were to be 'modelled', analysed, understood and emulated (*modelled*), then others may be able to apply the 'recipe', *unequivocally reaping the effect that the NLP precept may offer*.

In other words, if successful people's 'secret to success' could be unravelled to benefit others who may wish to perform similar actions in similar or near-similar situations, an essential part of NLP may be implemented in teaching and learning. 'Modelling' therefore, as a central key concept to the NLP methodology, seeks to deconstruct how desired personal-professional behaviour and organisational functional/operational excellence may be achieved through (re-)directing brain function (neuro), language (linguistic) and process (programming). In the ensuing narrative, NLP is presented as

a possible approach towards pursuing this quest for excellence in conduct and performance in a teaching and learning environment.

The research undertaken thus far does not differentiate between teaching and learning amongst employed or unemployed adults, nor does it proffer to totally address the complexities associated with teaching and learning within the South African education reality. The glaring systemic inadequacies due to historic and prevailing socio-economic disparities, which impact on the individual learner's ability to successfully navigate the challenges of becoming educated, work mature and ready to lead, or for that matter the teacher's ability to educate effectively, still need to be factored into subsequent research.

This paper essentially seeks to unveil how NLP may promote teaching and learning to address this (currently) challenging process in the South African public affairs human resources development reality, and to establish the foundation for longitudinal empirical research.

## 2. Research Method

The methodology used for the research conducted thus far, simply involved scrutiny of selected and notable secondary research conducted by individuals and institutions who seek to understand how teaching and learning may be aided, if at all, through the application of NLP techniques. Empirically, some research was undertaken by interviewing experienced NLP experts and practitioners to gain some perspective from practice. One of the authors of this paper, a practicing life coach and university lecturer, functions as 'participant researcher' and will in the subsequent research be instrumental in executing the in-classroom and on-location (inside organisational) field research.

Subsequent *infra* research of empirical and longitudinal nature should extend into conducting in-depth, in-class research among a segmented and stratified sample of learners in a tertiary education environment and in mentorship and coaching settings.

## 3. Understanding Neuro-Linguistic Programming

NLP is a decades old approach in dealing with human cognitive issues which seeks to understand,

predict and direct human behaviour. NLP portrays a 'user's manual' (Bodenhammer & Hall, 1999) how the mind works and how the mind influences human behaviour, thus delivering a particular behaviour. NLP showcases how a person comprehends information through sensory awareness which is contingent upon the subjective preference of the five senses (smell, sight, taste, hearing and touch), thereby allowing a person to filter the information coming in through the subconscious 'files' of stored responses relating to similar occurrences that has transpired in the past. Therefore, what is 'seen' is the *person's own map of his/her reality* and not necessarily the actual reality. The term Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) was coined by Dr Richard Bandler and Professor John Grinder, of the University of California, in the mid-1970s. The researchers focused their attention on investigating and deciphering the differentiation of people's interpersonal skills ranging from unacceptable to outstanding within the context of communication and social interaction. To carry out their research, they developed a methodology that is known as *modelling*, which emphasises the 'mapping' of phenomenological experience alongside the use of language models.

The principles which form the basis of NLP in particular contexts and cases have been *modelled* from individuals (*key people*) who produce desirable results, from the systems theory and natural laws (<https://anlp.org/presuppositions-of-nlp>). Freeth (2013:166) states that NLP is the study of the relationship between the brain, language and behaviour. Therefore, NLP refers to "...Neuro as in the function of the brain, Linguistic as in the language and Programming as in the following of defined patterns and routines" (Freeth, 2013:168). Mosby's Medical Dictionary (2009), defines NLP as "a complementary therapeutic strategy based on the premise that a 'thought' characterised as a representation of sensory experience, can impact the behaviour and can be modified to achieve a desired result by changing the patient's thought patterns and mental strategies to give the patient more choices in problem solving which is used for behaviour modification and the management of psychosomatic disorders and stress." Practically, NLP rests on particular pre-suppositions, being:

- **Have respect for other person's model of the world** – All people are unique and experience the world in different ways;

- **The map is not the territory** – People respond to their 'map' of reality and not to reality itself because 'sense-making' occurs through their senses and from personal experience;
  - **Mind and body form a linked system** – your mental attitude affects you physically and your behaviour;
  - **If what you are doing isn't working, do something else** – the ability to adapt (flexibility) is the key to success;
  - **Choice is better than no choice** – the possibility to pursue different options enhances the opportunity to achieve desired results;
  - **We are always communicating** – even when we are not (non-verbal communication accounts for a large portion of a message);
  - **The meaning of your communication is the response you get** – while the intended message may be clear to the transmitter, the receiver's interpretation and resulting response remains the measure of effectiveness of the communication;
  - **There is no failure, only feedback** – 'failure' serves as a catalyst for solution seeking and improvement;
  - **Behind every behaviour, is a positive intention** – for the most part people's behaviour and words don't carry ill-intent and consequently doesn't warrant a reciprocal negative reaction; and
  - **Anything can be accomplished if the task is broken down into small enough steps** – NLP assists to deconstruct sizable undertakings/activities/tasks into manageable (less overwhelming) components, thus improving effectiveness and efficiency (<https://anlp.org/presuppositions-of-nlp>).
- **Flexibility** – Techniques for developing personal flexibility and awareness of others; and
  - **Language** – Language models from hypnosis and therapy.

#### 4. Applying Neuro-Linguistic Programming Techniques in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Higher education institutions often lament the performance of their students and cite a general inability of their learners to master subject matter, which should be within the average student's grasp. Different reasons may be attributed to this problem, ranging from a teaching and learning dysfunctionality, socio-economic or psychological factors or even mismatched student-subject choices. Educators have for many years researched and debated these challenges and to some extent scientific panacea are available to, for the most part, to mitigate some of the shortcomings experienced within the education environment. The different remedies depend on the ability of the teacher to effectively identify the learners' specific needs and thereafter, to provide appropriate responses to improve the situation. This may prove to be a complex and often impossible quest if appropriate detection, response knowledge or common or specialised resources are unavailable.

Many educators and councillors with a vested interest in improving teaching and learning, have turned toward NLP as a possible means and solution towards addressing the above challenges. The premise of NLP in a teaching and learning context is simply that pre-identified desirable traits of successful teachers, facilitators, speakers *and* learners, should be *modelled* (copied), thus creating effective communicators (Freeth, 2013:8).

Once these desirable traits have been modelled, such may be moderated and translated into appropriate 'training styles' and 'learning styles', which often mirror different sides of the same coin.

Fundamentally, NLP tools and approaches can be said to encapsulate four categories of endeavour:

- **Outcomes** – Strategies and approaches for self-motivation and the motivation of others;
  - **Rapport** – Approaches for building rapport and influencing others;
- **Flexibility** – Techniques for developing personal flexibility and awareness of others; and
  - **Language** – Language models from hypnosis and therapy.

#### 4.1 The Process of Learning

Ultimately the objective in education is to articulately lead learners successfully through the process of learning. Dedicated educators should consider that successful learning is measured by the extent to which learners are moved from a state of '*not*

'knowing how to' to a state of 'knowing how to', thereby resulting in a change of behaviour which may be in concert with what is desired (*re-framed* to the pre-defined desired state and so-called *anchoring*). Yet, for this transition to occur, a conscious (cognitive) decision should be made to have an embracing attitude towards acquiring new knowledge, irrespective of the possibility that the 'new knowledge' may be viewed with some animosity (e.g. a fear of accountancy because of the belief that one cannot do arithmetic or failure to understand assets and liability theory). The activities associated with re-framing are indicated in the sample lesson plan, which is attached (Appendix A) and serve to create a condition during a teaching session where both learners and teachers attune themselves to deliberately (consciously) prepare to attach different meanings to particular emotions. Re-framing is such a common and frequently occurring part of our everyday experience that often we need only change a single word in our description of an experience in order to change the meaning of that experience significantly. In life, we often do this inadvertently, and the only difference would be that we now have the opportunity (or seek) to do it consciously and purposefully; A meaning reframe can be usefully delivered in response to a cause-and-effect statement (whenever X happens I respond Y) (<http://www.microdot.net/nlp/reframing/reframing-5.shtml>). As far as anchoring is concerned, it may be described as a conscious process used in conjunction with re-framing whereby anchors are employed in the process of association to focus awareness, re-access cognitive knowledge and internal states, connect experiences together in order to enrich meaning and consolidate knowledge and transfer acquired learning and experiences to other relevant contexts (<http://www.nlpu.com/Articles/artic28.htm>).

Therefore, moving from unknown territory to known territory – process of learning – involves the well-known four steps to learning, encompassing the stages of '*unconscious incompetence*', '*conscious incompetence*', '*conscious competence*' and finally, '*unconscious competence*'. (Freeth, 2013:40). Jassat (2017) emphasizes the importance of the above process of learning, but prefers to refer to its components as the *Quadrants of Learning* where the four steps are expressed towards the learner as:

**First Quadrant** – "I don't know that/what I don't know";

**Second Quadrant** – "I know that I don't know";

**Third Quadrant** – "I know that I know"; and

**Fourth Quadrant** – "I don't even know that I know".

According to Jassat (2017), a person (learner) should be enticed to become curious in exploring their world when they are perpetually residing in essentially the 1<sup>st</sup> quadrant, yet marvelling in the state of being that is presented in the 4<sup>th</sup> quadrant. The value of being in the 1<sup>st</sup> quadrant state of mind is that the learner embraces the spirit of continuous knowledge seeking and an enthusiastic ongoing pursuance of excellence. The role of the educator is therefore to apply techniques and create conditions, which lead to an environment where the learner enthusiastically takes charge of their own learning experience, thus creating the passion and hunger for striving to attain the sought after knowledge they intended to seek in the first place. Research undertaken regarding efficacy of using NLP techniques in teaching and learning, highlights many aspects of education, but for the purposes of this paper, one important aspect is particularly paramount: *Personalising learning*.

In a Research Paper entitled *Leading learning through relationships: The implications of Neuro-linguistic programming for personalisation and the children's agenda in England* the authors Churches and West-Burnham (November, 2008) mention that "Personalised learning is much more than a portfolio of effective teaching and learning strategies focusing on the individual. It is primarily about an ethos, or culture, which is expressed through a number of pivotal components." The mentioned pivotal components include:

- **Achievement:** personalising learning has to be focused on maximising the achievement of every individual through understanding of the full spectrum of definitions – taking cognisance most notably that all of the components of "Every Child Matters".
- **Aspiration:** central to personalising learning is a culture of high expectations and aspiration, again expressed in every dimension of a child's, or young person's, life but focused in particular on their entitlement to achieve optimum success at school.

- **Inclusion:** personalisation applies equally to the gifted and talented and those with special needs. In many ways it offers a powerful strategy to ensure ideal provision for all young people, which is geared towards their particular needs and gifted talents.
- **Relational:** learning is an interpersonal process and personalisation offers scope and opportunities to maximise the quality of learning relationships between learners and all those involved in supporting them including parents and fellow learners.
- **Accountability:** personalising learning clarifies personal and professional responsibilities and places added significance, highlighting increased performance for all those involved in the learning process. It assists in eradicating dependency across the system and outlines the effective individual outcomes and strategies.
- **Meta-learning Theory** – learning depends largely on the learner's ability to plan and manage their own learning; and
- **Co-operative Learning Theory** – successful learning depends on the ability to create a co-operative learning experience with a focus on 'how' learning occurs rather than only focusing on the learning content ('what') (Erasmus & Van Dyk, 1999:89).

Irrespective of the particular theory, Erasmus & Van Dyk (1999:93) pronounces that motivation is an important principle in the process of learning. In this regard, motivation refers to the extent to which a learner wishes to absorb the learning content and this factor depends on to which extent the teacher/trainer/coach/mentor has successfully been recognised and accepted by the learner (legitimation as the conveyor of knowledge and information). It should be noted that the learner may be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to learn, yet the above conditions remain dependant on the issue of motivation.

#### 4.2 Planning the Teaching by Understanding the Learning

According to Erasmus & Van Dyk (1999:87) many theories exist concerning learning and the acquisition of knowledge. However, learning may simply be described as "a permanent change in behaviour that occurs as a result of exercise and/or experience". Contextualised in an education and training perspective, this definition may imply that learning occurs when a learner has acquired an ability to perform a function as a measure of doing something that they were not previously able to execute. Placed within a human resources development and skills acquisition context, different theorems may deserve scrutiny. Theories on learning may include, but are not exclusive to:

- **Behaviourist Theory** – learning occurs as a result of a stimulus of some sort;
  - **Humanistic Theory** – humans are driven by the pursuit of personal objectives;
  - **Gestalt Theory** – learning is a complex cognitive process involving the whole personality;
  - **Experimental Theory** – learning is a complex process which cannot be explained with simplistic models;
- Freeth (2013:86) agrees that motivation serves as an important function in pursuance of successful learning and continues to mention that 'carrot' or 'stick' motivation both have a place in the learning environment where incentives or penalties for performance or non-performance are both strong motivators. Therefore, the principle from a NLP point of view is that the language used to communicate the consequences of performance or non-performance or success or failure, should be clear and unambiguous; behaviour change will only result if the language used is outcomes based. "Learners need to be informed of the outcomes if the request is complied with. If people are to be motivated away from problems, you need to tell them what they will avoid if they do what you ask." (Freeth, 2013:89). As much as teaching and learning modalities are complex and multifaceted, for the purposes of this research, the key aspect which warrants scrutiny is the role of a learner's sensory system when learning is underway.

Essentially, three sensory systems are employed in learning, being: visual (V), auditory (A) and kinaesthetic (K). These sensory functions are essential to the learning process, and if the teacher is attuned thereto, effective and efficient learning may be enhanced. It should be noted that a close

dependency exists between the sensory aspects, and the above mentioned motivational aspects as well. In a practical context, some learners have a propensity towards visual learning, where others are more auditory based or kinaesthetic (feeling). Although at times a combination of the three may prevail, one will always be the dominant or preferred choice of processing information.

Freeth (2013:96) emphasises that our senses are all influenced by the language context within which the learning occurs; hence the linguistic element in the NLP equation is a critical component of communication. It is therefore important to note that if the way in which learning is presented to the learner is set in a type of language which is clear, unambiguous and congruent with the type of learner (learning style – *personalised*), the objectives of the teaching outcomes may be better met.

#### 4.3 Sensory Preferences

As alluded to in the previous section, individuals react differently to environmental stimuli, depending on their sensory preferences. Good communicators hone their communication to align – 'suit' – their audience's sensory preferences. To explain further, the communicator who wishes to influence (lead through communication) needs to be attuned to an audience's sensory preference and adapt this stimulus in accordance thereto. As mentioned by Freeth (2013) essentially, V, A and K are the most dominant sensory factors. Table 1 explains the three sensory preference styles for 'taking in' and representing the world. It should be noted that 'typical' behaviour of individuals who fall into the different categories are highlighted, yet the

table does not present an exhaustive list; these are merely by way of example.

#### 4.4 Personalising Learning

In addition to the notes relating to personalising learning made *supra*, the role of the leader (teacher – trainer/mentor/coach) in this process is important because: *Firstly*, the notion of the leader as a *model of appropriate behaviour* is vital (legitimation). The ethical imperative has to be matched by morally consistent behaviour. There is, therefore, a moral imperative on teachers to adopt a model of personal effectiveness, which exemplifies the values which are supposed to be already inculcated within themselves, whilst transferring these to the respective learners, hence modelling the translation of principle into practice. *Secondly*, both from a principled and pragmatic stance, a growing understanding of neurological functioning indicates the fact that learning is an emotionally based activity. Effective brain functioning is reliant on a positive emotional environment. Anger, stress and tension actively blocks effective brain functioning, whereas a positive and relaxed climate will enhance the learning process. The aforementioned applies to adults as much as it does to children. In all of the differing opinions surrounding the concept of the learning organisation, the importance of the emotional climate should be encouraged. This implies the absence of tension and the creation of positive self-concept and self-awareness for mutual regard for each other – a fundamental trait of positive leadership for the highest good of all participants intended.

*Finally*, leadership effectiveness is a product of personal effectiveness, which is in turn grounded

**Table 1: Sensory Styles**

V - Visual Style	A - Auditory Style	K - Kinaesthetic Style
Revolves around vision and sight	Revolves around hearing	Revolves around tactileness and motion
<b>Typical behaviour/uses phrases:</b>		
Talks fast, uses visual phrases e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I can see clearly";</li> <li>• "Let me paint the picture";</li> <li>• "In view of";</li> <li>• "see what I am saying"</li> <li>• "It looks like"; and</li> <li>• "It is still cloudy to me".</li> </ul>	Talks methodically and carefully selects words e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "To tell the truth";</li> <li>• "Clear as a bell";</li> <li>• "That clicks with me"</li> <li>• "I hear what you are saying";</li> <li>• "What an earful";</li> <li>• "It sounds good"; and</li> <li>• "Loud and clear".</li> </ul>	May talk slowly, sometimes excessively slowly. Uses phrases such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Catch my drift";</li> <li>• "Get in touch";</li> <li>• "Get a handle on it"</li> <li>• "Hang in there"; and</li> <li>• "Cool and calm".</li> </ul>

Source: (Nadler, 2011: 281)

in emotional self-awareness and emotional intelligence (EI or EQ). The consistency and quality of sustained and significant leadership engagement with others is a chief ingredient of success. Therefore, it is crucial to develop leaders (teachers) who have a traditional range of knowledge, skills and qualities but who are capable, indispensable in a highly sophisticated way, to cultivate emotionally mature and intelligent learners that enable learning in both curricular and social settings triumphantly.

Emotional self-awareness and emotional intelligence may be described as the ability to be constantly aware (attuned to) of *yourself*, being able to manage yourself and thereby understanding *others* and managing *others* (Nadler, 2011:9). Nadler continues to state that "People who possess high Emotional Intelligence, are the ones who truly succeed in work – building flourishing careers and long-lasting relationships as well as having balanced work and home life". For the sake of clarification, D'Ambra (2007:7) defines Emotional Intelligence as: "Our EQ, or emotional intelligence quotient, is, by definition complex because it combines many different qualities, often almost indiscernible from each other, such as self-awareness, the ability to read our own feelings, control our impulses and communicate with others. It cannot be quantified in the same way as IQ (Intelligence Quotient). It needs to be evaluated in terms of self-awareness and our relationships with others".

The importance of emotional intelligence aspect in leadership is in fact the very essence of what it is all about: Being *aware* (observant) of peoples' preferred or 'stronger' sensory preferences, makes it easier to effect leadership and to be an effective leader. As explained *supra*, being aware of the three essential NLP sensory differentiators, being the *visual*, *auditory* or *kinaesthetic* sensory strengths or preferences, will result that the leader's communication to the recipient(s) – information tailored specifically to their preference – to have greater effect and impact (Nadler, 2011:280).

## 5. Applying Neuro-Linguistic Programming Techniques in Mentoring and Coaching

Mentoring and coaching are concepts which often cause confusion. To understand mentoring and coaching from an NLP perspective, the difference between these two concepts should be

clarified. Mentoring has a focus on 'Professional Development' and should be conducted by a more senior professional in the organisation who is specifically not the line manager of the mentee. Mentoring is a process that identifies opportunities to expand a staff member's experience and facilitate carer development (Menaul, 2013:9). It may specifically relate to the technical field within which the staff member functions, such as a financial manager, operating within the financial management domain. Here, the mentor may assist the mentee on financial decision making modalities under practical-operational conditions.

Coaching, often also referred to business coaching, corporate coaching, leadership coaching or management coaching, occurs when a specialist person, "works with people in organisations who are in a senior position of authority. The coach is there to provide a sounding board and listening ear to someone who has complex issues and may have no one else to share them with especially if they are right at the top of an organisation. In a leadership capacity, the coach may help them to inspire others create strategic plans and culture plus developing a vision for the company (organisation)" (Menaul, 2013:11). In other words, Menaul (2013:9) reveals that coaching is a 'management style' which seeks to maximise the contribution and performance of an individual in organisational context. It may involve providing guidance, direction, feedback and encouragement. It is a part of a management system and is premised on a teaching and learning philosophy which supports a practitioner through 'Performance Centred Learning'. It should be noted that coaching may occur as part of a natural process in the workplace, which can be done by an external coach or led by the line manager.

A noteworthy distinction, however, is drawn by Lozza (2014:11) where the difference between *business coaching* and *executive coaching* is made:

- Business coaching may be interpreted as a process of a mere general nature, scope and intent; a process relating to general career advancement and pathing, how to navigate certain transitions during a career in an organisation or general leadership development aspects.
- Executive coaching, to the contrary may be defined as: "an experiential and personalised leader development process that builds the

leader's capability to achieve short and long term organisational goals. It is conducted on a one-to-one and/or group interactions driven by data from multiple perspectives and based on mutual trust and respect. The organisation, the executive, and the executive coach work in partnership to achieve maximum impact."

It should be noted from the above that mentoring and coaching are two distinctively different activities, yet both potentially invaluable for staff members and organisations, respectively. The common factor to be noted, however, is that both form part of a teaching and learning process. Both have an invaluable role to play and as much as the teacher should apply their emotional intelligence to gauge their audience and apply NLP principles in a classroom setting, when doing mentoring and coaching, the same should equally apply during such events.

## 6. Neuro-Linguistic Programming in the Classroom and Beyond: Longitudinal Research

In order to support the development of an understanding of the potential of NLP tools in a public affairs education and human resources development purpose, empirical data collection and discourse are required. Research consistently indicates that what teachers do in the classroom is at the heart of the education institution's effectiveness, and the role of mentors and coaches intra-organisationally therefore aids their competitive advantage in the global human resources development arena and that the environment (classroom practice and experiential learning) are the factors that reign supreme in impacting the learners' progress (Churches and West-Burnham, 2008: (20). The researchers are currently in the throes of designing the study and to secure funding to support the study.

For the purposes of further research on public affairs education and human resources skills development, the following NLP-related aspects may warrant scrutiny:

- To study and develop an appreciation of the importance of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills in public affairs human resources development, in the context of the dynamics of the subject discipline;

- To Identify, define and implement agreed models of 'best practice' of NLP models in Public Affairs teaching and learning;
- To understand the role of body language and non-verbal communication in teaching and learning; and
- To determine the relationship between self-concept, self-esteem and achievement.

For the purposes of debate and explanation, Appendix A serves as an example of a lesson plan, prepared for a lesson in a Public Sector Accountancy module, which incorporates an NLP approach for in-class teaching methodology.

## 7. Conclusion

In the preceding discussion selected key NLP aspects were cast into a teaching and learning context in higher education and human resources skills development. These aspects do not by any means capture the rich NLP body of knowledge available to teachers or interested parties, but may serve to cast some light on the relevant theory. An attempt was made to indicate and position the key variables which through an NLP lens, may improve teaching and learning in complex higher education settings where learners may find public affairs teaching and in particular, Public Sector Accountancy challenging.

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## Appendix A

### **Lesson Plan: Public Sector Accounting (1<sup>st</sup> year Postgraduate)**

#### **Scenario: Postgraduate adult learners at an institution of higher learning**

- Teaching a cohort of adult learners who vary in their skills and knowledge and attitude of the subject.
  - Their motivations for learning Public Sector Accounting differ.
  - Part of a Programme with a compulsory module.
  - Most learners are learning this subject to advance their career
  - Accounting is a compulsory module in the particular programme curriculum.
  - Some learners would prefer to avoid Public Sector Accounting as they fear the quantification aspects associated with the subject. This state of mind exists as a result of past conditioning resulting in some individuals' innate 'inability' to cope and deal with accounting, where some may experience less apprehension in this regard due to positive framing during past exposure to the subject.
  - Learners attend Public Sector Accounting classes, weekly for four hours.
- Rapport is key in developing an interpersonal relationship with the learners in order for them to trust and feel comfortable with the teacher; thus creating an atmosphere of ease and comfort to learn effectively, which is vital.
  - The teacher maintains an open door policy with the learners, in the event where they require any further assistance for accounting over-and-above their classroom activities.
  - The parties (teacher and learners) all have developed a keen relationship with each other.
  - Classroom discussions are encouraged and repetitive learning through practicing their skills is enhanced.
  - The higher institution has some technology resources to utilize when teaching, namely: white board, a projector, Wi-Fi connectivity and a classroom setup conducive to teaching and learning; Blended learning is therefore well-facilitated.

#### **Lesson Aim:**

- Key concepts of Public Sector Accounting are explained to develop the learners' foundation and understanding of the subject matter.