

NLP – Language

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You're probably aware of just how important language is to communication. Well, there are other important things as well.

Hi, I'm Alan Patching.

We say in NLP that language is a secondary representation of experience. It's an important thing to be aware of and to understand.

Language obviously gives us the words which we hope express the feelings and intentions of those delivering the words. The tone of that language and the body language of the person delivering that language also give us some very strong insights into the total feeling and message of that person and what they are trying to put over. However, there are other things that we can look for and be aware of.

You see, in the business world in particular, we've been told and taught to mask our feelings. If we are a little upset by someone we tend to mask it. And by the time we are dealing with someone and perhaps we are upsetting them, by the time they get to the point of showing us that they are upset, it's well past the point of no return. In psychology language we say, "they've gone to a higher level in the conflict sequence" and by going to a higher level in the conflict sequence it's unlikely the conflict will be very quickly resolved. More on that in another post. But for the moment, we can learn to read the primary representation of the person's experience in their micro-signals.

So their language is the secondary interpretation we experience. If someone says, "I'm feeling fine", it may be that they are feeling really ticked off and you have to guess why. But if they are feeling ticked off, or feeling fine, their body language will give us those signals, we can tell by tension around the eyes and narrowing of the lips, change in colouration of the face ... micro-body language signals.

There's a thousand different ways that we can interpret through the primary representation of internal experience - which is a person's body language. Tone, complexion, pitch of voice, speed of voice - these kind of things can tell us the way they are feeling rather than the words they use if they are trying to mask feelings because society tells them that's what they should do.

So it's really important to learn what to look for and how to make an adjustment in our own behaviour if we are getting a response from someone else that says "I

don't like what you are saying to me," or "I don't like the way you are dealing with me".

In future posts we will be extending this theory that language is the secondary, not the primary, representation of experience and that people tell you what they think they ought to be telling you ... what they think you ought to be hearing in some circumstances ,when really it'd be far more resourceful for us to be able to get the sense that we are upsetting them and we need to change our ways.

So in future posts we will be looking at some detailed aspects of what to look for from a NLP perspective, to know from the primary representation of a person's experience - mainly their micro signals and body language, that maybe it's time for us to change tack to get a better result.

Be with me for that one, I'll be looking forward to it, hope you are too, for now, bye. See you soon.