

# The Map is NOT the Territory

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Have you heard the expression “The map is not the territory”? It’s a very important expression to know about for life and business.

Hi, I’m Alan Patching.

The map is not the territory is an expression from NLP that simply means the way we see something may not be the way it really is or the way someone else sees it.

Any experience we have in life we process in our mind through internal representations, and the perceptions we gain from any experience through our senses could be quite different from that other people get who had exactly the same experience.

For example you might go snow skiing, you may hate the cold, you may hate falling over, and you never want to go snow skiing again, but the people you went with thought it was the greatest experience of their life despite being a little chilly and falling over.

Exactly the same experience, two completely different perceptions. Exactly the same territory, two completely different maps of the territory.

So in NLP, we encourage people to maintain behaviour flexibility by just having the awareness to realise when you are getting into an argument with someone, whether it be in business or in personal life, we just want to say, “they are wrong” or “you are wrong” or whatever it might be - and becoming a little too defensive, it’s far more resourceful to structure that in our own mind, not that they are wrong and we are right, but rather just saying “ah, their map of the territory is different from mine”.

It would be nice to engage in a conversation to understand why the differences exist and perhaps if we work those differences out not only will we come to a resolution on this problem but we will also build a better relationship between us for future business and personal life experiences.

And that makes for a better life and business for all involved.

Hope you’ve enjoyed this tip from NLP for business and personal life, I’m Alan Patching, see you again soon.