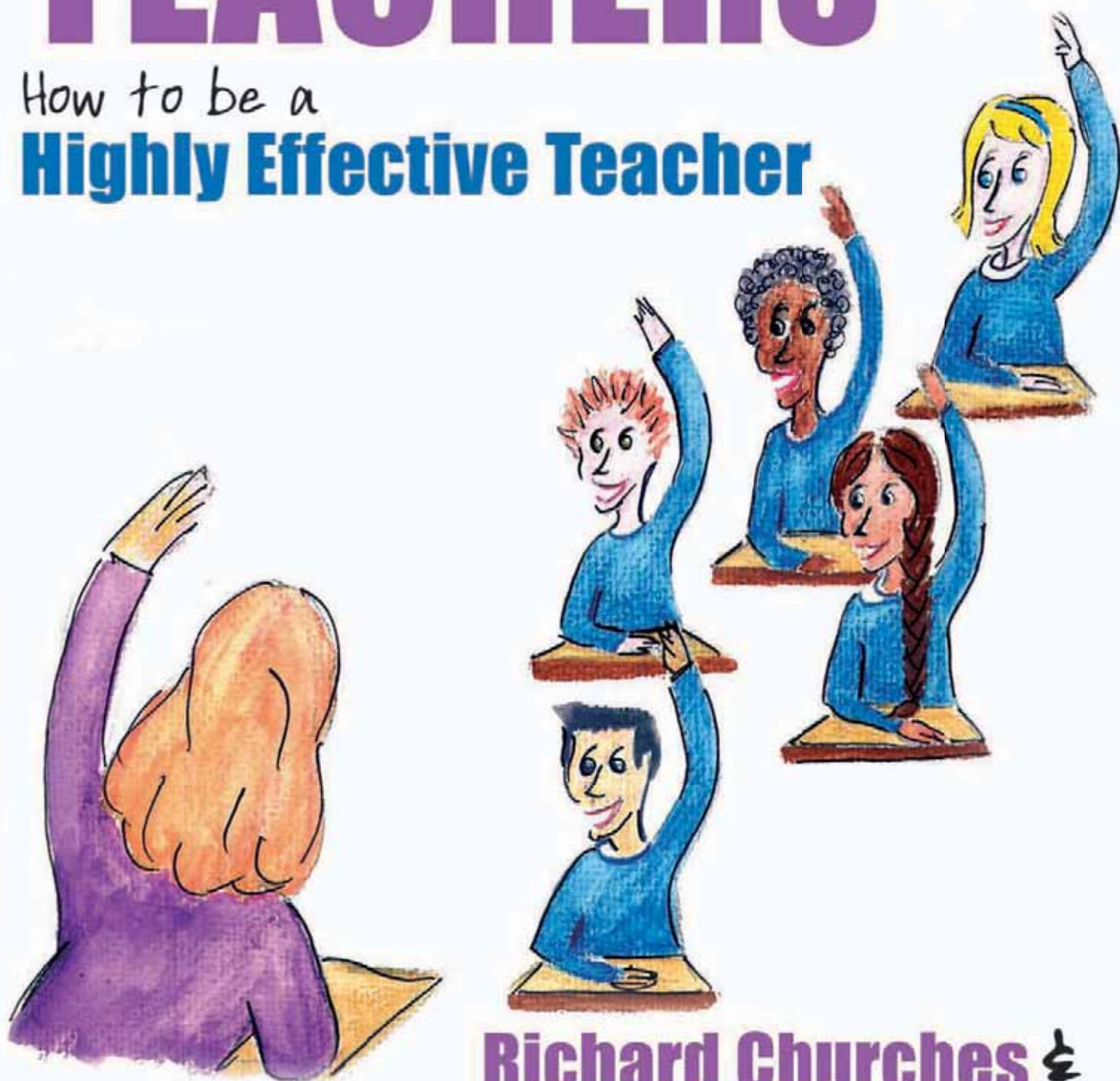


# NLP for TEACHERS

How to be a  
**Highly Effective Teacher**

Includes an  
**Instant NLP  
Training  
Day**

plan and deliver your own NLP training • plan and deliver your own NLP training •



**Richard Churches** &  
**Roger Terry**

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## Introduction

# Should you buy this book?



**Teaching is about relationships as well as pedagogy. It is about feelings as well as facts and it is as much about what goes on inside your head as it is about what goes on in the heads of your students. It is about using your senses as well as your subject knowledge.**

At the end of the day we all know that it is our mood when we enter the classroom that has the greatest effect on the children, our sense of motivation that drives the pace of the lesson and our abilities to relieve the tension in a difficult moment that creates the right classroom climate. Effective teaching begins and ends with our capacity to manage our internal responses and external behaviours.

There can be few jobs that require such mastery over interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, and the central importance of this area for teachers and school leader development is becoming increasingly clear (see West-Burnham, 2004; West-Burnham and Ireson, 2005). Because Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP) is about personal effectiveness it offers teachers a range of tools and techniques to develop interpersonal and intrapersonal capacity, manage emotions and communicate much more effectively. At the same time there are specific approaches for getting in touch with who you are, so that you can truly connect to your moral purpose and values as a teacher, think deeply about what you do and have the skills to take effective action. In our work with teachers we have found that knowing what is important to you, what you want and having the personal effectiveness to act gives you the ability to link your values to your behaviours and to influence those around you to easily achieve what really matters. The link between values, behaviour and purpose is now recognised as being of key importance to effective school improvement (Fullan, 2001; 2007). We have included a specific chapter (The teacher within) on working with your values and exploring you identity. Is NLP the technology of emotional intelligence? Well, if such a thing exists, yes it probably is. It is certainly technology for developing interpersonal and intrapersonal competence.

Is NLP the technology of emotional intelligence?

Well, if such a thing exists, then yes it probably is. It is certainly technology for developing interpersonal and intrapersonal competence.

In writing this book we have not sought to present a work on pedagogy or teaching strategies. There are many excellent texts already available that cover these areas. Rather our intention has been to present a practical text that gives teachers the opportunity to explore the key areas of personal development and personal effectiveness. We believe that this area is not only under-represented in teacher education and training at the moment, but is also the key (in combination with effective teaching and learning approaches) to high teacher effectiveness. In our experience, it is this area that is often lacking or under-developed in less effective teachers, and the reason why two teachers can deliver virtually the same lesson (in the same way) to similar classes and yet have very different results.

In this book you will learn how to:

- communicate more effectively
- develop your influencing skills and approaches
- manage your emotions and feelings more effectively to help you to build resilience
- set yourself, and achieve, positive outcomes
- expand your range of potential behaviours and develop more flexibility

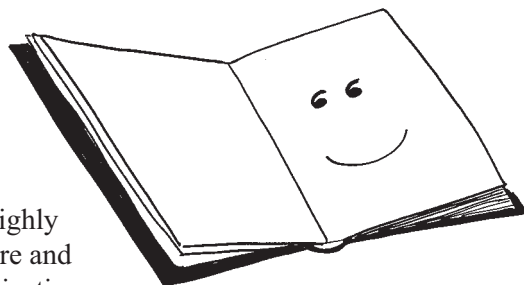
We have also included up-to-date **Research Zones** throughout the book that we hope will be of interest to the wider academic community as well as to teachers and others who work with children in a learning capacity. Chapter 1, *What's in a name?* contains some background information about NLP and its core concepts; the practical tool-based chapters begin with Chapter 2, *Blockbuster movies*. Chapter 14, *The magic number 7*, puts NLP into a wider research context in relation to what we know about consciousness and cognition and how early work in the field of NLP relates to current thinking. A final chapter, *Instant training day*, gives you a detailed set of training scripts to support you in delivering some NLP training yourself.

## What have you got in mind?

At its heart this is a book about language and internal mental imagery, and how understanding this can transform your life and work as a teacher. Specifically it is a book about how to use the language and approaches of a group of extraordinary therapists (modelled by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in the mid-1970s) in the classroom. This early NLP research explored how therapists such as Milton Erickson, Virginia Satir, Frank Farrelly and Fritz Perls did what they did—the end result of which was the documentation of a wide range of tools, techniques and approaches. In doing this they discovered and unpacked tools, approaches and methodologies. These led to the development of specific techniques that are just as effective when used in everyday situations with everyday problems as they are when used with people in therapy. Indeed, over time, it became increasingly clear that there were specific strategies and approaches that many excellent communicators and achievers shared in common. Together these personal effectiveness and communication strategies have become part of what is known as NLP. Many of you will read this book and notice things that you have already learnt on courses and in books in recent years. The fact is NLP has been gradually being integrated into education over the last few years through the cascading and sharing of tools and techniques. This book will help you to understand where many of these ideas come from and how to use them effectively.

## What you will not find in this book!

- **This is not a book about brain-friendly learning nor is it a book about how the brain learns.** If you are looking for a work on neuroscience and how the brain learns we highly recommend *The Learning Brain* by Sarah-Jayne Blakemore and Uta Frith (Blakemore and Frith, 2007) and the recent publication *Neuroscience and Education: Issues and Opportunities* by the Teaching and Learning Research Programme and the Economic Social Research Council (TLRP, 2007). There are also many helpful texts by Alistair Smith (2000; 2002; 2003; Smith and Call, 1999), Bill Lucas (2001), Guy Claxton (2002), Tony Buzan (2001) and others which provide a practical approach for those aspiring to plan their teaching and learning in a way that supports a more ‘brain-focused’ way of working. For a scholarly review of the potential impact of these approaches we suggest you look at the recently published research report *Learning to Learn in Schools* (Higgins et al., 2007). As NLP is primarily about communication, with yourself and





others, you will find that the techniques and tools in the book complement any and all pedagogic approaches.

- **You will not find pedagogic approaches in this book or anything that might replace your existing practice or training as a teacher.** Rather this book contains personal effectiveness tools and techniques with which you can easily enhance any existing good classroom skills and approaches, so that you can become highly effective in the classroom. In doing so you will find yourself becoming more influential in your delivery skills and more effective at managing yourself. This will enable you to have more energy and stamina, clarity and focus and the feeling of being completely in control of your emotions and purpose.

## So what is this book about?

This book is about personal effectiveness. In a sense it is about the space between you and the students that you teach and the space within you when you are doing that. The type of knowledge that NLP represents is therefore a 'how to' rather than a 'what'. In a way it is technology for your mind.

This book is about personal effectiveness. In a sense it is about the space between you and the students that you teach and the space within you when you are doing that. The type of knowledge that NLP represents is therefore a 'how to' rather than a 'what'. In a way it is technology for your mind.

## Why we wrote this book

What our experience of using NLP with teachers tells us is that these tools and techniques can help teachers to hit the challenging mark of interpersonal and intrapersonal effectiveness more and more often. Our work over the last four years has taught us many things. In particular, we have learnt that that not every tool or technique works for everyone. This is almost certainly because we all have highly effective ways of dealing with the challenge of teaching. What is undeniable, from our experience, is that nearly every teacher we have worked with finds something that makes a real difference to them and their relationships in both the classroom and the staff room. At the end of the day the answer in teaching has to be in the territory of practitioner-led enquiry and in this spirit we invite you to work with the ideas and tools in this book and let us know what happens.



## Learning NLP

Any good book about NLP should aspire to be a complement to hands-on practice and training. With this in mind we have included practical exercises throughout the book and a final chapter, *Instant training day*, which gives you seven interactive NLP training exercises that you can use separately or to deliver your own whole day training event in school. If you have not yet had the opportunity to attend NLP training by a recognised trainer or practitioner we would highly recommend that you do so. NLP is a set of practical skills and there is much to learn that can only ever be touched on in the context of a written text. Look out for training delivered by registered trainers of either INLPTA (International NLP Trainers Association) or ANLP (Association of NLP).

For those of you who are studying for a teacher training qualification, or who are doing a higher degree in education, we have provided **Research Zones** that give you useful references to research from outside of NLP that parallels and supports the model.

So should you buy this book? Yes, if you're interested in beginning to develop excellence in classroom communication skills. Yes, if you want to learn how to use powerful tools to support your personal and professional goals. Yes, if you just want to know how to feel good whenever you want to. In fact, anyone working in a school—teachers, subject leaders, phase leaders, senior managers, learning support assistants, local authority advisors and many others—will want to buy it.

## Getting the most out of this book

As well as containing lots of information about NLP and background to the tools and techniques, there are many practical activities for you to work on.

- **Just do its** are activities that will build your internal skills and capacity, and act as a prelude to the more advanced tools in the *NLP Toolboxes*.
- You will notice that there is some repetition of concepts in the book. We have done this so that you can really focus on working on a chapter at a time without having to cross-reference too much.
- We suggest that you take it a little bit at a time and play with the concepts and tools in your daily work, noticing how effective they can be in everyday situations. Once you have read a chapter and worked through the activities yourself, you may want to work through the activities again with a friend or a colleague. With some of the tools and techniques it is helpful to have someone read it out loud whilst you work through it. Discussing the activities afterwards can be really helpful.
- Set yourself the goal of taking two or three ideas, concepts and techniques at a time and have a day when you practise that one thing. Applying some of these strategies will be much more effective than simply reading the book.
- In general it is best to work through a single chapter in order as the approaches and learning become more advanced as the chapter progresses.
- **Research Zones** add academic depth to what is in the chapters but it is not necessary to spend time on these before working through the chapters and the tools.

- At the end of all the practical chapters there a box entitled More ways to start improving your classroom practice with NLP. These include a series of additional suggestions for getting started with the tools that are described in the chapter.
- Remember you don't need to absorb it all at once. Allow yourself time to work on one or two tools or approaches at a time.

## Chapter 5

# Don't think about chocolate cake

### How to use your language to get what you want

Imagine for a moment that someone you were to meet in a bar, restaurant or in the street later today were to say to you, 'just by saying a few words in the right way you can send people into wonderful places, influence the way they think or help them to find their own solutions to any problem they face.' That would be good, wouldn't it?

In the introduction we mentioned how the founders of NLP had 'modelled' a number of extraordinary figures at the leading edge of therapy in the 1970s. One person they studied in great detail was Milton Erickson, the world famous hypnotherapist. Erickson, who died in 1980, is widely considered to have been one of the most important leaders in his field. He was so impressed with Bandler and Grinder's work that he wrote forewords for some of their books.

In one of these he describes suffering from polio early in his life. During his long periods of treatment and recovery he began to develop his sensory perception in relation to non-verbal communication to a very advanced level (you can learn more about this in Chapter 3, *We like like*).

As well as 'modelling' Erickson's extraordinary ability to build rapport rapidly and deeply with his clients, Bandler and Grinder mapped his language and identified many different patterns that he regularly used to influence, make suggestions and induce trance. So effective was Erickson's use of language that he was able to create change in clients without formally creating a sleep-like hypnotic state. He was also able to dramatically change people by just having a conversation or telling a story. This 'waking-state' form hypnosis was a technique that Bandler and Grinder took forward into their work and their training of NLP.

One of Milton Erickson's greatest skills was the ability to be artfully vague. In other words he would often talk in generalised or ambiguous ways. Vague language is effective because it gets people into an altered state of mind and distracts their attention from, and with, the external world. Putting people into this state makes it easier to connect with them and to create rapport, even with people you do not know well. It also helps to ensure that suggestions and commands are more easily accepted. **Hypnotic language** (sometimes referred to as **soft language**) is very effective in a coaching context, particularly when you want someone to search inside to find their own solutions, rather than impose or directly suggest ideas. Milton Erickson believed that people have all the internal resources they need to solve any problem that they face.



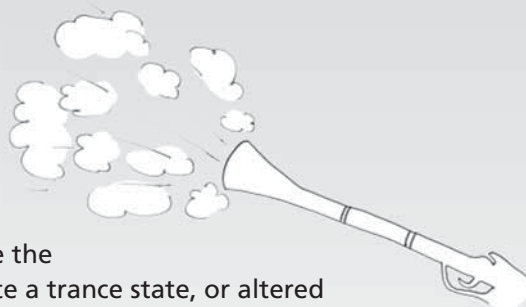
Hypnotic language patterns are powerful tools, both for use in the classroom and in life in general. By the way, should your ethical button have just been pushed a little, listen more carefully the next time a salesperson talks to you, as these things are standard practice in sales and are well worth knowing about! Although this is quite a technical chapter, spending time exploring these ideas and practising the tools will be well worth it in the long run.

## Jargon Buster

### Milton model

The term 'Milton model' is used in NLP to describe the set of language patterns that can be used to create a trance state, or altered state of consciousness. The Milton model is named after Milton Erickson and is first described in detail in *Patterns of the Hypnotic Techniques of Milton Erickson, vol. i* (Bandler and Grinder, 1975).

Bandler and Grinder noticed that Erickson consistently 'chunked up' out of the details that we might usually include in language, removing the details and creating **generalisations, distortions** and **deletions**. Because information is missing we are forced to go 'inside' (in what is sometimes called a **transderivational search (TDS)**) for meaning. It is this internal search for meaning that places the person's attention on internal representations rather than the external world and which 'induces' trance and suggestibility. Having used vague language to create an altered state Erickson would then make a suggestion or embed a command.



## Presuppositions

A key concept to grasp, before you begin to explore a few of these patterns, is the notion of presupposition. Presuppositions are the hidden meanings in sentences, phrases or individual words and work covertly or indirectly. It works like this. If we were to say:

*Either now or in the next few seconds you can think of a time when using the right words, at the right time, would have been more useful to you*

you are quite likely to do just that.

This is because the first part of the sentence presupposes that you are going to do what we have suggested.

This particular pattern is called a **double bind** and is very useful when you want to limit the number of possibilities that the person you are talking to will have. For example, in the classroom you might say:

*John, would you like to start by doing the questions or do the diagram first?*

The presupposition is that John will start work now, whichever way he chooses to do it.

John Grinder was a professor of linguistics and in his, and Bandler's writing explains how this process of presupposition works by referring to Chomsky's notions of transformational grammar. In essence the idea is that there are two levels of language structure: a **surface structure** and a **deep structure**. The surface structure contains the basic information, for example:

*My best friend is trying to get pregnant*

The deep structure contains all the other implicit information that has been passed on but which is not stated, for example, the fact that my best friend is female. In effect, instructions can be hidden within the deep structure of a sentence and do not necessarily need to be said.

## Top tips for the classroom

Useful sentences with positive presuppositions:

*Tomorrow you will be able to learn even more*—presupposes that a lot has already been learnt

*Starting is just the beginning*—presupposes that there is more to learn

*This first bit you have learned is the hardest part*—presupposes that the next bit will be easier

*Knowing this you can realise that you have more resources than ever before*—presupposes infinite internal resources

So ... how ready are you to read on?

Jargon  
Buster

## Deep and surface structure and transformational grammar

The term surface structure refers to the actual words or phrases that are being used (the syntactic structure of a sentence). Deep structure applies to the actual meaning of the sentence. Chomsky suggested that language is much more complex and less predictable than had previously been believed. He argued that when we hear a sentence we don't actually process or retain the surface structure; rather we transform it into its deep structure. Transformational grammar is the 'know how' of translating a sentence's meaning into the words that make it up and vice versa.





## NLP Toolbox No. 15

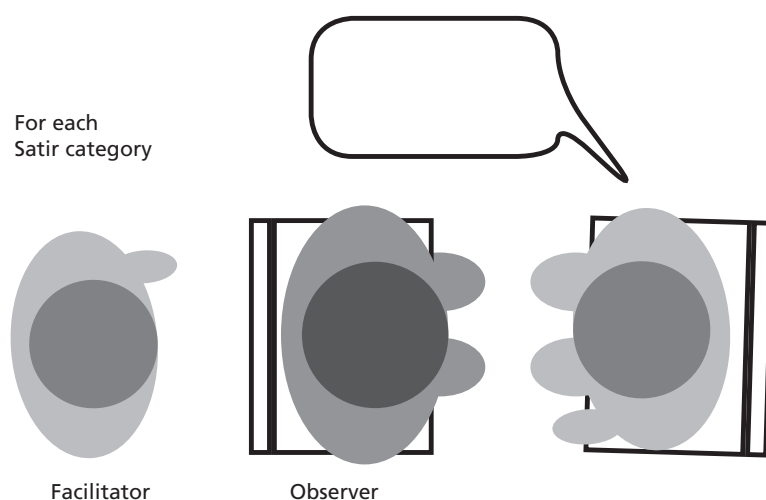
### Puppet Master's parents' evening

Here's a fun activity to do on an inset or training day with your colleagues or other teachers.

- Firstly, do a little bit of upfront teaching so people understand a bit about the theory of Satir categories and where they come from.
- Divide the group into threes. Two people need to sit facing each other as if at a parents' evening. One person takes the role of a parent, the other of the teacher. The third person (or Puppet Master) stands behind the person who is being the parent so that the parent cannot see what they are doing.
- Ask the teachers to think back to a time when they had to give a difficult message to a parent.
- As the teachers explain the difficult message to the parent, the Puppet Master chooses a Satir category and displays it. The teacher then has to use that category.
- The Puppet Master should then randomly work their way through the different categories whilst the poor teacher is forced to follow their lead.
- The parent can choose to match a category or to mismatch one. Blamer, in particular, usually creates some really interesting interactions.

This exercise, if prepared well, usually results in a lot of fun and learning about how our body language has an effect on others. Make sure that you debrief the session afterward (ideally to flipchart) and ask people what they have learnt.

Alternatively, do the same exercise in the context of dealing with a difficult student.





## Research Zone

### Emotional intelligence and empathy

The idea that empathy (seeing the world from another's point of view) is important for effective communication and relationships has long been accepted (see e.g. Rogers, 1959). In recent years ideas about empathy have taken on a new lease of life as a result of the popularisation of the concept of emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman, in particular, has proposed that emotional intelligence may matter more than IQ in relation to success in career and life in general (Goleman, 1995; 1996). The exact definition of emotional intelligence is in dispute, as indeed is its existence (Eysenck, 2000) and its effect (Antonakis, 2003). Some writers suggest that what may be being measured is, in fact, social conformity (Roberts et al., 2001). Generally EI or emotional quotient (EQ) is defined in terms of a person's capacity or ability to perceive and manage their own emotions and those of others. Whether emotional intelligence can be improved is also a contentious issue. However, even early researchers like John 'Jack' Mayer, who suggests that emotional intelligence is unlikely to be something that can be raised, accept that emotional knowledge and social and emotional functioning can be enhanced, and indeed that it is probably desirable to do so (Mayer, 2005). Within most concepts of emotional intelligence (e.g. Goleman, 2001; Bar-On, 1997; 2000) empathy figures strongly as a core area of emotional competence.

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### More ways to start improving your classroom practice with NLP

- Be in **third position** in your mind when dealing with behaviour issues
- Adopt **second position** when planning lessons, explaining concepts or asking questions
- Choose **first position** when giving praise or rewards
- With practice you will also be able to maintain a monitoring position in your classroom using **fourth position** so that you become associated in the process of your lesson

- Have a classroom rule for each of Dilts' levels: Purpose, Values and Beliefs, Capabilities, Behaviour and Environment. Display these in your classroom. You can also agree the rules with the children or get them to design them
- Use Dilts' levels as an analytical tool when covering topics that require children to understand where people are, or were, coming from. This is particularly effective with historical concepts and where there is conflict between people. Ask at what level were these people in conflict? What could they have done?
- Influence groups by ensuring that in your classroom explanations and planning you cater for children with different metaprograms. When giving context pay particular attention to whether you start with general or specific information. Plan activities to cater for both options or procedure preferences. When working one-to-one make sure that you give information according to the preferred metaprogram first and then work round to the less preferred metaprogram
- Make the children aware of their preferences and encourage them to learn to use their less preferred style of thinking to encourage development and flexibility
- If a child just doesn't immediately understand something that you have explained, think about which metaprogram you used to explain it and re-explain in the alternative way.

*“NLP for Teachers: How to be a highly effective teacher is a rare book – unique and original ideas presented in so many different stimulating ways. You have idea sets, toolboxes, research zones, top tips, cartoons – a cornucopia of stimuli. Churches and Terry have produced something that not only will make you a better teacher, it will make any of us a better person if we soak in and act on the many clear suggestions. NLP for Teachers is at once a deeply practical and deeply theoretical book.”*

Michael Fullan, Professor Emeritus, OISE/University of Toronto,  
author of *The New Meaning of Educational Change*

NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) allows us to uncover how people’s minds are “programmed”. It is a powerful tool for developing communication skills and supporting personal and professional development. This book covers a wide range of practical applications of NLP that will enhance your personal effectiveness and improve your classroom delivery. Learn how to:

- Adapt your language to alter the response you get
- Communicate in ways you never thought possible both inside and outside the classroom
- Build rapport and influence others
- Keep motivation on target
- See issues from many different perspectives
- Use your new knowledge to plan and deliver an NLP training day

Invaluable for everyone working with learners be they teachers, subject leaders, phase leaders, senior managers, learning support assistants or Local Authority advisors. Also includes “Research Zones” that detail supporting research.

*“This is a powerful resource for all those who wish to extend their portfolio of strategies to support effective learning and teaching. NLP offers a systematic, coherent and well tried range of techniques to enhance all aspects of communication. The book combines lucid expositions of theory, practical and relevant examples and a range of activities which support understanding and application.*

Education is a social process – this book demonstrates that it is no longer necessary to aspire to, or exhort, social skills – they can be developed and learnt. NLP offers a rigorous approach to personal effectiveness and enhanced professional expertise. The authors provide an accessible, relevant and directly applicable resource which has the potential to help classrooms and schools become emotionally literate communities.”

John West-Burnham, Visiting Professor of Education, Queen’s University, Belfast



**Richard Churches** is Principal Consultant for National Programmes at CfBT Education Trust, the world-leading education consultancy. In recent years he has worked on a number of major UK government initiatives for the DfES (Department for Education and Skills/Department for Children, Schools and Families) and the National College for School Leadership. This has included being the national lead consultant for Fast Track teaching, Managing Editor for the NPQH materials and consultant

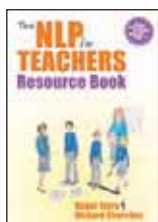
for the London Leadership Strategy.

He is currently National Programme Manager for the support materials for the new secondary curriculum. Previously, Richard was an Advanced Skills Teacher in Greenwich and before that held senior management posts in two inner London schools. He has taught in primary and secondary phases and in a special school. He is reading for a PhD at Surrey University School of Management and is a Fellow of the RSA.



**Roger Terry** is an International NLP Master Trainer and public speaker. As an expert on Neuro-Linguistic Programming and human value systems Roger leads seminars and consults with organisations in the UK, USA, Europe and Middle East. He is the author of *The Hidden Art of Interviewing: NLP and Qualitative Research*. His published articles include regular contributions to *Teaching Expertise* magazine with Richard Churches. Roger has, with Henrie Liddiard,

trained over 1,000 Fast Track teachers in NLP. Eleven years ago he founded Evolution Training with his wife and business partner Emily. Previously his career was within the utility sector where he was responsible for new business creation and innovative organisational development. He now works with organisations and individuals, guiding them to reach their full potential.



Also available

***The NLP for Teachers Resource Book***

ISBN: 978-184590138-7 available April 2009

Packed with easy to use tools and techniques, includes practical worksheets on stagecraft for teachers, leadership, classroom activities, personal development and developing emotional and social literacy with children.



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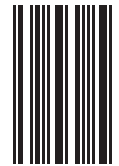
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