THE NLP COMMUNICATION MODEL

How We Perceive, Process, and Respond

Introduction: The Filtered Reality

Imagine walking through a crowded street with a friend. You notice the **aroma of fresh coffee**, while your friend is captivated by a **street musician playing the violin**. Same environment, yet two completely different experiences.

Why? Because our brains **filter reality based on our past experiences, beliefs, and focus**.

NLP's **Communication Model** explains how we take in information, **process it internally**, and then **respond to the world**. It reveals that our experience of reality is **never the actual reality**—it is a **filtered perception shaped by our minds**.

Let's dive into the **inner workings of human communication in NLP**.

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1. The NLP Communication Model: An Overview

At its core, the NLP Communication Model explains:

1. **External Events & Stimuli** – The world around us.
2. **Filters** – How we delete, distort, and generalize information.
3. **Internal Representation** – The mental pictures, sounds, and feelings we create.
4. **State** – The emotions and physiology we experience.
5. **Behavior & Response** – The words and actions we express to the world.

This sequence determines **how we communicate, respond, and interpret life**.

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2. External Events & Stimuli: The Raw Data

Every second, we are bombarded with **millions of bits of sensory information**—sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feelings. However, our brain can only handle around **134 bits per second** (Miller's Law).

So, what happens to the rest of the information? **It gets filtered.**

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3. Filters: How We Shape Our Perception

Before we even *think* about an event, our brain **filters information** using three primary mechanisms:

🔹 **1. Deletion (Ignoring Certain Information)**

We subconsciously **delete** details to avoid sensory overload.
✅ Example: Walking down the street, you might ignore background chatter and focus only on your friend's voice.

🔹 **2. Distortion (Altering Reality)**

We **twist or modify** information to fit our expectations or beliefs.
✅ Example: If you believe someone dislikes you, you might interpret their neutral expression as a **negative look**.

🔹 **3. Generalization (Creating Patterns)**

We take one experience and apply it broadly to **similar situations**.
✅ Example: If you failed a public speech once, you might say, *"I'm terrible at public speaking."*

These filters are influenced by:
🧠 **Beliefs & Values** – What we think is possible or important.
🗣️ **Language** – The words we use to describe reality.
👀 **Memories & Past Experiences** – How we've interpreted life before.
🌍 **Culture & Environment** – The norms we've absorbed from society.

These filters **shape** our reality—**not the actual event itself**.

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4. Internal Representation: The Mind's Movie

After filtering, the brain creates an **Internal Representation (IR)**—a mental model of reality made of:

🎥 **Visual (Images & Colors)** – How we see things in our minds.

🎧 **Auditory (Sounds & Voices)** – What we hear inside our heads.

🎭 **Kinesthetic (Feelings & Sensations)** – The emotions we associate.

👅 **Olfactory & Gustatory (Smell & Taste)** – How past experiences trigger reactions.

This **internal representation** affects how we feel and react.

✅ **Example:**

- You see a dog (External Event).

- Your filters recall a **childhood experience of being bitten** (Distortion).

- Your **Internal Representation** creates an image of an aggressive dog.

- You feel **fear** (State).

- You **avoid the dog** (Behavior).

A different person, with **positive experiences with dogs**, would interpret the same event **differently**!

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5. State: How Our Mind Affects Our Body

Your **Internal Representation** determines your **State**—a combination of:

💭 **Thoughts** (Positive or Negative)

💓 **Emotions** (Happy, Angry, Nervous)

🏃 **Physiology** (Posture, Breathing, Facial Expressions)

State is the missing link in communication!

- If you feel **confident**, you communicate with energy.

- If you feel **nervous**, your voice and body language reflect hesitation.

NLP teaches that **we can control our state** using:

✅ **Breathing Techniques** (Deep breathing shifts emotions)
✅ **Power Poses** (Changing posture boosts confidence)
✅ **Anchoring** (Linking a positive state to a specific trigger)

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6. Behavior & Response: The Outer Expression

Finally, our **state** determines how we communicate and behave.

✅ **If you feel confident** → You speak clearly, make eye contact, and express yourself well.
❌ **If you feel anxious** → You might mumble, avoid eye contact, and struggle to articulate thoughts.

The way we **respond to others** is a **reflection of our internal state**—not just the words we say.

Putting It All Together: The NLP Communication Flow

📌 **Step 1: External Event** – The world around you.
📌 **Step 2: Filters** – Your brain deletes, distorts, and generalizes.
📌 **Step 3: Internal Representation** – Your mind forms a mental picture.
📌 **Step 4: State** – Your thoughts and emotions shift.
📌 **Step 5: Behavior & Response** – You communicate based on your state.

Everything we **say, feel, and do** follows this model.

Practical Applications of the NLP Communication Model

◆ **Reframing Negative Thoughts**

Instead of saying, *"I'm a failure"* (generalization), reframe it as *"I didn't succeed this time, but I'm learning."*

◆ **Building Confidence in Communication**

If you feel nervous, change your **state** by adjusting your **posture, breathing, and thoughts** before speaking.

◆ **Improving Relationships**

Recognize that people **filter reality differently**, so misunderstandings happen. Learning **how others filter information** improves connection.

◆ **Overcoming Fears & Phobias**

Change your **Internal Representation** (visualize a calm and successful outcome instead of failure).

Conclusion: Master Your Filters, Master Your Life

Understanding NLP's **Communication Model** allows you to:
✅ **Recognize how you interpret reality.**
✅ **Change limiting filters to empowering ones.**
✅ **Master your state for better communication.**
✅ **Create more positive and impactful responses.**

💡 **Next Step:** Start observing your own **filters, states, and responses** in daily conversations—because mastering communication starts **within**. 🚀