

Intellectual



As many people and organisations continually have to adapt to changing marketplace conditions, executive and business performance coaching is becoming a popular way to get ahead. And as businesses recognise that people are their most valuable resource, they are more prepared to help them work more effectively to realise both corporate and individual goals.

Michael Beale, founder and director of PPI Business NLP, is a successful executive coach who uses NLP techniques to help organizations and managers maximise their business performance. His company provides NLP training for business, executive coaching and bespoke in-house courses on teambuilding, communication, networking, presenting and sales. Beale works with corporate clients including

BT, Coultts and AstraZeneca as well as helping top executives develop their one-to-one skills.

Beale's premise is that effective communication impacts on every aspect of running a business, so enhancing peoples' communication skills and their ability to build rapport will improve their performance at work as well as promoting good working relationships throughout an organisation. 'Basically,

Picture:
Michael
Beale

Kung-Fu

Michael Beale, the founder and director of PPI Business NLP uses NLP-powered coaching to boost business performance. Joanna Goodman investigates

NLP is very good for all people-to-people interaction,' explains Beale. 'NLP techniques are by far the quickest and most effective way of getting people to improve their one-to-one skills.' He also uses NLP to build rapport with his clients to help them get what they want out of executive coaching. 'People often ignore one-to-one skills, but you can't coach, you can't sell and you can't lead easily without them,' he says.

The people who attend his NLP courses are often ambitious middle managers. They've not usually been sent by their companies, but have decided to take on some resources to help them get that promotion.

Beale offers bespoke training to help managers and teams deliver on specific company objectives like increasing the performance of the sales force, helping the marketing department communicate more effectively or working with the HR team on interviewing techniques.

The success of executive coaching using NLP is documented by the fact that more and more organisations choose to spend part of their training budgets on NLP. So does NLP always work, or has Beale ever had to fall back on more conventional coaching techniques? 'If you rely on one technique alone, it may or may not work, depending on individual circumstances,' he explains. 'But because NLP is so wide and is basically about very best practice, there are enough tools in the toolkit to be able to help address any problem.'

As coaching is a reactive tool – people need help with a particular aspect of their role – it can work on many different levels. 'Coaching can work simply by

creating a space for somebody to work out their own issues,' says Beale. 'But using NLP is wider than simply applying a technique. It's a process that involves examining what a client is doing now. If they're not getting the results that they want, it may be that most of what they do is fine, but one or two things need adjusting. So I model what they do at the moment, compare it with the best practice model and tweak the things that need a little work.'

Beale claims that NLP is the key to his success with many of his clients. 'The first step is to make absolutely certain the person being coached knows exactly what they want to achieve,' he says. That may sound simplistic, but people often go for things that they don't really want.'

Beale then draws on NLP techniques and other coaching resources to find

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the quickest way to deliver results. 'NLP is like a martial art: you learn the techniques and then do what's necessary to get the results you want. You have a set of attitudes, tools and techniques to draw on,' he explains. 'It becomes very holistic. NLP gives people a basic framework to refer back to and use as a way of determining how far you've got.'

Having coached many senior executives, Beale can spot the business leaders who've had NLP training. 'It comes out in lots of different ways,' he



says. 'They're effective communicators. They use stories, tone of voice and rhythm in the way they speak. It may be that they have a clear vision of what they want. These are all NLP traits.' How do these qualities impact on the businesses they lead? 'NLP-trained leaders are congruent,' explains Beale. 'They actually walk the talk. It makes a tremendous difference. If a leader says one thing and does another, in the end it does not create the right conditions for a successful

business. If leaders are congruent in what they are doing, they will be much more effective leaders.'

Does it follow

that if Britain were run by NLP trained leaders, we would be the largest economy in Europe? 'Sending people on NLP courses is not always the answer,' he says. 'There is no doubt that many business leaders would be helped by NLP coaching, but it needs to relate to their individual outcomes. It's like coaching a football team: a good coach will improve performance and NLP is one of the very best basics for coaching.' ●

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