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DECISIONS, DECISIONS

by John La Valle

For years I've been telling people that if they're working harder than their clients or customers, then they are doing something wrong! Now, since this means they ought to take a look at what they're doing and how, I like to start before where most people think any [strategy](#) starts. Even in your own decision making, there are places to check for what you're sorting for, especially when choosing who you want as customers. That's right, too many people throw out the net and try catch as many as they can. And if you prescribe to the [Pareto Principal](#) at all, then you know that 80% of your business comes from 20% of your customers, and that you spend most of your time with the other 80% who either don't give you business, or very little.

The best sales people have something very special that they do: they **decide** if the relationship is right! While many people think that "closing" the sale is where it's at, I can tell you from my own experience that it's not! In today's market, it's about **Relationship Management**. It has been all along, but it's even more important today than ever. The internet has changed the world dramatically! People, like me, like you, are inundated daily with information, offers, opportunities, etc. And this has caused a shift in the [Meta Program](#) Sequencing of many, many people. Because of the **stack overload** of the information, I find that many people now are filtering their email, hence their input, based on **who** is sending it, as a primary sort. This tells me a lot about the value of relationships! And it may also have crossed over into the context of regular junk snail mail, or perhaps that's where it started. At any rate, the information isn't enough, anymore.

So, how best to manage the relationship of selling? Similar to your other relationships, if you have a good strategy for that. Who do you want to do business with? Of course you'd want them to have a need or desire for your product or service, but what about your other criteria? Do you really want to do business with everyone? Aren't there some customers you already have that are more work than return? Even with our seminars, there are people we turn away, for their good, as well as ours.

Think about who your potential customers are and let's assume they have a need or desire for what you have to offer.

Here are some questions worth asking yourself about them, or of them, even, although you'll want to change some of the questions a bit:

1. Do they make decisions? While we all know that everyone makes decisions, what's the depth of their decision making ability? How much information do **they** need or want in order to

process through their [strategy](#)?

2. How do they make decisions? We can break this one down into other pieces:
 1. How are they motivated to start their decision making [strategy](#) (which is a decision itself)
 2. Once started, are they proactive or reactive inside the [strategy](#) they are operating in? This will let you know the difference between whether or not they will take action on their own, or will need to be reminded (by you) to take the action, like sending in that contract. While you can easily detect this in their use of active or passive verbs and complete or incomplete sentence structures, consider that this part of their strategy is also going into another [strategy](#) (subroutine).

For example, if they are reactive, then at the end of their [strategy](#) of decision making, they will say, or think, or [represent](#) in some way, "Yes, but not now." And this may in many cases have nothing to do with your product or service, nor their desire for it necessarily, but another subroutine in their own [strategy](#) that stops them, or redirects their attention, or moves them into hesitating, some internal [state](#) that isn't necessarily useful to you. None of this is wrong, actually, and can be useful to them, for them. Recognize it and you'll know what to do next, which is the next secret of the best sales people: They KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT, regardless.

This will let you know how much of the relationship *You* will *Have To* manage.

3. How are they comparing? Remember that every decision is made by comparing one thing to another. It's either, "go", or "no go" from that point after the comparison. Are they comparing against what they already have, or know, or are they comparing what's different from their past experiences, or how it can be different?

What are their criteria? What's important to them about what you are offering? Make no assumptions here. Everyone may very well have different answers to the same question, and linked to a very positive [feeling](#), or [state](#). This is one of the basis' of [Persuasion Engineering™](#) . Rather than give you pat phrases,, etc. we provide you with a systemic approach that you get to build into your personal approach to selling!! You've got to gather information from potential customers before deciding.

4. Are they a *buyer* or a *shopper*? Now it's easy enough to change a shopper to a buyer, and just as easy to change a buyer to a shopper, if you're not paying close attention, but you'll have to know which [strategy](#) they are operating in, regardless of what they may actually tell you. Many of the same subroutines may run, but not in the same sequence. They may well have the same questions, the same sorts, but in a different sequence when they are deciding vs. shopping, and vice versa.

And there are others, but this will give you a good start!

When you can detect these, it puts *You* into a position deciding whether or not *You* want them as a customer! And that then changes your selling strategy, doesn't it!

Enjoy!!

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Soften Those Questions

by **Barbara Stepp**

Some people can become annoyed when we ask questions, too many questions or questions like "what specifically?" or "how specifically?" There are ways we can avoid that and still get the information we need.

Rapport is the art of being the same. It will help us gather the information we are looking for. Rapport is also a choice we can make deliberately.

A useful way of doing this is to ask Meta Model™ questions using softeners. Use softeners like "I wonder, I'm curious, can you tell me, "can you help me". These can gather the information without annoying our listener.

A few of my favorite questions are "What do you mean by that? How do you know that? What makes it that way? For what purpose?"

So we can use Meta Model questions with softeners to get more information, avoid roadblocks in

our communication and maintain rapport.

So use your NLP™ skills of rapport and the Meta Model™ for this purpose and you will discover many more areas in which to apply them.

As I often say, "Keep it simple sweetie"

Try it . . . it works!

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[Barbara Stepp](#), Licensed Master Trainer of NLP™ and DHE™

[Join Barb for these seminars starting March 27, 2010!!](#)

Barb also specializes in private client work. Contact her at mind@excelquest.com .

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The Still or Not So Still, Small or Not So Small Voice Within!!

Tyrant or friend

"The only tyrant I accept in the world is the still small voice within me"---Mahatma Gandhi.

By Bridget Clapham

Maybe he accepted it because Ghandi realised that he had the power to change it!! Or perhaps he knew that he had the choice of how much attention he paid to it? So, what do we do with the still small voice within?

Our inner dialogue or self talk is hugely powerful and influences us in a powerful way, moment to moment. Our state in any moment is influenced hugely by what we are listening to and not just the words. The WAY we are talking to ourselves has more impact than the words we are listening to.

Years ago, when I was teaching communication skills to Doctors and Nurses I always emphasised the importance of tonality pace etc. as being crucial to the meaning of the message when communicating to another individual. When I ran programmes about Stress management and Resilience I did teach about self talk and still I admit focussed mainly on the what of what we are saying to ourselves!! A little on the how yet way too little!!!

It was, however, only when I sat in a room with 750 others as an NLP Practitioner delegate and learned from Richard Bandler about the power of submodalities that the learning really took off for me!!

Those skill drills eliciting submodalities were so important and exercises in changing them were truly lessons in driving the bus as Richard would say!!

I am guessing that, at times, we can all identify with the Tyrant concept that Ghandi referred to.

Sometimes that inner voice is anything BUT still and small it can be downright loud, destructive, tyrannical even and certainly can lead us to feelings of depression, guilt, anger, frustration, panic fear ,anxiety and other states far removed from and overwhelmingly different from the happiness and freedom available within.

When we talk to ourselves in positive words matched with a positive tonality and get the pitch, volume and inner smile in the voice, boy does it feel different!

Much of my work with clients in and outside corporate land is around giving people tools with which to achieve more joy... one of those sets of tools is about managing their voice within!

Below is a summary of what they and I learn and practice!

Firstly to pay attention to and to notice how you are feeling and tune in to your inner voice as if tuning into a radio!!!

1 Notice the inner dialogue

2 Pay attention to what it is saying

3 Notice HOW you are hearing the voice, is it gentle soothing, encouraging and supportive or sarcastic, belittling, frightened or sad?

4 Consider what that voice may be getting you to pay attention to and act upon? (Remember there will be a positive intention, tricky though it may be to discern!!) .

5 If the voice is useful and you are feeling great, keep going and do more of it!! Ramp it up!!!

6 If it isn't getting you to feel the way you need to in the situation take action.

After all, there isn't really anyone there (truly!!) just a set of neural pathways firing off ---electrical activity represented as a voice.

For many clients, corporate and private, this in itself is enough to get them to take control! They can picture a set off pathways and the electrical activity and imagine putting a block in so that the pathway can't fire off in the same way any more.

Cool!!

If the voice persists there are several techniques which, if you are a practitioner of NLP you will be aware of.

I often tell the story of a client Ryan who learned how to have better conversations in his head with fabulous results for his happiness and achievement.

Ryan was 10 years old when I worked with him.

His father called me and told me that Ryan had a promising tennis career and yet had "lost all of his confidence" He had become anxious increasingly worried and had become fearful about playing matches. Whilst he was fine in training he had lost every match in recent weeks. Could I help?

I wanted first to elicit whether I was talking to a father who had sights set on a Grand Slam Title and whether Ryan was a reluctant to climb up the tennis ladder. A quick chat to Ryan convinced me. The young man LOVED his tennis and wanted to enjoy his matches and to win again.

Ryan and I worked together once and kept in touch by phone.

This young man had developed a very critical, frustrated, irritated, superior and aggressive inner voice.

" You are useless at Tennis, the other boy will be better than you, you will miss all your shots, you may as well give up, you're a useless failure" Those were just a few of the hypnotic suggestions he was bathing in on a daily basis!

He wanted to enjoy his tennis, feel happy confident and motivated to win with a lovely mix of excitement and anticipation before and during his matches. He wanted the feeling of winning, success and celebration back!!

Mastering his inner voice was the key to him achieving his desired change. We did other things too

yet the major shift came when he changed his inner dialogue!

I gave him several tools with which to do this. The one he like best and used the most was imagining he was listening to a track on his Ipod and simply changing tracks!! After all, why would he listen to something that was making him feel bad!?

I then asked him to imagine tuning to a different track, an audio book yet that didn't seem to help.

We had been talking about favourite Tennis players, TV shows movies etc. so I seized an idea (the client will always provide the answer!!)

I asked him to create his own inner confidence coach and to imagine what that person would say to him about his tennis... I suggested his favourite player and many times Grand Slam Champion (mistake Bridget, too directive, remember the rules!) and he said, very cutely

"Do I have to have a tennis player?"

No" I said, it's your brain, you can have whoever you like!!"

"I know who I will have" he said suddenly and, as he did so his whole physiology changed. He sat up tall, smiled and I knew the change we were waiting for had happened!!!

"Who will you have then?" I asked.

"Mr. T" he said!!! (What a fabulous coach strong, solid, confident and BIG!!!)

"Fantastic" says Bridget-"fabulous coach after all he only deals with the A team".

Ryan who was on a roll then said "Is it OK if I have two?"

"Who else have you got on your team now then" I asked "Rocky" grinned Ryan!!! And got even taller if that was possible!

I got him to close his eyes and imagine walking in court Mr. T on one side Rocky on the other with Eye of the Tiger blaring through the speakers and ----job done!

We did some great visualisations, more work on building great states and then,....off he went head held high and brimming with confidence and a great big smile.

He started to win his matches again and, whilst he may or may not become a Grand Slam Champion, he now has an idea and a sense of what it could feel like!!

Inner tyrant to Inspirational inner coach in a short session!

Ryan's story has inspired many of my adult clients both private and at CEO and Director level in corporate land. Whilst the tyrant may well pop up from time to time, it's good to remember who is in charge!

©2010 [Bridget Clapham](#)

[Bridget Clapham](#) has a background in psychology, training and coaching and is a Licensed Trainer and Master Practitioner of NLP. She works with corporate clients coaching and training in transformational leadership and enjoys working with individuals private clients on personal change work.

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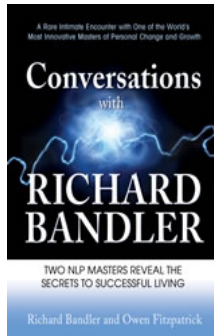
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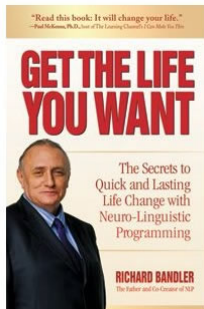


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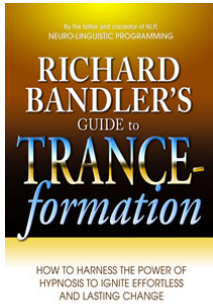
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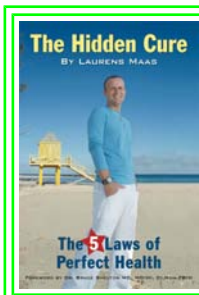
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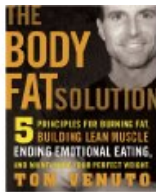
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Regards,
John La Valle

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