

NLP

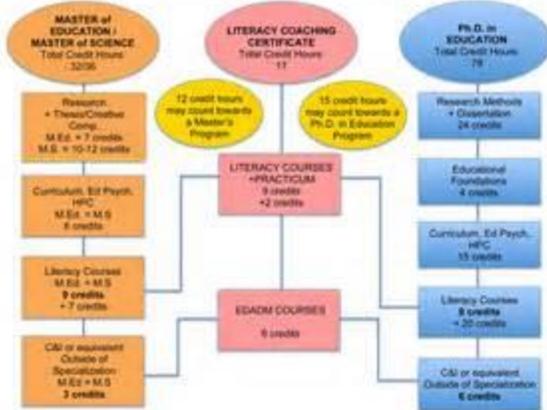
NEURO-
LINGUISTIC
PROGRAMMING

NLP

SESSION 10 COACHING THE COACH



Literacy Coaching Certificate credits can count towards a Master's or Ph.D Program





What Is NLP?

Definition: NLP, or Neuro-Linguistic Programming is the study of human excellence and communication.

At The Coaching Institute, we see it as so much more than that. Understanding NLP allows you to take control of your state, emotions and behavior. It allows you to transform your thought patterns to become more effective and facilitate positive change in others.

First Developed by Richard Bandler and John Grinder back in the 1970's, NLP and it's developments have become ever more popular in the education world. Famed for its phenomenal stack of tools and techniques NLP is credited with assisting thousands of people in overcoming blocks and reaching their true potential.

NLP begins with "modelling" – Studying an expert in the field and then breaking down the process of what makes them successful into thoughts, beliefs, values and actions. By doing this you unlock the ability to replicate the same awesome results and discover the core aspects of success.

'Following our dreams' and doing the things we want to do in life can at times seem impossible. Maybe the opportunities never arise, maybe obligations and responsibilities hold us back, maybe practicalities always stop us at the last moment. A lifetime of routine and habit can make it difficult to break out of the familiar comfort-zone that so many of us slip into without even knowing it. NLP helps us to realize that more often than not, it's not the world or our busy lifestyles holding us back - it's ourselves

What is NLP?

NLP is a specialist technique used by life coaches. NLP stands for Neuro-Linguistic Programming. 'Neuro', Latin for nerve, refers to the way we gather information from the outside world with our five senses. 'Linguistic', the study of language, refers to the way we make sense of that information by organizing it into the structure of language. 'Programming' is a way of controlling something. In this case it refers to the way our interpretations of the world control our actions, choices and behaviors in day-to-day life. NLP teaches us that by changing how we make sense of the world, we can then adjust our behaviors and actions in order to make the most of ourselves and our lives.

By harnessing the power of language, NLP-trained life coaches can break down the mental barriers we all unknowingly create for ourselves over time and habit. NLP is considered by many to be one of the most useful and

accessible tools to come from modern psychology. NLP can assist stress management, improve empathy and communication skills, resolve destructive relationship patterns and encourage clients to move out of their comfort zones towards fuller, happier, and infinitely more satisfying lives.

Developed by...

John Grinder and Richard Bandler. Both were enrolled at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Grinder was an Assistant Professor of linguistics and Bandler was a psychology undergraduate.

Inspired by...

- Fritz Perls - the psychotherapist who developed Gestalt therapy.
- Virginia Satir - dubbed the 'Mother of Family Therapy'
- Milton Erickson - the first therapist to use hypnosis for medical purposes.

Bandler and Grinder wanted to know: what made these three therapists so *good* at improving the lives of their clients?

Influenced by...

Gregory Bateson - a British academic famed for his contribution to cybernetics (the science concerned with patterns of communication within natural and mechanical systems) and epistemology (the study of knowledge).

Bateson's influence was thought to drive Bandler and Grinder's research towards the idea that we can 'reprogramme' our minds.

Understanding NLP

NLP is a vast and complex subject. Before we look at how it works, what it involves and how it helps, we must first understand the fundamental ideas behind it. We can break those ideas down into three parts:

1. **Subjectivity** - at the heart of NLP lies the understanding that each one of us sees the world in a different light.
2. **Maps** - our own worlds are made of boundaries and territories that our life experiences draw out for us.
3. **Language** - we have the power to shift and redraw those boundaries using our 'control systems', the most influential of which is language.

1. NLP and subjectivity

Imagine this situation: there are two people. Both are experiencing transition in their lives after being made redundant from their respective companies. Due to a lack of work available in either of their locations, both have been forced to move far from home to start new jobs.

Person A:

Person A, although initially upset by the unexpected upheaval, has become accustomed to the idea. He's been utilising his free time by searching for a house to rent and clubs to join while he's there. He's realised that the cost of living is much lower in the new place, and feels pleased at

the idea of living in a bigger house and enjoying more luxuries. Although the job is a few steps down from his last one, he knows how lucky he is to have it - after all, many of his old colleagues are still living on benefits. Although he'll be leaving a happy, settled life behind him, he knows that if he's done it once, he'll be able to do it again. By seeing the move as an opportunity for new and better things, Person A has managed to turn a potential source of pain and anxiety into a positive experience.

Person B:

Person B, although in exactly the same situation, is not doing well. The redundancy was a big hit to his self-confidence. He feels like his new, lower-grade job represents his failure. He spends his time off not knowing what to do with himself - he still cannot comprehend that his life has changed forever now.

Before he knows it, it's time to move and he hasn't got round to finding any accommodation. As a result, he's forced to rent the first place he finds, which is a fraction of the size of the property he could have found, had he given himself more time.

Person A and Person B live in the same country; they live according to the same laws, the same social and political restrictions. And yet - their respective experiences of the same situation were incredibly different. If we revisited Person A and Person B in the future, what would we find? Who do you think is more likely to be happier, or more successful? Of course, no one can stay in total control of their lives - unexpected things do happen. We might find that Person A contracted an illness and Person B won the

lottery. What we do know however, is that the way we view the world can have a profound effect on how we recover from those unexpected situations. For example, Person A might find that his illness gives him a fresh sense of purpose and an enlightened outlook on life, whereas Person B, with his unlimited wealth, might realize the futility and shallowness of humanity and end up feeling even more unhappy.

The moral of the story is that, regardless of what happens to a person during his or her life, it is the way they see the world that effects the richness of their experience, and not the nature of the experiences themselves.

So what determines how we see the world?

2. NLP maps

This leads us on to the second idea behind NLP: the idea that each of our lives is a 'map', or model, in working progress. (NLP experts use the word 'map' and 'model' interchangeably but we will stick with 'map'.)

A 'map' is only a representation of a place, not the place itself. NLP uses the idea of the map to illustrate how we can only ever view our own representations of the world, and not the world itself. It's like we're all wearing special goggles overlaid with a unique pattern that blocks out some parts of the world and focuses in on others. This means that, although we all live in the same world, we all have our own unique view of it. Even identical twins have different maps, despite sharing the same genes and the same upbringings. The truth is, no one experience can truly be 'shared' - it is logistically impossible because no two people can ever be standing in exactly the same place at once. Even two

people witnessing the same event from slightly different angles can come away with different experiences of said event. Whether we know it or not, every single thing that happens in our lives has an impact on the future - whether that be our future beliefs, our behaviors, or the decisions we make, every second makes its mark in some way. Every day our experiences shape the boundaries and territories of our maps, and every day we must learn to live within those boundaries and territories.

Understanding that we all see a different version of the world is fundamental to NLP. Life coaches use NLP to understand how some of their clients manage to back themselves into corners and ruts that hold them back in life. Even the most bizarre behavior can be understood when viewed within the context of that person's map. For example: think for a moment back to Person B in the [NLP and subjectivity](#) example. This was the person who limited the richness and diversity of his experience by dwelling on the past and leaving his future to chance. Person B's map of the world was restrictive. All he saw around him was failure and disappointment, to such an extent that he made life even harder for himself. That's not to say that Person B was bad, weak, or mentally ill - he was simply behaving in the only manner he could within the boundaries of his map. The nature of cause and effect means that something that happened to Person B many years ago, such as harsh rejection, some form of loss, or a public humiliation, may be preventing him from seeing the bright side of things now.

3. NLP and language

And so we come to the third idea behind NLP: that we can, to some extent, reshape and redraw our own maps by 'reprogramming' ourselves.

Is it really possible to 'reprogrammed' our brains to view the world differently? And if so - how do we do it? We are not machines, or computers - we don't come with an instruction manual; we don't have a control panel, or lines of source code to rewrite. Our brains are incredibly complex organs. They carry out millions of processes continually that even we're not consciously aware of. In fact, our neurons make around one million connections every second - few of which actually make it into our conscious minds.

Even when you're slumped on the settee watching your favourite soap opera, your brain is busy processing and filtering the smell of your discarded take-away, the feel of the sofa fabric on your skin, the box of tissues on the coffee table, the digestive fluid slowly breaking down the food in your stomach - leaving you free to focus your attention completely on what's happening on TV.

What has language got to do with it?

Once our brains filter out the millions of signals from the outside world, how do we then make sense of the left-over information? The answer is: by compartmentalizing concepts (such as 'tree') and attributing them with a sound. These sounds, representing concepts, are known as words, and these words are arranged according to a structure known as language. By learning words in relation to other words, we soon begin to build links between each one (a

perfect example of this is the word association game. E.g. tree = green, green = grass, grass = cow, cow = farm, farm = tweed, tweed = rifle and so on...), which eventually forms a huge network of words, meanings and associations that not only describe, but also shape the world around us.

While it does give us the ability to formulate, express and communicate our thoughts, language also imposes more limits and filters on our experiences of the world.

For example, imagine you meet a woman at a party who begins to talk about how she studies at Oxford and enjoys playing Polo. On the surface you know just two things about this woman: a) where she studies and b) what she likes to do with her spare time. Anything else you infer is a product of your own view of the world. What do the words Oxford and Polo mean to you? People familiar with Oxford University's prestigious reputation, and polo's name as 'The Sport of Kings' may form the opinion that: 'this person must be wealthy and well-educated'. From here, deeper opinions can be formed depending on the ideas they associate with the words 'wealthy' and 'well-educated'. While one person might be thinking: 'this person is probably a snob', another might be thinking: 'this person could teach me something interesting'.

Now imagine that there was a brand new word introduced to the English language, one that translated directly as 'I go to Oxford University and play polo but I come from a middle-class family and never take myself too seriously'. If the woman describes herself using this new word, immediately a distinction has been made that may affect

your perception of the woman, which may in turn affect the way you interact with her.

A real-life example of this can be seen in the American-Indian language of Maidu. Although humans are physically capable of distinguishing 7,500,000 different colours on the visible colour spectrum, speakers of Maidu only have three colour categories:

1. Lak - red.
2. Tit - green and blue.
3. Tulak - yellow, orange and brown.

While an English speaker will distinguish between a green mug and a blue mug, a Maidu speaker will simply identify two 'tit' mugs. It's hard for an English-speaking person to imagine ever compartmentalising green and blue as the same thing, but it shows just how far language can distort our perceptions of the world.

By altering our use of language, we can expand the limits of our maps and make the life-changes we want to make. For instance - what does 'failure' mean to you? To some it may represent a dead-end, a block in the road. They might associate the word 'failure' with a sinking feeling in the stomach, with a certain colour, or a certain smell. These associations go on to shape how a person reacts to failure (not meeting a goal) in the future. However, to other people the word failure might represent new beginnings, fresh-starts and acquired wisdom. By altering the way different words and associations link up in the network of our vocabularies, we can eventually change the way we think and the way we live our lives.

How do life coaches use NLP?

We convey meaning in a wide variety of different ways - through pitch, tone, volume, pace, facial expressions, body language and of course words. Most of our meaning is communicated unconsciously. Life coaches specialising in NLP are trained to pick up on these subtle clues that give away how their clients are really feeling. By unveiling their clients' unique maps of the world (how they see the world), life coaches can identify any self-imposed restrictions and then help to challenge them.

The three main types of limiting beliefs are thought to be:

- worthlessness
- hopelessness
- helplessness.

By thinking thoughts such as: 'I'm not good enough', or 'other people are better than me', you set yourself up for failure. Taking a defeatist attitude can really limit your experiences and your accomplishments.

A life coach will uncover these limiting beliefs by asking the following questions:

- Why do you feel undeserving of happiness or success?
- Why can't you succeed?
- What is preventing you from succeeding?

These questions can help to reveal the thoughts and feelings that cause the limiting beliefs. A life coach will then start to explore and challenge these limiting beliefs in a bid to help transform them.

What to expect in an NLP session

Although different life coaches may have different practices, the standard NLP session will follow the same basic pattern:

1. You will be asked to state what you want to change and what problems you want to overcome. Your life coach will pay close attention to what you say and how you say it, and tailor their questions according to your responses.
2. Your life coach will work through different exercises with you in order to piece together your map of the world and introduce new thought processes in order to widen your boundaries and territories. All you will be required to do is sit back and relax - there will never be any physical contact, aside from a quick touch of the knuckle in some exercises.
3. Your life coach will probably give you a few exercises to take away with you and practice. This will help you get accustomed to the techniques you learnt during your NLP session. Although the main neurological changes will have occurred during the session itself, they may need to settle in and develop as you get back into the routine of your life.
4. In your next session, you will be asked to report any changes you've noticed and then, when you're ready, move on to the next change you want to make.

NLP is so popular because it is future-focused. It explores future possibilities and solutions, rather than encouraging you to dig up your past. NLP is about adding choices and widening perceptions rather than dwelling for too long on the problems

How can NLP help?

Because it is essentially a tool-kit for the mind, NLP can help all areas of life. It is particularly effective for improving the following situations:

Anxiety and stress

The problem with anxiety is that it can often feel irrational - you know you shouldn't feel anxious, you might even know you don't *need* to feel anxious, but you do. So how can you possibly stop it?

NLP is an effective method for fighting feelings of stress and anxiety because it identifies the thought patterns that lead to those feelings. As soon as these unconscious thought patterns are brought out into the light and made conscious, they can be challenged.

Business

Because NLP is an excellent tool for understanding people, it is immediately applicable to business. By learning techniques from your life coach, you will be able to improve how you communicate, empathise and negotiate with your colleagues, business partners, employees and bosses.

Arts and creativity

Writer's or 'artist's block' is something that affects most creative spirits at some point. Sometimes, it simply becomes impossible to adequately express what you want to express. An NLP session could be used to identify what is creating that block. Your life coach may develop exercises for you to

complete, designed to unleash and channel the energy you've been storing up.

Fears and phobias

Like with anxiety and stress, NLP is great for revealing the thought processes behind what we might consider 'irrational' behaviour. Really, no behaviour is completely irrational - we are products of our pasts and something along the way will have kick-started those fears. NLP can help to change the thoughts and feelings we have about the things that scare us so that we no longer have to avoid them.

Health and wellbeing

One of the most important ideas underpinning NLP is that the mind and body are closely and intricately connected. By improving the way we approach and think about the world, we can effect the health and wellbeing of our bodies.

Relationships

Relationships are based on how we communicate with each other. How we communicate depends on the kind of people we are and the ways we view the world. We all have what we might consider 'bad character traits' that have the unfortunate habit of ruining relationships. This could include being argumentative, distrustful, jealous, insecure and so on. NLP can help you become more aware of how you communicate. It can help you to understand that other people might have different views of the world and that your way of thinking is not necessarily right.

Developing empathy skills can make it easier to build strong and lasting relationships - whether they be with friends, family members, or lovers.

Sport

NLP is a fantastic tool when it comes to sport. It's so easy to give up when we become exhausted or feel like we can't go on anymore. To really excel in sport, athletes must be able to push through these feelings with incredibly high levels of focus and motivation. NLP can help to break down the mental blocks that are so easy to develop when our bodies become exhausted. To get good results, it is essential to have confidence, to know you can do something and to focus your mind on achieving that. NLP helps nurture all of these qualities in order to bring sports-people to new levels of personal excellence.

life coaching and personal coaching

life coaching tips for business coaching, personal coaching - techniques for coaching success, performance, career and life-change

Personal coaching - or 'life coaching' as it is commonly described and promoted - is a quite recent area of learning and development.

Life coaching can be effective in many situations, for example in helping a person's career direction and development, or for personal fulfillment or life change more generally.

Life coaching, or becoming a personal coach is also a career opportunity in itself that interests many people from a wide variety of backgrounds.

In recent years a big industry has grown under the heading of 'life coaching'. For this reason the term 'life coaching' appears widely in related marketing and publicity, which can create a perception that 'life coaching' is in some way quite different from other forms of personal coaching. In fact the term 'personal coaching' can be equally descriptive of what 'life coaching' entails: many personal coaches have capabilities which match those of 'life coaches', and many clients of personal coaches experience exactly the same coaching effects as in the 'life coaching' industry.

Accordingly, throughout this article, the terms 'life coaching' and 'personal coaching' are inter-changeable, and mean the same.

Life coaching/personal coaching is interesting from the standpoint of **being coached**, and also **becoming a coach**. This article aims to cover both angles.

life coaching/personal coaching definitions and features

Life coaching and personal coaching are interchangeable terms - they mean the same.

Life coaching aims to **draws out** a person's potential rather than puts in aims and knowledge from outside.

It **develops** rather than imposes.

It **reflects** rather than directs.

Effective life coaching or personal coaching is a form of **change facilitation** - it **enables** people, rather than trains them.

Life coaching is **reactive** and **flexible** - it allows for **personal transition** on an **individual basis**.

Coaching of this sort makes no assumptions - it's not judgmental, nor is it prescriptive or instructional.

[Empathy](#) is central to the coaching process.

Good personal coaching seeks to help the other person's understanding of himself or herself.

Life coaching is rather like a brand or label of the life coaching industry, but it potentially covers virtually every aspect of personal development that an individual might aspire to - for career direction and development, management, executive and leadership, business start-up and entrepreneurialism, life skills, personal fulfilment, life-balance, and the acquisition of specific skills or knowledge.

Life coaching can be this adaptable because it is not concerned with delivery and specialised training - it focuses on enablement and reflection, so that the individual decides and discovers their required progression themselves.

purposes of life coaching and personal coaching

People use life coaches and personal coaches for various reasons, for example:

sounding board

career help

career direction

Coaching is about getting the very best out of someone and enabling them to make decisions that will improve their life. Coaches are hired for very many different and diverse reasons, for example: to climb the career ladder faster; to feel more fulfilled at work; to improve relationships with family and partners; to learn parenting skills that benefit both the child and parent; to gain a spiritual meaning to life, or a desire to 'get sorted'.

The profession is growing and coaching is becoming widely acknowledged also because people realise just how effective coaching is. Coaching is a relatively new and different profession - different to psychology, counselling or therapy. The big difference between coaching and these professions is that coaching doesn't claim to have the answers. A coach's job is not to go over old ground, be past-orientated or to force-feed information, but to work with clients **to help them find the answers themselves.**

Also, when a person experiences being coached, their motivation comes from working with a coach who is him/herself an upbeat, positive role model. In this way coaching is a unique way of developing people. Coaches agree that helping clients to reach their full potential through this approach produces great satisfaction.

reasons people become a coaches

Many people enter the life coaching profession having been coached first, enjoying and benefiting from the experience, and feeling inspired to help others in a similar manner.

Life coaching offers a potentially rewarding additional or alternative career to people of all sorts.

Whatever the reasons for people deciding to work with coaches; whatever the type of coaching given, and whatever results clients seek from coaching, a common feature in all coaching relationship is that **coaching is a two-way process.**

The two-way partnership is a main attraction for people to coaching. Both coach and client benefit. Personal development for the coach is a huge aspect of learning coaching and all coaches find that they themselves grow yourself, before starting to help others to do the same.

An excellent coach finds out new things about themselves and is on a continuous learning journey. Indeed, becoming a coach means a lifelong quest for personal excellence. For many this quest is the motivation to become a coach in the first place.

Helping clients discover where they want to go and helping them to get there is now a proven methodology, which is fuelling the increasing popularity of professional coaching.

Significantly, good coaches are never motivated entirely by money. The very nature of coaching means that it's a

profession that is centered around 'making a difference' and helping people. Focusing mainly on making money generally leads to a lack of concern for the client, with the result that the client exits the relationship, not surprisingly. Happily, coaches who enter the profession chiefly for financial gain leave coaching quickly - which helps to maintain the integrity of the coaching professional reputation.

Common factors and reasons for coaches entering the profession:

- they like people and want to bring out the best in them
- they want to do something more fulfilling in their lives
- they want personal and financial freedom
- their family, friends and colleagues previously turned to them for advice and help - they have natural 'people' skills.

Coaching entails helping yourself grow and become more self aware, at the same time, helping others to overcome problems in their lives.

how life coaching and personal coaching typically operates

Interestingly, most life coaching and personal coaching is conducted on the telephone. Many coaches never actually meet their clients. For several reasons coaching is just as effective over the telephone as it is face-to-face. In fact, many clients prefer to speak over the telephone. This

makes the process very convenient for both coach and client, and it offers greater flexibility for people with a busy lifestyle. Coaching using the telephone offers other obvious advantages:

- coaching can be conducted wherever coach and client happen to be - anywhere in the world
- there's no travelling time or cost involved
- since little preparation needs to be done, telephone coaching sessions can be arranged with minimum prior notice
- coaches do not need offices, meeting rooms, staff or other expensive overheads

A coaching session is typically thirty minutes and rarely longer than an hour.

life coaching and personal coaching profession attractions

Being self-employed has its advantages in any area of business. Having the luxury to choose the hours you work, where you work and how much to charge for your service is a huge motivation for anyone considering joining the profession.

Coaches can choose how many clients they want - one client, or twenty.

And there are no overheads involved - working from home is a big incentive for people who want to enter the coaching profession.

The flexibility of the coaching role, along with the rewarding aspects of the job, is likely to ensure that coaching and the number of practising coaches grows considerably in coming years.

Coaching, as well as being hugely satisfying, a means of personal development and very flexible, is also financially rewarding. Clients value and benefit from the support and are therefore happy to pay for it.

Coaches are attracted into the profession because it gives them:

1. accelerated personal growth and understanding of self
2. a lifelong journey of personal excellence and knowledge
3. the ability to enhance any job-role in any organization and industry - coaching brings out the best in people and motivates them to be the very best in whatever they do - in all manner of jobs and careers
4. more options in life - important and rare choices of when to work and with whom
5. a right and good purpose and meaning in life, measured in real value terms of effort and reward, not lost in a corporate fog

Little can compare to really making a difference in another person's life.

The ability to help people make lasting, positive changes in their lives is very special. Good coaches have this very special ability, and it is therefore no wonder that people are attracted to the coaching role.

Typical motivations for becoming a coach are explained in this example:

"It's a wonderful experience when a client makes a breakthrough, has a 'light bulb moment' and takes action on something they have been putting off for a long time. It's a fantastic feeling for both me and them." (Pam Lidford, a UK-based qualified coach and trainer)

challenges coaches face and how coaching overcomes them

On a day-to-day basis, coaches face many challenges. Coaching is an ongoing process, a method of continuous development and a significant learning experience for coaches and clients, so it's important to learn from 'mistakes'

The key to this is realising that these aren't 'mistakes' or failings in the first place.

What many people regard as mistakes are lessons, experiences, and opportunities to learn and develop.

Cherie Carter-Scott in her book ['If Life Is Game, These Are The Rules'](#) has some helpful things to say about mistakes and learning. So does Don Miguel Ruiz in his book ['The Four Agreements'](#). See also the [inspirational quotes](#), many of which help to approach mistakes and learning experiences positively. Perhaps one of the most powerful examples is "What does not kill us makes us stronger." (attributed to Friedrich Nietzsche, based on his words: "Out of life's school

of war: What does not destroy me, makes me stronger." from *The Twilight of the Idols*, 1899).

A coach must demonstrate resourcefulness and help people to see that if they think they have failed in the past, this bears no bearing to what they can do in the future.

John Cassidy-Rice is a qualified coach who has been working in personal development for many years. He explains typical challenges that coaches can face:

"Failure is only measured by time. If you look at the bigger picture, it's the 'failures' in our life that can actually turn out to be our greatest successes. What we learn from failure is invaluable. To give an example, when a football team loses an important match, they may regard themselves as failures; it's a natural thought process to go through. However, if they take it one match at a time, and look at where they went wrong in the game, and indeed, how they can improve for the next one, it means that these mistakes won't be made again - and they'll be successful in the future games they play. It can be a challenge to remove the 'failure' thought from clients. And showing them that it doesn't mean they can't achieve success in the future."

Listening skills, and resisting the urge to give advice are key attributes and methods of successful coaching, and central to truly helping people find their own direction and solutions.

Listening is the most important ability and behaviour of a coach. This takes patience, tolerance and practice, especially in order to develop real empathic listening techniques. See the section on [empathy](#), which explains more about the different types of listening.

Communicating fully and expertly is a quality that most good coaches will possess. Many coaches draw on the techniques and principles of Neuro-Linguistic Programming to assimilate and master these important communicating capabilities.

Understanding the client's needs is also pivotal to the coach-client relationship, and a prerequisite for avoiding difficulties in the relationship and coaching support process.

It is essential that coaches **coach** and do not give advice. There's a huge difference between coaching and advising:

Coaching is centred around the client; whereas advising tends to be based on the beliefs, values and opinions of the advisor. In this respect a coach is most certainly not an advisor. The coach's role, and the coaching concept, is to help the other person find their own solutions, not to have them follow an advisor's recommendations or suggestions. This is a fundamental principle.

client and coach relationships

Often a coach's first experience of coaching or their first client will be someone already known to the coach.

Many other coaching relationships will result from recommendations or referrals by clients' or from past clients.

Integrity and trust are significant factors in successful coaching relationships, so it is logical that personal referrals and introductions are at the start of many coach-client relationships.

It is a fact that most coaches are recommended by existing or past clients.

Aside from this, coaches can and do market their services like any other professional provider, using a variety of appropriate methods, including internet websites, directories, brochures and leaflets. Many coaches offer free trial sessions.

Publicity from various media also helps to spread the word, and promote the reputations and availability of many coaches. Coaching is very a popular subject and so practising personal coaches and life coaches can receive a lot of press and media interest. Coaches are seen by the public as having special skills that not everyone has - so it's not unusual to see coaches being interviewed on local radio or asked for their advice in newspaper articles, etc.

coaching and the role of the coach - future development

The reputation of coaching is growing along with the use of the concept - and coaching is becoming increasingly associated with modern recognised requirements for success in life, work, business and organizations, notably the qualities of excellence, integrity, humanity and facilitative learning (as distinct from traditional 'training')

As previously stated, coaching is increasingly sub-dividing into specialist and new applications. There is already a considerable coaching presence and influence in the following areas:

- spiritual coaching
- parent coaching
- corporate coaching
- financial coaching
- business coaching

In the future coaching is likely to incorporate and attract skills, resources and new coaches from many different areas, such as: teaching, human resources, training, healthcare and nursing, the armed forces, the police, counselling and therapy, etc.

Scientific research will improve cognisance throughout the profession, the processes performed and the reputation of coaches themselves. We will progressively understand more about why coaching works so well, and more about human behaviour and human response in the coaching context.

There will be a clearer definition, understanding and acceptance of life coaching and personal coaching, and its role in helping people to reach their goals.

Just as coaching is not the same as advising, so neither is coaching the same as consultancy. Coaching and consultancy are two very different disciplines, with different methods and aims.

Significantly, a consultant is a specialist in his or her field; whereas **a coach is a specialist in coaching**, and need not be a specialist in any other field.

That is not to say coaches do not benefit from having expertise in a particular field, in fact approaching coaching

from a particular expertise or niche is becoming more prevalent among newly-trained coaches.

There will always be a demand for good coaches. And because coaching skills are so transferable, the coaching capability is hugely valuable for all sorts of other jobs and roles.

coaching - a career, or a new skill to augment existing career

The very nature of coaching means that coaches will recommend it as a career. Coaches are passionate about what they do and want to 'spread the word' about the benefits of coaching from both the coach's and the client's perspective. Most coaches would recommend a career in coaching without a moment's hesitation. Helping people to be the very best they can be, touching people's lives, as well as guiding them to help them reach their goals provides immense job satisfaction. Coaching is a relatively young skill and service area and yet in recent years its growth is only exceeded by that of IT.

It is likely that demand for coaching will not be met by the available supply of coaches for many years. Compare this with management consultancy, which has been established as a service area for many decades, and is relatively well-supplied with management consultants.

Compared to established professional services, such as management consultancy, training, accountancy, legal services, etc., coaching is a much newer discipline.

Coaching is fast growing and still relatively under-supplied, which is why many people are attracted to learn how to coach, either to become coaching professionals, or to add coaching skills to their existing role capabilities.

People seeking new career direction, or seeking to add new skills to an existing professional service capability are increasingly turning to coaching.

qualities required for good coaching

Coaching is unlike training, consultancy, advising, or providing a professional service in which work is completed on behalf of a client. The qualities required for good coaching are different to those found in these other disciplines too:

listening

In coaching, listening is more important than talking. By listening, people can be helped to overcome their fears, be offered complete objectivity and given undivided attention and unparalleled support. This leads to the intuitive questioning that allows the client to explore what is going on for themselves.

communication skills

Coaching is a two-way process. While listening is crucial, so is being able to interpret and reflect back, in ways that remove barriers, pre-conceptions, bias, and negativity.

Communicating well enables trust and meaningful understanding on both sides.

Coaches are able to communicate feeling and meaning, as well as content - there is a huge difference.

Communicating with no personal agenda, and without judging or influencing, are essential aspects of the communicating process, especially when dealing with people's personal anxieties, hopes and dreams.

Good coaching uses communication not to give the client the answers, but to help the clients find their answers for themselves.

rapport-building

A coach's ability to build rapport with people is vital. Normally such an ability stems from a desire to help people, which all coaches tend to possess. Rapport-building is made far easier in coaching compared to other services because the coach's only focus is the client. When a coach supports a person in this way it quite naturally accelerates the rapport-building process.

motivating and inspiring

Coaches motivate and inspire people. This ability to do this lies within us all. It is borne of a desire to help and support. People who feel ready to help others are normally able to motivate and inspire. When someone receives attention and personal investment from a coach towards their well-being and development, such as happens in the coaching relationship, this is in itself very motivational and inspirational.

curiosity, flexibility and courage

Coaching patterns vary; people's needs are different, circumstances and timings are unpredictable, so coaching relationships do not follow a single set formula.

Remembering that everyone is different and has different needs is an essential part of being a coach. Ultimately, everyone is human - so coaches take human emotions and feelings into account.

And coaching is client-led - which means that these emotions have to be tapped into from the very beginning of the coaching process. So, having the flexibility to react to people's differences, along with the curiosity and interest to understand fundamental issues in people's lives, are also crucial in coaching.

The coach's curiosity enables the client's journey to be full and far-reaching; both coach and client are often surprised at how expectations are exceeded, and how much people grow.

All this does take some courage - coaches generally have a strong belief in themselves, a strong determination to do the best they can for their clients, and a belief, or faith that inherently people are capable of reaching goals themselves.

coaching maxims and principles

Typically good coaches will use and follow these principles:

- Listening is more important than talking
- What motivates people must be understood

- Everyone is capable of achieving more
- A person's past is no indication of their future
- People's beliefs about what is possible for themselves are their only limits
- A coach must always provide full support
- Coaches don't provide the answers
- Coaching does not include criticizing people
- All coaching is completely confidential
- Some people's needs cannot be met by coaching , and coaches recognise clients with these needs

life coaches come from all backgrounds

Life coaches and personal coaches come from all kinds of backgrounds and professions. Not surprisingly, coaches tend to like people, and many coaches come from 'people' and 'caring' professions.

Coaches come from backgrounds as varied as these, and the list is certainly not exhaustive:

- Teaching
- Nursing
- Management
- Consulting
- Prison Service
- Therapy
- Counselling
- Training

- Complementary Therapies
- Human Resources
- Personal Trainers
- Voluntary workers
- Charity workers
- Armed forces
- Emergency services
- Service industries

And many people on business, institutions, management, and organisations of all sorts learn how to become coaches so as to enrich their existing roles with the very special skills, methodologies and philosophies that coaching entails.

becoming a coach fosters the coach's own personal growth

Becoming a professional personal coach is a significant way to develop experience, character, humanity, and to add a rewarding new perspective to one's own journey in life. Typically, seeking a new outlook on life, a willingness to learn, and a passion for helping other people are the first steps in the process towards becoming a coach.

Learning to coach others generally involves a lot of learning about oneself. Coaches almost always find that they have had to explore and resolve a number of new personal issues themselves, before they are ready to begin helping others to do the same. Some of this experience can be surprising; it can also be a little scary, but it is usually ultimately rewarding.

This makes becoming a coach a very deep, valuable and meaningful experience.

Learning to be a coach is a serious step and a serious commitment. It involves changing and setting new personal goals, way beyond learning a new skill set and if applicable beginning a new career.

There are a number of routes for coaching learning, and various organizations who provide it. Accreditation and standardisation of coaching skills and qualifications are increasingly becoming formalised, all over the world, although because coaching is still in relative infancy, there is some way to go before these standards reach international harmonization and uniformity.