

EXERCISE

Modeling



Time: solo 15 minutes to several days



Setup and materials: pencil and paper



Good For: individuals or groups

Framing:

Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP) began when the early developers studied strategies that resulted in excellence. “Modeling” is a simple process:

You find someone who has achieved what you want to.

You watch and listen; you pay close attention to precisely what they do to create the result.

Then you break their action down into manageable chunks and you practice until you are able to achieve the same result.

As children we learned to stand and walk and talk this way. We had a thorough understanding of how to model behaviors by imitating other people at age 2.

Steps:

1. Identify something you would like to accomplish. It could be a task or project like writing a book or completing a marathon, or it could be a way of being, like being peaceful, or disciplined, or patient. Think of an individual who has accomplished this task or who embodies this quality.

Who do you admire?

Whose skill would you like to emulate?

What abilities would you like to develop in yourself?

Who already has those abilities?

2. Chunk down the behavior that they engage in that leads to the results they achieve. Do they write every day or take training runs? Be specific about the behaviors that lead to the result. If they write every day and also happen to wear red shoes, getting red shoes will not get your book written.

3. Look over the chunks you identified in step 2. Create a plan for moving toward success with your task or skill or quality by copying your model's behavior. They are your guide. They demonstrate that what you want to grow in yourself is possible. You can create your plan in conversation or on your own.
4. Design an accountability strategy so that you follow up with your plan and keep your commitment to yourself. Accountability seems to be most effective when it involves another person or group. How will you check in regularly to celebrate your movement and reconfirm your commitment to your goal?

This exercise can be as simple or ornate as you want it to be. You could be like a scientist and take a year or more to do a thorough modeling project. Or you could become aware of one small action that your model practices and then design a way to incorporate it into your habits.

“A good example has twice the value of good advice.” Anonymous