PM World Book Review

Book Title: **NLP for Project Managers, Make things happen with neuro-linguistic programming**

Authors: **Dr Peter Parkes**

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Reviewer: **Philip Smelt**

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I’m one of those project managers that likes to keep up-to-date of new techniques in project management although I must admit to being slightly sceptical of the less than ‘hard’ skills that seem to come and go as ‘fad’s. That said, from the myriad of endorsements that Peter Parkes’s book ‘NLP for Project Managers, Make things happen with neuro-linguistic programming’ has received it soon becomes apparent that NLP and its applications are not a ‘fad’. Even from the front cover this handy book states its intention; ‘make things happen’. In three parts and just over two hundred pages, Peter Parkes develops and explores how neuro-linguistic programming can assist you in becoming more effective on your projects; whatever their size, type or complexity.

In the first part Peter attempts to condense the world of project management in fifty pages. I say attempts, whereas in actual fact I found this section to be the most concise and informative summary of project management I have ever read! Bold words that I do not use lightly. Using the extensive notes section in the back of the book I immediately ordered five of the listed reference books, such had Peter whetted my appetite for more knowledge on a subject in which I believed I was well versed.

It is in respect of this first section of the book that I believe Peter sets himself apart from other NLP practitioners who know little of projects. Let’s not forget that Dr. Parkes is a very accomplished and respected project and programme manager who is known internationally throughout the PPM community.
In part two of his book Peter has then employed the same approach as part one but to neuro-linguistic programming. Again calling upon his extensive experience in this subject area, Peter concisely but informatively develops the themes of NLP and introduces us to its terminology in a logical and well laid out fashion.

Part three then is where part one, project management and part two, NLP, collide. It is in this section of the book where Peter fully demonstrates his art as a Master Practitioner of both worlds and provides valuable insights into putting NLP into practice. A useful set of appendices then complete this book; its mission accomplished.

In these days of electronic project management tools and applied technical method we should not forget that project management is actually about working with people in an effective manner. In this book, Peter brings this home time and time again. So, if you want to lead, motivate and influence those involved in your projects, then this book is for you. In fact I recommend ‘NLP for Project Managers’ to all; yes, everyone; as all of the techniques described in the book are equally applicable to home and work life, alike.

About the Reviewer

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Philip Smelt works at Lincolnshire County Council as a Project Manager within their Performance and Programme Service. Philip began his career as a research chemist for the Ministry of Defence at the Chemical Defence Establishment, Porton Down; studying gas adsorption on novel polymeric materials, research that resulted in an M.Phil. Philip has traveled the globe whilst working on projects in the scientific instrumentation industry, including 5 years in the Former Soviet Union at the time of Perestroika and Glasnost. His work involved the commissioning of multi-million pound state of the art Surface Science Instrumentation. For a Westland Helicopters Computer Based Training sub-contractor, he led a team of courseware designers, authors, graphics artists and application software engineers in the production of multi-screen Computer Aided Instruction and Emulation Systems. He has also delivered multi-million pound control room projects for a ‘bluelight’ company specializing in Integrated Communications Control Systems. As a Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) Practitioner and Management of Risk (M_O_R) Practitioner, Philip has broad private and public sector exposure. Philip also possesses a Post-graduate Certificate in Systems Thinking and a Post-graduate Diploma in Management Studies, both from the University of Lincoln. He has been a member of the Association for Project Management (APM) since 2005 and Chairman of APM’s Yorkshire & North Lincolnshire branch since 2008. Philip is a member of the BSi Technical Committee on Project Management and is currently completing his MBA. Philip was born in Lincolnshire, has been married for nearly 30 years and has two children. He is a keen photographer, hi-fi enthusiast and angler and is researching his family ancestry pre-1650AD. Philip enjoys setting quizzes for social events and also enjoys fine dining, and likes to think of himself as accomplished in the kitchen. Philip can be contacted at project_prince@hotmail.com