

Visualisation, Premiership footballers...and your team

I don't normally watch 'Match of the Day' on TV but it was on over the weekend and I overheard a premiership football player talk glowingly about his "visualisation coach" (he'd just scored the winning goal!) and how they work together as part of his match preparation.

Back in the studio, ex players from a previous era were quite quick to ridicule the concept... "we didn't need those in my day" etc etc.

Yet **visualisation** as a tool for improving performance is growing fast. Sports stars have used visualisation techniques for years. One rowing gold medallist I spoke to confirmed that, having won a silver medal at one Olympic Games, they reduced their physical training and upped their psychological training - and won the gold medal four years later.

Not just sport. Visualisation is used more and more in business. It's a great tool for helping your sales people.

What should I visualise?

You can use visualisation techniques for anything from an upcoming chat with the boss through to next year's sales strategy. From 1-2-1's, customer pitches and presentations, upcoming internal presentations - and importantly you can also visualise that **winning feeling**, ie how you feel **AFTER** you've achieved your goals.

For example Nick Faldo speaks of how he visualised himself coming down to breakfast the day after winning golf's major tournaments, rather than visualising the winning of the championship the day before. What would work for you?

When?

The best times to visualise are immediately on waking and just



before you go to sleep. Tonight - what fabulous goal can you visualise?

Am I watching my movie or in it?

Either, try both. You can be 'associated', which means you're watching through your own eyes, a full-on mental rehearsal of what you've chosen to visualise. In football terms you're on the pitch, looking at the action through your eyes.

Or you can be 'dissociated' – meaning you're watching yourself, perhaps on a massive movie screen, achieving your success. Personally I believe it's more powerful to be associated, to be in there watching the action through my own eyes.

Preparation

Make sure you're relaxed first. Go somewhere quiet and get into a physically comfortable chair or couch. Generate three to five deep breaths to release as much tension as you can. The more time you can spend on this the better but if you need to act quickly just stop for a few seconds, breathe and start the visualising – it's better than doing nothing to prepare.

Run the movie

Once you're relaxed, close your eyes and use your imagination to run a mental movie of yourself being brilliant at whatever it is you want to achieve. Turn up the colour, the sounds, the happiness levels, the feelings, the tastes, everything. Really live that moment in all its glory. Get your juices flowing!

What's the logic?

Why does such a simple tip work? Because planting these positive images in your subconscious will switch your brain into the mode whereby it will automatically generate the endorphins that will give you the natural 'high' you need to succeed.

If you mentally rehearse those key moments, when those situations come around for real, you've already been there, practiced them, succeeded. Your brain's already done it.

When the sporting heroes do those brilliant moves to win trophies, they do those moves naturally because, as well as the physical practice, they've done those same moves thousands of times in their mind beforehand.

It won't happen by itself

It doesn't matter how much you want something or how much you visualise a successful outcome...if you don't take any action it won't

happen. So make sure you've got a plan of action to bring some further momentum towards achieving your goals.

Visualisation – another reason to embrace The Psychology of Selling.

I'd love to hear your thoughts.

Until next time.

Leigh



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