

Imagery and performance

Psychology



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Teacher Imagery or visualization in sports In a study conducted by Penn as reported on the April issue of the Penn Sports Medicine, it reported that in addition to physical conditioning, athletes may also want to exercise their imagination to gain edge in the competition. The research suggested that mental preparation is an important component in sports and therefore, athletes must learn to do visualization which is also known as imagery or imaging. Dr. Bruce Oglivie claimed that " With this technique, an athlete imagines a practice session or competition, seeing with the minds eye and going over every detail, from dressing for the event to competing, to heading back home victorious (Swimming Technique, 1994).

This study is supported by Tymony who made a more emphatic report that visualizing is definitely an edge for every athlete to reach peak performance. Imaging basically creates neural patterns in the brain which tells muscle how and when to move with corresponding power. Studies has also validated that visualization “ can affect brain waves, blood flow, heart rate and skin temperature. Imagining movement activates those same areas of the brain which direct the muscles producing the movement” (Tymony, 1993). In sum, imaging is basically a mental training and preparation of the sports event itself.

I totally agree with the findings of these studies that visualization is a critical component for the success in sports competition. In fact, this technique of visualization or mental preparation is so effective that it is also used in other endeavours. It is even useful for students like me because I also visualize before I make a report in front of the class as part of my mental preparation.

References

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Imaging your way to victory. (1994). *Swimming Technique*, 31(1), 38.
Tymony, C. (1993). Minds eye. *American Fitness*, 11(4), 37.