



IMPORTANCE OF SPORTS PERFORMANCE BY MENTAL IMAGERY AND MENTAL SKILL

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Abstract:

Introduction:

Mental imagery is a real tool to maintain and maximize your sports performance. If you do anything to work on the mental side of your sport, it better be mental imagery because there is no more powerful mental tool than mental imagery and it can not have huge impact on your sports performance. Mental practice is the cognitive thinking of a physically skill without movement, it is effective both for skill learning and preparing for competition sports psychologist often use visualization and rehearsal to help in motivation, self confidence and to reduce competitive anxiety. Regardless of it's application it is well established that training the mind is key to successful sports performance.

Imagery is used by virtually all great athletes. Some Olympic professional players stated that mental imagery is as weight lifting for the mind and some stated that mental imagery is the tool that they emphasizes the most with them and have the greatest impact on their performance.

Mental imagery can be defined as the process that occurs when we recreate experiences in the mind using information that is stored in the memory. Many athletes and coaches feel that the way a player thinks before the actual event is the way a player performs. These ideas about the relationship between mental imagery and performance appear to have sound theoretic having develop program such as one of their basic premises that the persons thoughts and images exert a profound influence on athletics overt behavior.

Mind preparation strategies are essential for producing maximum or peak performance. Rehearsing competitive situations in anticipations of events is a key strategy for optimizing performance.

Effects of Theories on Imagery :-

There are two theories about why imagery and rehearsals in the mind are effective.

- 1) Neuromuscular theory proposes that visualization activates the same motor pathways as if the skill were physically performed but at a sub-threshold level
- 2) Cognitive theory suggested that imagery speeds up the acquisition of mental elements required for the performance of a skill. The athlete can also devise strategies and test solution without the risk of injury or fatigue. Imagery is a mental skill which will need to concentrate on creating and controlling your images which can be tiring when you first get started.

Some mental practice techniques used as a mental skill for improving mental imagery:-

- 1) Ask athletes to visualize movements early in learning to facilitate skill acquisition.
- 2) Allow opportunities for athletes to visit site of competitions prior to important contests and encourage them to visualize themselves in peak performance in competition
- 3) Encourage athlete to engage in rehearsal strategies and problem solving activities prior to competition
- 4) Between trials, include techniques when the athlete imagines how correct movements should be performed

5) Perform imagery exercise in a relaxed state when subconscious mind is more active.

Imagery also called visualization and mental rehearsal. Imagery means using all of your senses to rehearse your sport in your mind. One variable that has received increased attention is the orientation of a imagery that is destination between internal and external imagery.

Internal Imagery :- Internal imagery involves seeing or feeling something from the performance own potential, own perspective and has also been termed kinesthetic imagery.

External Imagery :- External imagery occurs when a person views her or himself from the perspective of an external observer much like in movie

Why should we use Imagery :- we use imagery to get the most out of training. Top athletes use imagery extensively to build on their strength and help eliminate their weakness. To complete more effectively imagery not only helps athletes to regulate the anxiety they experience during competition but also helps athletes to stay confidence, focused and mentally tough.

Imagery also tool that can help athletes to maintain a vision of what they would like to achieve in their sport. Athletes can also use imagery to assist them in setting their daily goals as well as to stay motivated during tough training sessions.

Different ways can achieve target by using imagery by best athletes. Following tips provides by researcher's for using imagery as a part of an athlete's training regimen.

- 1) Selection of place where there are no distractions so that you can concentrate.
 - 2) Uses of all sense modalities for imagining in sports event.
 - 3) Focus on perfect skill for best performance.
 - 4) Use imagery to go over and learn different strategies that you might use throughout the game.
 - 5) For more concentration try to relax for using imagery.
 - 6) Practice controlling your image until you can get it to do what you want it to do.
- Mental imagery involves the athlete imagining himself in specific environment

for performing a specific activities. The image should have the athlete performing these items very well and successfully. They should seen themselves enjoying the activity and feeling satisfied with their performance. They should attempt to enter fully in to the image with all their senses.

There are four factors that impact the quality of mental imagery. You can develop each of these areas so you can get the most out of your imagery

1) **Imagery Perspective:** - imagery perspective refers to where the imagery camera is when you do imagery. The internal perspective involves seeing yourself from inside your body looking out, as if you were actually performing your sport. The external perspective involves seeing yourself from outside your body like on video. Research indicates that one perspective is not better than the other .

2) **Control :-** Hope you ever been doing imagery and you keep making mistakes, for example Basketball point guard sees ball stick to the court while dribbling . this problem relates to imagery control, which is low well you are able to imagine what you want to imagine. It's not uncommon for athletes to perform poorly in their imagery and it often reflects a fundamental lack of confidence in their ability to perform successfully, if mistake occur in your imagery, at that movement immediately rewind the imagery video and edit the imagery video until you do it correctly.

3) **Multiple Senses :-** The best imagery involves the multi sensory reproduction of the actual sport experience you should duplicate the sights, sound, physical sensations, thoughts and emotions that you would experience in an actual competition. Visual imagery involves low clearly you see yourself performing.

The most powerful part of mental imagery is feeling it in your body, which gives effect on improvement in new technical and mental skill and habits. A useful way to increase the feeling in your mental imagery is to combine imagined and real sensation. Imagine yourself performing and move your body along with the imagery. You see world-class athletes doing this before competition

4) Speed :- The ability to adjust the speed of your imagery will enable you to use imagery to improve different aspects of your sports performance. Slow motion is effective for focusing on technique

Imagine realistic :- imagine yourself performing under realistic conditions or do imagery under those conditions which you normally complete. If you are usually compete in difficult condition then start imagine yourself performing under those condition.

Imagine Realistic Performance :- if you are young athlete, don't imagine yourself performing like national or international level competition. Instead , imagine yourself performing the way you normally do, but incorporate positive changes that you are working on.

Set Imagery Goals :- Set specific goals for what areas you want to work on in your imagery. Goal can be technical, tactical, mental or overall performance you might focus on some technical change, being more relaxed and focused or just going for it in your sport.

Climb Imagery Ladder:- Create a ladder of practice and competitive scenarios in which you will be performing. The ladder should start with practice in a simple setting and progress to more demanding practice situation for best performance.

If you commit the imagery program with an incentive physical condition in regimen and quality practice time, then with confidence that you can be to perform my best and achieve your goals.

Uses of Mental Imagery :-

1) **To See Success :-** Many athletes see themselves achieving their goals on a regular basis, both performing skill at a high level and seeing the desired performance outcomes'

2) **To motive :-** Before or during training session, calling up images of your goals for that session or of a past or future competition or competitor can serve as motivational purpose.

3) **To Perfect Skill:-** Mental imagery is often used to facilitate the learning and refinement of skill or skill sequences. The best athletes :see: and feel themselves

performing perfect skills programmes, routines or plays on a very regular basis.

4) **To Familiar :-** Mental imagery can be effectively used to familiarize yourself with all kinds of things such as a competition site, complex play pattern a pre-competition plan, event plan, media interview plan, a refocusing plan and strategy you plan to follow.

5) **Pre-competition plan :-** Mental imagery is often an integral part of the pre-competition plan which helps set the mental stage, for a good performance athlete do a complete mental run through of the key elements of their performance. This helps draw out their desired pre-competition feeling and focus.

6) **To refocus :-** Mental imagery can be used in helping you to refocus when the need arises for example it a wormup is feeling sluggish imagery of a precious best event focus can help get things back on track. You can also use imagery as a means of refocusing within the event'

Imagery is used by virtually all great athletes and of mental imagery has shown that, when combined with actual practice, improves performance more than practice alone. Imagery also is not just a mental experience that occurs in your head, but rather impacts you in everyday way that is emotionally, physically, technically and tactically' Some Olympic professional players stated that mental imagery is the tool that they emphasis the most with them. If you are not engaged in a consistent mental imagery program you are not engaged in a consistent mental imagery program you are not doing everything you can to achieve you athletic goals. Even more research shows that the the more able an athlete is to control his or her imagined movements, the greater the potential performance enhancement. Research also shown that the more visualization of a muscle movement in the mind can create electrical activity in the muscle even though there is no actual movement in the muscle itself.

The focus turned to the relationship of imagery perspective, type of task, positive verses negative imagery and the timing of imagery. It is seen that that the future

direction for research including such areas as amount of time to image, imagery of children going to participate in national and international level in sports, imagery ability, imagery and perfect skill & effect on performance.

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