

How to Put Your Resolution in Play Now

Resolutions are great, but only if we act on them. By this stage in your career, resolutions are at least 50% head game, if not 80% or more. Let's borrow our tools, then, from the ultimate head game: The Olympics. Think about it. At this level, every athlete is the best in the world. It's not about talent. It's about the head game.

I'd like to extend a big thank-you to Dr. Roberta Kraus, Olympic sports psychologist, for teaching me this technique way back in the day. I still use it almost 20 years later. Just for the record, she did not teach me this because I was an Olympic athlete. She taught me this because I was a leader who wanted to integrate the best techniques from every discipline into my work. (Yeah, that's kind of boring by comparison, isn't it....)

When you're having trouble with a particular performance (say, you repeatedly clam up in important meetings) or you just want to improve a skill (like putting), give it a try.

There are five steps and I do recommend that you do them all:

1. *Pre-Performance*: This is like a rehearsal. Go through the entire performance in your mind, as close to real time as you can get within the confines of your schedule.
2. *Pre-Act*: immediately before the performance, visualize the performance as if on fast forward
3. *Performance*
4. *Post-Act*: immediately after the performance, remember the performance as if on fast forward
5. *Post-Performance*: remember the performance more slowly, analyzing how you did and identifying any needed changes in your performance

To get the most value from the visualization process, try the following:

- Visualize yourself in the actual room, on the putting green – wherever you will be performing.
- Imagine the entire situation with vividness and clarity.
- Imagine the feel of the action, what it would really be like to be in the meeting or on that putting green right now.
- This is not an exercise in perfectly predicting the future – just take reasonable guesses about what will happen, what others will say and do, how they will respond, etc.

- Succeed mightily during the rehearsal. If you start to fail in the rehearsal, rewind and do the failing part over until you are successful.
- Take a few deep breaths before visualization and again before the performance to relax. Unclench your fists, too.
- The night before the event and the morning of the event, relive your best previous performance. If you have not yet had a successful performance, relive a different successful performance that is in some way similar.

Use this technique for one resolution. Then tell me how it goes!

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