

## I Envision Success In Your Future

By Jennifer Selby Long

Think back to when you first starting working in your profession. There was quite a bit of variance in the talent and intelligence of your many peers, wasn't there?

Now that you've moved up the food chain, the variance isn't so big. After a certain point, talent and intelligence alone won't help you get ahead. It's the mind game that counts. You can psych yourself up or psych yourself out.

One tool I've used with clients for many years is from the world of sports psychology. I first learned this tool from Dr. Roberta Kraus, a sports psychologist for the Olympics.

I've modified the approach just a bit over the years for pragmatic reasons. 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 closing sales), give it a try.

There are five steps. I recommend that you do them all in the exact sequence given:

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 place where 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 situation 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.

Now, get out there and knock their socks off!

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