

Visualization Skills

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Visualization is sometimes called imaginary or mental rehearsal. It is a mental skill that has been proven to improve performance. Visualization is the process of mentally viewing yourself performing. Imagined events can have an effect identical to the actual performance. It works by helping to develop a mental blueprint for executing skills. If practiced often, the blueprint becomes an automatic response.

BENEFITS OF VISUALIZATION

- Perform better,
- Improved confidence,
- Better concentration,
- Less nervous or anxious, and
- The ability to improve performance when unable to train due to injuries or illness.

TWO METHODS OF PRACTICE

Internal - Seeing it through your eyes as if you are doing the skill. This is the desired practice because it more closely approximates the way the athlete competes.

External - Seeing it from the perspective of a camera filming you. This is helpful in analyzing and correcting errors.

HOW TO USE VISUALIZATION

1. Start with a skill you already know and have a rough blue print of.
2. Try to relax and get comfortable. Tension suppresses images. Practice in a site with few distractions. As skills improve, begin to practice with more distractions. Works best with relaxation techniques.
3. Use as many senses as possible; hear, smell, touch and see.
4. Bring up as many emotional feelings as you can.
5. Be as vivid and as specific as possible. Use trigger or cue words for fine details.
6. Use partial movements or actions, thereby causing the muscles to practice as you visualize.
7. Be sure to use the correct, proper and perfect skills in practice. The more detailed the more effective the visualization.
8. The skills visualized should always be performed in their entirety.

9. See a positive outcome with you in control. Use positive reinforcement. Negative thoughts and doubts doom performance.

10. Visualize an entire match. Imagine the actions at the speed at which they occur in reality.

11. Visualize the proper response to all the possible consequences that could happen, so you can avoid unexpected surprises.

12. Use visualization to help you with achieving your goals. Visualize the details of attaining your goals.

WHEN TO USE VISUALIZATION

- At least 5-10 minutes 4-5 days/week
- On the way to practice and on the way home
- Before bed, dream
- In practice, visualize skills and corrections
- Before competitions, visit the site so that you can put together an accurate picture
- During the competition, see yourself in control
- When you cannot compete or practice
- Visualize an entire match

* The more times you practice, the more comfortable you become with the required action needed in wrestling well. ; Thus, the more likely that the proper responses will occur.

- After competing, find a quiet place and recall your best performance. This will help to recreate your ideal competitive state. Athletes should recall their best performances after competing in a quiet place to strengthen their blue print. Visualize the entire performance immediately so those images of mistakes are vivid. Avoid this when emotional or upset. The athlete must be somewhat relaxed. Use slow motion to analyze and correct mistakes. When corrected speed up images to actual speed.

VIDEO TAPES AND OTHER AIDS

- Use props (i.e. sports equipment, or pictures) to trigger images
- Use phrases to motivate you and help you concentrate on activities: trigger/cue words can be useful in stimulating vivid images
- Videotaping matches helps to analyze and to re-live emotions/thoughts so that you improve your skills.
- Create visualization tapes. These are tapes of you performing a series of 5 to 7 perfect repetitions of a skill in competition. This tape could include several techniques. It is recommended that each skill is reviewed at the end of the tape and that the tape not last longer than 20 minutes. Creating visualization tapes using national or international caliber athletes could be just as effective.

- Viewing videotapes of opponents can help you to prepare to visualize a successful encounter.
- Viewing videotapes of successful athletes can help you visualize yourself in similar situations.
- A tape of yourself in our finest form accompanied by an inspiring song can help you to maintain your confidence.

QUESTIONS

1. When can you use visualization?
2. How can you improve visualization clarity?
3. What is the best way to practice visualization?
4. Compare and contrast internal and external visualization.