

Goal Review

To better understand training, we will look at 7 guidelines to building Subconscious skills.

Training Guideline Number 1

Catch yourself doing something right. All too often, I hear the comment, "What am I doing wrong? If I could only isolate my problem areas and find the cause of my failures, I could be a success." Nothing could be further from the truth. That's like saying if you study all the ways of doing a math problem, you will learn how to do it right. What you really need to do is study one or two ways of doing something right instead of a hundred ways to do it wrong. If you study failure, you will become an expert in how to fail. So, stop catching yourself doing things wrong and trying to find out why you are failing.

Focusing on success alone builds Self-Image. Here is an example. A golfer hits a good shot and says, "Well, I guess I just got lucky that time." When he hits a bad shot he says, " Why do I always do that?" His Self-Image shrinks every time he repeats this kind of behavior. A better solution would be to say, ' 'What do I need to do to make that shot good?" if it is not good or "That's a good shot. What did I do right?" if it is a good one. See the difference? This may sound so basic and common sense to you but how many times do we see accomplished veterans making this mistake?

Training Guideline Number 2

Train four or five days a week. The information in this guideline is applicable only to performers while developing skill. It is not uncommon for performers that have acquired skill to train little or none at all and do very well in competition. The best athletes in the world had to go through a development period. Few train the same today as when they were acquiring skill. You cannot become skilled if you do not train regularly. The question to answer is: How much is too much and how much is not enough? For most activities, during your development period, you will burn out if you do them seven days a week. If you train less than four days a week, you will not maximize your development. If you train only one day a week, it is probable that you will deteriorate faster than if you do not train at all. That's right, one day a week is worse than no training at all. If you train two or three days a week, you can maintain your level, but you may not improve. Therefore, training four to six days a week is optimal to move up the mastery curve. You may not be able to sustain this during heavy competition-driven periods so maximize this guideline in the off-season if you can. Golf and Shooting can be year-round sports but you will benefit greatly in scheduling periods of intense training.

Training Guideline Number 3

Wherever you are, be all there. When you go from the office to the golf course, leave the office thoughts in the office. When you go home to the family, leave the bad golf round at the course. When you go from home to the office, leave the home problems at home. Wherever you are, be there 100 percent. This may be the most important training guideline. When we carry problems from one area of life into another, focus is lost in the primary area. This is why this guideline is so important.

A person must have the discipline to stay focused on the task at hand. If the task is a business call, you cannot effectively handle it when thinking of something that went wrong at home. Worry about that problem when you can do something about it. If you scheduled practice from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM, you should do just that practice during those two hours. There is nothing wrong with catching up on things with friends, but do not let it interfere with your training.



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Training Guideline Number 4

Rehearse the match day often within the training session. Treat training days as if they had the same importance as the most crucial competition day. At some point in every day take some time to imagine that you are in competition and playing well.

Be vivid in your rehearsal, see it, hear it, taste it, smell it, and feel it. Another common time to perform this rehearsal is the night before a competition. Tournament days can be stressful and PGA Tour players tell us that they prepare for success by mentally playing the round in their mind the night before the competition. This form of practice helps set up the Self-Image for a successful tournament day.

Training Guideline Number 5

When you are playing well, play a lot. This guideline speaks to the reinforcement of a great mental picture and physical behaviour. If something is working then keep doing it, even if you had planned to train in another position. When you are shooting well, shoot a lot."

In this aspect golf and shooting are the same. In golf the best time to practice your drives on the driving range is right after you have crushed some good ones. Keep hitting the driver. If you're on a roll, keep on going. This helps to reinforce the good experience you are having and therefore make it more likely to occur in the future. Likewise, if you are slicing badly, now is not the time to hit another bucket of balls. If you are having a bad day, stop training. Do not practice losing.

Training Guideline Number 6

We raise ourselves to the standard we are around. Train with people who are better than you, and you will get better. When you train with people who are not in your league, you tend play just like them. We often see champions in all sports sharing with young athletes this good for both the experienced athlete and the beginner. We can all learn from others, by watching their play. We can see how they handle certain situations that might be useful in your sport. The Self-Image benefits from the imprints of better technique that the player receives by watching skilled athletes. We also tend to be more affected by the behavior of people that are where we want to go than by those that are where we have been. Perhaps this is because we do not goal set to go backward.



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Training Guideline Number 7

Plan your year. Begin by determining the competition schedule for the year. In most sports, there are several big meets scheduled for the year, culminating in the nationals. Schedule these events on your master calendar in your journal.

Next, count the number of training days you have available to you until the next competition. Now count the days available for the entire year. You may be surprised just how few there are. Look for possible conflicts with your attendance at these special events. College students may not be able to move their finals to go to a match, but they might be able to register for classes that allow them to have Fridays free as travel days. Try to maximize the hours you have available by planning in advance.

Next, you should file a training budget. If you are fortunate, you have a coach or manager who can help you with this step. A training budget has projections for at least four areas: equipment, travel, fees, and supplies.

What new equipment will you need to reach your goals for the year? What is your plan to acquire them and when is the best time to make purchases?

What are the travel costs to get to matches, sessions with instructors, or training sessions? By planning in advance, you may be able to save on advance purchases for air fare or combine two competitions into one trip.

What fees will be charged for entering competitions, national association memberships, seminars, and coaching? What supplies will you use? Include ammunition, targets, and cleaning supplies. Avoid the possibility of lost training days by scheduling advance purchases of these essential items.

You divide your year into quarterly sessions. The lengths of the quarters are individual and sport-specific. During the first quarter of a training year, after you have just finished a needed rest from last season's competitions, evaluate your performance. During this session, you should establish your training plan, make out your budget, and set your schedule for the next year. Evaluate any equipment or technique changes you plan to make in the coming competitive year. Now is the time to test new ideas. Order new equipment, evaluate it, and make improvements during this session. Later in the competition phase, you will not want to change things.

During the second quarter, concentrate on conditioning. In this quarter, you work especially hard on drills that will strengthen you for the demanding seasons ahead. During this period, you will be attending major competitions leading up to your national championship. By this time, you should be properly conditioned and at your best. The focus in this session is peak performance. Training centers on match simulations rather than drills. Avoid experimentation with new equipment and techniques.

During the fourth quarter, rest and reflect on how the season progressed. You have done your best in the nationals. It is a time for much needed rest, repair, and reflection. Do not make the mistake of omitting this step. You may think you can get a jump on your competition by training at this time, but chances are you will weaken yourself in the long run. Also, you need the time away from your sport to reflect on your goals, training methods, and concepts. It is during this period that you establish an outline for your training during the year.

Finally, you should set up training objectives for the year in three major areas. First, determine what objectives you want to meet in training by the end of each quarter session. Second, determine how many hours you will average in each training day. Third, plan how you will spend those hours. By following these guidelines, you can develop a well-planned training program that should improve your results in competition.

