

3 Steps to a Winning Sports Mindset

By Richard Kelly



Research shows that with the right mindset you can achieve extraordinary things.

We are all born with fixed elements, eye colour, hair colour, body shape and so on, but one thing we have ultimate control over is the power of thought.

With the right mindset you can transform your life and the lives of those around you.

In the sports world, the mindset I am talking about is what is going on inside your head just before any sporting activity, whether it be at competition level or at a track event or any game.

The 3 main elements that I consider to be the most important are:

- **Calmness**
- **Aggressivity**
- **Clarity**

Let me go into more detail:

1) Calmness

A calm mindset is typically best for athletes who get nervous before they compete. Throughout your pre-competitive preparations and when about to begin a competition, your primary goal is to settle down and relax, thus allowing your mind to let go of doubt and worry and your body to be free of nerves and tension. Additionally, a calm mindset can be valuable for athletes who are naturally aggressive and don't need to take active steps to get into attack mode.

A calm mindset can be created in several ways. First, it's difficult to have a calm mind if your body is anxious, so focusing on relaxing your body is a good start. Deep breathing and muscle relaxation are two good tools you can use to calm your body.

Second, you can use mental imagery in which you see and feel yourself being calm before a competition. This imagery has a direct physiologically relaxing effect on both your body and mind.

2) Aggressivity

An aggressive mindset is often needed for athletes to shift from solid performance to exceptional performance because it allows them to take their performances to the next level, particularly for those who aren't naturally aggressive in how they perform.

An aggressive mindset can be so valuable because many sports these days have become "combat sport," meaning that opponents or competitive conditions are trying to literally or figuratively beat athletes. Athletes do battle not only with opposing teams and players, but also weather and field court, or course conditions. Only by assuming an aggressive mindset do some athletes have a chance to vanquish those enemies.

An aggressive mindset can be developed in several ways. First, you're more likely to perform aggressively if your body is amped up a bit more than usual. You can raise your physical intensity with more movement during practice, in your pre-competitive routines, and just before you begin to compete. Simply moving more and being more dynamic in your movements will help you shift to a more aggressive mindset.

Second, you can use high-energy self-talk to instill that aggressive mindset. You can see this practice used regularly in football locker rooms and before weightlifting competitions. Examples include: "Let's go! Attack! Charge! Bring it!" What you notice is not only what you say, but how you say it. So, your aggressive self-talk should sound, well, aggressive. No pussy cats here; only tigers, lions, and panthers allowed.

Third, you can incorporate an aggressive mindset into mental imagery in which you see and feel yourself competing aggressively which, in turn, helps create more attacking thinking, focus, and feeling.

3) Clarity

A clear mind involves having basically nothing related to performing going on in your mind before a competition. The athletes who use a clear mindset are those you see before a competition talking to coaches, teammates, or even their competition. They are often smiling, dancing around, chatting it up, or singing to themselves. These athletes can use a clear mindset because they are incredibly talented natural athletes and have years of experience that allow them to trust their bodies completely to perform their best without any interference from their minds.

A clear mind is most suited for athletes who are intuitive free spirited, and experienced

You create a calm mindset by thinking about anything except your sport. Talking to others around you, thinking about someone or something that makes you feel good, and listening to music in your head are several ways you can keep your mind clear, thus preventing it from getting in the way of your body performing its best.

Mindset, like all mental states, requires several steps to instil and master. **First**, you have to experiment to figure out which mindset will work best for you. **Second**, you need to make a commitment to adopting an ideal mindset. **Third**, you must focus on your desired mindset in practice and competitions to create that mindset. And, finally, you need repetition in practice and competitions to ingrain your ideal mindset so deeply that, when you begin the most important competition of your life, that mindset just clicks on and it enables you to perform your very best.

About Richard

Richard is a Mindset & Performance Consultant, keynote Speaker and Coach

He helps people stay committed, empowered, focused, disciplined, and develop a winning mindset.

If you would like a winning mindset contact me today

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