

Visualise Yourself to Victory

By Stephen Cornelius - Miami Masters Swim Coach

Visualisation is one of many psych tools you can use in getting yourself to the top of your sport. A famous example is Michael Phelps an American Olympic



swimmer. He had a secret weapon on most of his competitors and it wasn't just his high training ethic and perfectly sculpted swimmers' body. Phelps's secret weapon was that every night as he went to bed, he would visualise the same 'movie'.

He would see himself diving off the starting blocks in slow motion, swimming the perfect race. He would visualise a perfect entry, perfect long flowing strokes, perfect turns and a perfect finish. He would visualise the pool crowd, and how they would react at the finish of the race. He visualised what it would be like to rip off his cap with victory at the end of the race and how magnificent that would feel.

He visualised it time and time again until it became so real to him that when it came time to compete, his swim coach would simply say "Put on the video tape", and Phelps knew exactly what to do.

When Michael Phelps woke up on competition day, he got up early, he had his breakfast and energy shakes, just like every other day, and when he got into the pool to compete at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, he annihilated the competition, bringing home an unprecedented eight Olympic Gold Medals.

Michael would go into an automatic 'winning' trance as he swam his perfect races, shaving seconds off world records and overcoming any competitor.

Human Behaviour Specialists all agree "What you think about, and thank about, you bring about." This all comes down to the idea that perfect practice makes perfect and when you mentally rehearse winning something, it trains your brain to succeed.