

# ***CREATING CONFIDENCE***

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Confidence is something that athletes are supposed to possess at elite levels of sport. However, for various (complicated) reasons, this may not be the case. Additionally, there are times when an athlete's confidence can erode or slip. Fortunately, there are ways to enhance and maintain confidence.

## **(1) VISUALIZE SUCCESS**

Imagery is a powerful technique that affects both performance and attitude (confidence). Use imagery to see yourself executing specific skills or playing well. Also image positive outcomes and the feelings of success and winning.

## **(2) USE POSITIVE SELF-TALK**

Avoid being excessively self-critical. Use mistakes to improve; not tear yourself down. Any problem-oriented thought should be followed by a solution to implement. Use skill-focused self-talk to maximize performance.

## **(3) USE A SYSTEM OF GOALS AND REINFORCEMENT**

Goals are essential to know where to put efforts to improve and if improvement is occurring. Because improvements at elite levels of performance may be small and hard to see initially, it is important to reinforce yourself for effort as well as achievement.

## **(4) ACT CONFIDENTLY**

The mind-body relationship is a two-way street. Not only does thinking affect the body and performance; the body and actions (performance) affects the mind. Acting with confidence can help seed the feeling which will grow if the hard work that is needed for success follows.

## **(5) BE A ROLE MODEL**

Decide to be a role model for others in terms of attitude and confidence. Use your own role models and model your own behavior after them.