



# Sport Personality Questionnaire

>Performance Improvement Tips



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## Introduction

# Practical Tips to Improve Your Game

- The purpose of this learning and development guide is to give you some practical ideas, tips, and reading suggestions for learning and development and performance improvement drawn from the sport psychology literature.
- These ideas and suggestions are linked to the personality factors and mental skills measured by the Sport Personality Questionnaire. They cover twenty key areas of your mental game.
- Each group of ideas and suggestions for learning and development/mental skills improvement includes a reading recommendation.
- If you are looking at this document on a computer which has access to the internet, clicking on the book title or image will take you to Amazon where you can find more information about the book and purchase it.
- There is a planning template at the end of the guide to help you set your mental skills improvement goals and plan your training and performance improvement activities.

## Achievement and Competitiveness

### Achievement

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|-----|--|
| 1.1 | Read <u>Psychology of Champions: How to Win at Sports and Life with the Focus Edge of Super-Athletes</u> by James Barrell and David Ryback |
| 1.2 | Develop a dream about what you want to achieve in your sport.  |
| 1.3 | Be prepared to work your butt off to achieve success as a professional or amateur athlete.   |
| 1.4 | Get the most out of training and practice by being enthusiastic, determined, and goal-driven.  |
| 1.5 | Review your performance continuously, and celebrate successes and good performances.   |
| 1.6 | Show through your behavior and actions that you want to learn, you want to get better, and you are prepared to put the work in.            |

### Adaptability

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| 2.1 | Read <u>Six Thinking Hats</u> by Edward de Bono  |
| 2.2 | Ask for and be open to advice and support from others – for example, your coach, fellow team mates, sport commentators.                      |
| 2.3 | Try out creative thinking techniques such as brainstorming, the six thinking hats, metaphors and stories to help generate imaginative ideas. |
| 2.4 | Try approaching problems from angles that are as far as possible from the ways you have approached them in the past.                         |
| 2.5 | Be willing to adapt your behavior to increase your ability to play well and compete successfully.  |
| 2.6 | Remember that mental and physical skills' improvement takes time, commitment, and consistent effort.   |

### Competitiveness

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| 3.1 | Read <u>Mind Gym : An Athlete's Guide to Inner Excellence</u> by Gary Mack and David Casstevens.  |
| 3.2 | Analyze your strengths and weaknesses in relation to other athletes and where you need to improve to gain competitive edge.                         |
| 3.3 | In competition, focus on performing well rather than winning as focusing on winning will do little to help you win.                                 |
| 3.4 | Learn to control your explanations for winning and losing - give yourself full credit for your wins and give your opponents credits for their wins. |
| 3.5 | Enjoy the buzz from competing and performing well in front of others  |
| 3.6 | Believe in your ability and never give up hope.   |

## Achievement and Competitiveness

### Conscientiousness

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| 4.1 | Read <u>The New Toughness Training for Sports: Mental Emotional Physical Conditioning from One of the World's Premier Sports Psychologists</u> by James Loehr |
| 4.2 | Be prepared to spend most of your time in training and in practice.   |
| 4.3 | Develop specific plans and goals to guide your training and practice and focus on the task in hand.   |
| 4.4 | Prepare yourself thoroughly for competition by developing and rehearsing a competition plan.  |
| 4.5 | When you are going through a difficult patch, stick with it and do your best rather than give up and going through the motions.                               |
| 4.6 | Try to consistently deliver more than you are asked to do by your coach or team captain.  |

### Visualization

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| 5.1 | Read <u>Creative Visualization for Beginners</u> by Richard Webster.  |
| 5.2 | Use imagery and visualization to help master skills and counter nerves.   |
| 5.3 | Visualize yourself in a movie performing skilfully and confidently and replay the movie frequently.                       |
| 5.4 | Create positive images that are vivid and detailed and make use of all senses – try to see, feel, hear, smell, and taste. |
| 5.5 | Try to spend from 10 to 30 minutes every day visualizing yourself performing well and achieving your goals.               |
| 5.6 | Think of imagery as a mental skill that you need to practice to perfect like physical skills.                             |

### Intuition

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| 6.1 | Read <u>The Intuitive Way: The Definitive Guide to Increasing Your Awareness</u> by Penney Peirce.                                       |
| 6.2 | Trust your instincts and intuition when you are facing a situation or challenge that you have rehearsed and practiced many times before. |
| 6.3 | Don't act impulsively - listen to your feelings alongside information and advice from your coach and team mates.                         |
| 6.4 | Practice your ability to identify early cues or changes in the game which indicate what your opponents are going to do.                  |
| 6.5 | Don't ignore bad feelings/anxiety about a problem or issue until you have information to refute it.                                      |
| 6.6 | Actively learn from training and competition in order to gradually improve your perception, expertise, and sixth sense over time.        |

## Achievement and Competitiveness

### Goal Setting

7.1	Read <u>10-Minute Toughness: The Mental Training Program for Winning Before the Game Begins</u> by Jason Selk
7.2	Develop a strategy with your coach with clear development stages for improving your overall game.
7.3	Consider the value of moving modestly, patiently, carefully, and incrementally in order to achieve your goals.
7.4	Make sure you own your goals. Write them down using the planning template in this guide. Check whether they are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed.
7.5	Invite feedback from your coach and fellow athletes on whether you are working on the right areas.
7.6	Continually review progress towards your objectives/goals and set new goals to replace achieved ones.

## Confidence and Resilience

### Managing Pressure

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| 8.1 | Read <u><a href="#">With Winning in Mind: The Mental Management System</a></u> by Lanny Bassham.                                |
| 8.2 | View nervousness as a natural and essential part of strong competitive performance.   |
| 8.3 | Identify and write down the feelings you experience when winning and use imagery to create a positive mindset before competing. |
| 8.4 | During competition, focus on performing to the best of your ability rather than winning.  |
| 8.5 | Learn to reduce tension using mental routines such as deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation.                         |
| 8.6 | When under pressure, step back, get things in perspective, and if necessary develop a new game plan.                            |

### Self-Efficacy

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| 9.1 | Read <u><a href="#">The Talent Code: Greatness Isn't Born. It's Grown. Here's How</a></u> by Daniel Coyle.             |
| 9.2 | Avoid comparing yourself to your opponent and focus on the things that you know you do well.                           |
| 9.3 | Be confident, positive, and optimistic that you will perform well in your next competition.                            |
| 9.4 | Use thought-stopping to block unwanted thoughts and help refocus your attention on the task in hand.                   |
| 9.5 | After errors and setbacks, acknowledge what went wrong, refocus on the task in hand and avoid thinking about the past. |
| 9.6 | Increase your sense of well-being by expressing positive feelings and emotions to others.                              |

### Fear of Failure Control

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| 10.1 | Read <u><a href="#">The Achilles Syndrome: Overcoming the Secret Fear of Failure</a></u> by Petruska Clarkson.                               |
| 10.2 | Accept/tell yourself that you will not achieve your goals without learning from losses, mistakes and errors.                                 |
| 10.3 | Overcome fear of failure by trying different approaches and persisting until you achieve your goals/succeed.                                 |
| 10.4 | Take the positives out of a situation where you don't perform the way you planned and analyze what you are going to do differently next time |
| 10.5 | Use positive affirmations such as "I don't worry about what people think" to counter thoughts about failing.                                 |
| 10.6 | Don't be hard on yourself when you don't succeed. Get failure into perspective and learn something every time you lose.                      |

## Confidence and Resilience

### Flow

11.1	Read <u>Finding Your Zone: Ten Core Lessons for Achieving Peak Performance in Sports and Life</u> by Michael Lardon.
11.2	During training and competition, focus on the task in hand and eliminate possible distractions from what is going on around you.
11.3	Trust and act on your instincts and intuition. Be prepared to let go and take calculated risks.
11.4	View training as a challenge to improve your skills and train with intensity and commitment.
11.5	Get yourself feeling positive and confident before performing by, for example, recreating past positive experiences.
11.6	Rehearse beforehand how you see yourself performing and focus on enjoying competing and performing.

### Stress Management

12.1	Read <u>Performing Under Pressure: Gaining the Mental Edge in Business and Sport</u> by Saul Miller.
12.2	Develop a sense of humour and perspective as a shield in times of hardship.
12.3	When you face difficult situations, stare down reality rather than adopt an overly optimistic assessment of the situation.
12.4	Maintain your level of interaction with people when you feel stressed rather than cutting yourself off.
12.5	View training pain (as opposed to injury pain) as a normal part of training and competition.
12.6	Try to get plenty of sleep and make sure you have a good diet.

### Emotions

13.1	Read <u>177 Mental Toughness Secrets of the World Class: The Thought Processes, Habits and Philosophies of the Great Ones (Volume 3)</u> by Steve Siebold.
13.2	Increase your knowledge and understanding of feelings and emotions by noting your thoughts and feelings in practices and competitions.
13.3	Learn to read people's expressions and behaviours and think about how your words and actions affect others - for example, your coach, fellow competitors and family.
13.4	Recognise how other people's feelings and emotions may affect you.
13.5	Express your frustrations and concerns appropriately rather than bottling things up. Use humour to defuse tension.
13.6	Use visualization and positive self-talk to manage performance anxiety and change emotional gears.

## Confidence and Resilience

### Self-Talk

14.1	Read <u>What to Say When you Talk To Yourself</u> by Shad Helmstetter.
14.2	Use your inner voice to stay in control of and focused on your game and prevent you acting impulsively.
14.3	Say positive things to yourself such as, "I need to get out of this mind-set" to stay fresh and refocus.
14.4	Rehearse personal positive affirmations about your strengths such as "I am having a lot of fun" to use before, during, and after competing.
14.5	Practice positive cue statements in combination with deep breathing to refocus and decrease muscle tension caused by anxiety.
14.6	Develop and practice techniques for noticing and countering negative thoughts - for example, the rubber band snap technique.

### Self-Awareness

15.1	Read <u>Compete, Play, Win: Finding Your Best Competitive Self</u> by David Apostolico.
15.2	Develop your understanding of what works for you and doesn't work for you in order to get into your best performance state.
15.3	Invite feedback and suggestions from coaches and team mates on your physical skills and how you handle yourself mentally.
15.4	Use video of your performances to help assess your strengths and weaknesses and help develop strategies for future competitions.
15.5	Evaluate your performance with your coach after training and competition to identify what went well and what you could have done differently and should work on.
15.6	Be aware of your thought patterns and self-talk at peak/stressful moments in competition and deploy techniques to counter negative thoughts.

## Interaction & Sportsmanship

### Ethics

- 16.1 Read [Fair Play: The Ethics of Sport](#) by Robert Simon.
- 16.2 Expect to be judged by what you do and how well you do it.
- 16.3 Play fairly using only tactics that are in accord with the spirit of your sport.
- 16.4 Stick to the rules and regulations of your sport and avoid gamesmanship.
- 16.5 Show loyalty to your team mates, sport, community, society, and family.
- 16.6 Don't use performance enhancing drugs to increase your muscle strength.

### Empathy

- 17.1 Read [Real Dream Teams: Seven Practices Used by World-Class Team Leaders to Achieve Extraordinary Results \(St Lucie\)](#) by Robert Fisher and Bo Thomas.
- 17.2 Take time to learn about people's personal situations, views, and concerns.
- 17.3 In conversations, look like you care and ask questions to show that you are interested in what your coach or team mates are saying.
- 17.4 Acknowledge cultural differences among competitors and recognize the value in those differences.
- 17.5 Avoid personal celebrity and aim for a combination of extreme professional determination and outward personality modesty.
- 17.6 Watch for the warning signs of stress and burnout in people around you.

### Relationships

- 18.1 Read [Negotiate Like the Pros: A Top Sports Negotiator's Lessons for Making Deals, Building Relationships, and Getting What You Want](#) by Kenneth Shropshire.
- 18.2 Connect face-to-face with people you get on with as frequently as you can.
- 18.3 Initiate interactions and communications with people in your sport rather than waiting for other people to come to you.
- 18.4 Develop strong relationships with your coach, team mates, commentators, and sponsors.
- 18.5 Aim to be moderately assertive pushing your views and ideas at times and backing off at other times.
- 18.6 Make time to have fun with, show interest in, and care for the people who matter most to you.

## Power & Aggressiveness

### Aggressiveness

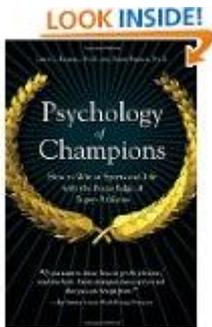
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| 19.1 | Read <u>The Mental Edge</u> by Kenneth Baum.  |
| 19.2 | Practice hard to improve your game and gain confidence to play well.                                      |
| 19.3 | Develop your understanding about when to play aggressively and when to play safe.                         |
| 19.4 | Focus on execution rather than the results and avoid thinking about mistakes.                             |
| 19.5 | Go through your routines with full intensity and focus in order to achieve a peak level when you perform. |
| 19.6 | Play aggressively in order to play well and be among the top players.                                     |

### Power

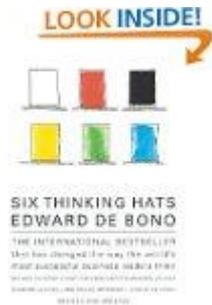
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| 20.1 | Read <u>The Captain: Steve Yzerman: 22 Seasons, 3 Cups, 1 Team</u> by Detroit Free Press.                           |
| 20.2 | Take the role of team captain seriously and develop your understanding of what it takes to be an effective captain. |
| 20.3 | Put the success of the team ahead of your own needs and demonstrate concern for the well-being of team members.     |
| 20.4 | Demonstrate your passion for the game by giving 100% every time you train and compete.                              |
| 20.5 | Be prepared to step up, walk the talk, and set an example for the rest of the team.                                 |
| 20.6 | Talk to your coach, team mates, and past captains to understand what people expect from you as captain.             |

# Reading

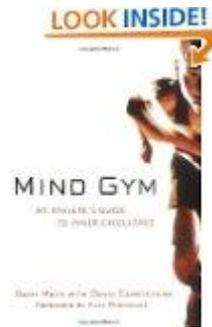
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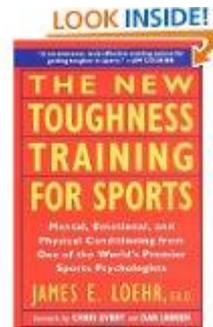
Psychology of Champions: How to Win at Sports and Life with the Focus Edge of Super-Athletes



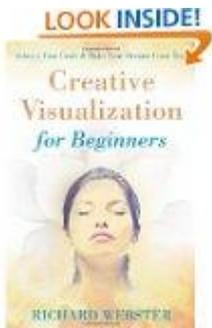
Six Thinking Hats



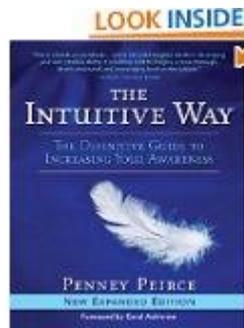
Mind Gym : An Athlete's Guide to Inner Excellence



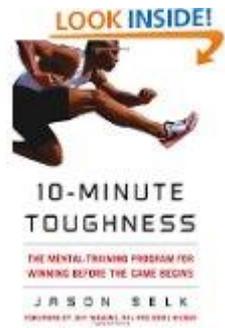
The New Toughness Training for Sports: Mental Emotional Physical Conditioning from One of the World's Premier Sports Psychologists



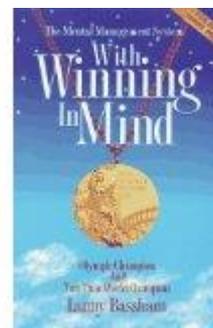
Creative Visualization for Beginners



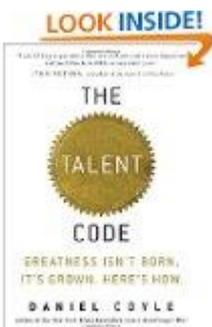
The Intuitive Way: The Definitive Guide to Increasing Your Awareness



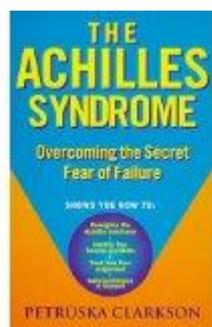
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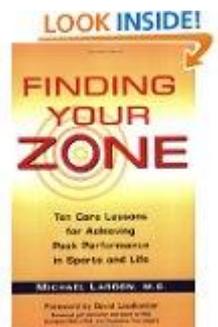
With Winning in Mind: The Mental Management System



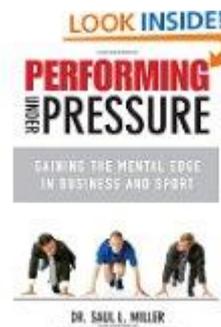
The Talent Code: Greatness Isn't Born. It's Grown. Here's How



The Achilles Syndrome: Overcoming the Secret Fear of Failure



Finding Your Zone: Ten Core Lessons for Achieving Peak Performance in Sports and Life



Performing Under Pressure: Gaining the Mental Edge in Business and Sport

# Mental Skills Development Plan

Dimension	Goal	Learning Activity	Timeline	Review Notes
Achievement Drive and Competitiveness				
Confidence and Mental Resilience				
Interaction and Sportsmanship				
Power and Aggressiveness				