



MIND & BODY

Building an Imagery Script

A popular sport psychology technique Warfighters can use is mental imagery. This is the practice of seeing (and feeling) in your mind’s eye how you want to perform a skill, as if you were actually doing it. It can augment your usual training and help you maintain—or even surpass—your current skill level, even when you’re sidelined.

Some of the ways that imagery helps performance include:

- Better decision-making
- Fewer errors
- Improved attention
- Increased confidence
- Reduced stress and anxiety

You can generate imagery in your mind for just about any task (improving your running time or marksmanship, for example). Good mental imagery incorporates all of the senses, and it often helps to listen to a scripted audio recording. In addition, here are two videos you can watch to give you an idea of mental imagery in action:

- [“Old Blue Angels—Pre-briefing and post-briefing”](#)
- [“Olympics 2012: Michael Phelps”](#)

Follow the instructions below to create your own script.

Stage # 1: Writing the Script (step by step)

Task you are breaking down:

When is it? (date if known, time of year, conditions, likely temperature, etc.):

It may help to recall when you performed or observed a similar task in the past. Name approximately 5* relevant details that make the scene more vivid and concrete in your mind’s eye (sights, feelings of effort, sounds, smells, tastes, touch, or emotions, for example):

(Circle the 3 most relevant).

How “amped up” or “chilled out” are you going into this? Describe what this means for you (butterflies? faster breathing? excitement? tiredness?). Name approximately 5* details:

(Circle the 3 most relevant).

How “amped” would you like to be? Describe how this feels with approximately 3* details:

(Circle the most relevant).

In any order, brainstorm a list of the key technical steps for performing this task optimally. Then mark each step with small numbers to note the sequence of steps:

(Circle the 5 most relevant).

In order, list the 3* most relevant steps. Then list at least 3 details that make an image of these steps realistic or that seem relevant (sights, feelings of effort, sounds, smells, tastes, touch, or emotions, for example):

1)

Details:

2)

Details:

3)

Details:

*These numbers are just suggestions based on practical experience; they are not research based findings. We provide them merely as loose suggestions for you to modify as you see fit.

