



By Dan DeMuth

PERFORMANCE IN MOTION: IMPROVE YOUR PERFORMANCE IN BUSINESS AND GOLF – AND ENJOY THE GAME

DISCOVERING THE POSSIBILITIES!



Have you or your team ever had a difficult time looking at a situation differently? Viewing events or experiences in a fixed way can be dangerous and costly for businesses and individuals. This hesitancy to try new things can result from negative risk-taking experiences in the past, a fear of failure in the future, or simply a preference to stick with what is working. I have seen countless companies stuck in unproductive patterns over the years. In many cases, all it takes is an outside viewpoint and a couple of simple exercises to open their minds and get them to see new possibilities. The same happens with many golfers - they practice the same thing over and over, hoping to get better, but do not realize that the real solution is to try something completely different.

At Performance In Motion, we do the same series of putting exercises with both businesses and golfers in order to help them think outside the box. In our studio, we set up putts from distances of three, six, and nine feet, with three golf balls at each distance. Then, each person hits these putts in a number of different ways. First, they putt the way they believe to be their "right way." They follow by putting with their eyes closed, looking at the hole instead of the ball, one-handed, and putting to a club, rather than the hole.

Over the past 12 years, we have been keeping statistics from these exercises. The results have been astounding. At this point, our numbers show that 10,300 people have participated. 90 people, less than 1% of all participants, have achieved better results doing it their way, and 117 did as well their way, but not any better. Interestingly, 57 people have shown improvement in every progressing stage of the exercise.

There are several lessons clients can take away from the putting exercise. First and foremost, they learn to be more receptive to new ideas (from themselves and from others). They also learn to be open to experimental activities. In the case of this exercise, there is nothing to lose and almost everything to gain. If clients recognize these same circumstances in the workplace, they may be more likely to experiment there as well. Another important thing they learn is to be open to improving the quality of their performance every day. It is easy to accept decent results, but why settle for decent when you can be great?

This leads to an interesting story about a business retreat I did with Wells Fargo. The vice president wanted to address some key initiatives and thought his team should change the way they were thinking. So instead of doing the coaching in my studio, we took the team up north for a three-day retreat. Since most of them were non-golfers, we did not tell them we were going to play golf. When they arrived, I was there to greet them and explain some of the activities planned for the next few days - one of which was the putting exercise. We started off by having everyone try the five different ways of putting. In this group, no one was able to putt better their right way.

As we talked about the process afterward, we related the results back to their key initiatives. Everyone agreed that they needed to make some changes and see new possibilities. I took them back out to the putting green to play a competitive putting game, in which everyone reverted to their original, perceived right way. After the game, we processed and talked about the results again. It was interesting to see that, even though their performance was better putting in the experimental ways, they stuck with what they were comfortable doing.

At this point, there is one more question to be asked: Were they seeking a respect for tradition, or a passion for the truth? We

commonly behave in certain ways because it is what we know how to do. Unfortunately, it is difficult to see that sometimes tradition is not the solution.

In some cases, the best options are those that seem uncomfortable at first.

In our workshops, we can advise clients to be more open-minded when they go back to business, but they may be unconvinced. This goes to show that we may be able to demonstrate the benefits of seeing new possibilities, but it is still up to the team or individual to apply these changes when it matters.

Referred to by the Minneapolis Star Tribune as, "The Golf Whisperer," Dan DeMuth's innovative coaching model has helped countless people achieve new levels of success both on and off the course. A former Minnesota PGA Golf Teacher of the Year, Dan now specializes in business, team, and individual performance coaching. To learn more, visit the "About Us" section at www.performanceinmotion.biz



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