

HOW TO BECOME A SPORT CHAMPION

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Abstract

Many teenagers dream to become a sport champion. But in order to achieve their dreams they should know they must respect the golden rules, such as: start practice sport since childhood, work hard, respect a healthy and adequate nutrition and work with a good trainer. As you grow up, we will also need a mental coaching.

The first step is setting the intention which is the motor that starts everything in motion. Without setting intention, your life wanders around aimlessly without goal or direction. After you set your goal it is very important to believe in you, because the mind is the creator of all things and will give you the strength to work hard. The next step is to start training and now you'll need a trainer in order to learn the adequate technique to develop and to improve it and to start planning a tactic in competition. The path to your dream won't be easy task - it takes commitment, patience, and perseverance.

Nowadays the native talent, the will and work are not enough. The sport performance requires a lot of time and money so the children will need to have their parent support. This support materializes in trainings, professional equipment, the adequate nutrition and step by step even a mental coach that can help you build a strong champion character.

Since childhood they should participate to inter-school competitions at popular sports such as soccer, tennis, handball, volleyball basketball etc. and to continue with "high schools Cups". This amateur competition will give them the chance to taste the victory and performance, will strengthen their character and will.

The teachers/instructors will select students with specific skills and abilities for a sport and they will start together the process of creating the future champion.

Introduction

Sport is a very complex and challenging area in which many sportsmen dream to become champions. However very few of them manage reach the top and even fewer become champions.

To become a champion requires few indispensable elements like: *physical abilities*, *mentality*, *commitment*, *adequate training*, *sacrifice*, *time*, *resources* and very important *adequate support*.

1) *Physical abilities* are the basis for a future champion. If the candidate to a sport meet the requirements, has the chance to develop, to evolve to gain performance a maybe will finally become a champion. Therefore, selection is very important. For example, a person wish to become a boxer but his physical constitution makes him more suitable for tennis. First step to become a champion is to find out if the sport you embrace and practice is in accordance with your *physical abilities*. The practitioners who do not have adequate body characteristics for a certain sport, may evolve, may gain progress, but if the body does not help them, it is very improbable to become champions. If we consider the fact that for a sport practitioner that meets all the requirements for a certain sport he needs a 5 to 10 years to reach the peak of performance, we understand how important are the *physical abilities* in starting the long road from beginner to champion. The age at which a person starts to practice the sport is to be considered. A person who practices sport for 10 years is more likely to reach the success than a person who has 2 years of practice.

2) *Mentality* - makes a practitioner of a sport to tackle properly all the challenges may confront with. Passion for sport fortifies and make the practitioner feel that he belongs to that sport. He will not easily feel

weak, the determination will help to overpass the effort he does. Such a practitioner will train most of the day without feeling exhausted at physical and mental level.

Mike Tyson for example was training in a brutal manner reaching 5 to 5 training session per day. Asked why is he running at 4.30 AM he answered: *I do that because I know while I am training, my adversary sleeps.*

Mentality makes a sportsman to evolve, to accept sometimes failure and continue improving his results. Mentality makes a sportsman who wish to become champion say: *I never lose, I either win or I learn!*

Muhammad Ali stated: *To become a great champion you need to believe you are the best. If not, pretend you are!*

3) *Adequate training* - is essential when considering to evolve to champion. Therefore, modern bases for training are required. Methods of training continuously evolve and the trainers should be permanently updated to offering to trainee the best solutions in order to help him improving performance and reaching new records. Some sports require experienced partners for training while individual sports require focus on method. Each training method should consider physical attributes of sportsman, in order to make him give his best performance.

4) *Sacrifice* - sportsmen need often to make sacrifices.

Some may need to quit their habitual actions or to comply to diet restrictions. Clubbing and night life may impede to a champion route. Therefore, discipline is compulsory here. It is not easy to avoid cookies for an athlete that loves them, still sacrifice to become champion is needed. Sacrifices are made also in spending a lot of time for training and less with the families. Sacrifices are made when cancelling a planned vacation for sport. Friends and families are required to support sportsmen because without sacrifices you can not become champion.

5) *Time - performance is reached in time!*

Each sport requires time for training. More than 60 percent of their time was consumed for training by world's champions. Practice in certain periods of time of the day combined with discipline and determination may produce a champion. It is not easy to train 6 hours a day for example if we consider travel from home to training area, preparation and adaptation then travel back home. Michael Jordan famous basketball player stated: *Champions don't become champions when they win an event, but in the hours, weeks, months and years they spend preparing for it!*

6) *Resources - always make the difference!*

A sportsman seeking to become champion needs an at least decent financial situation to reach his goal. Nutrition, individual equipment, access to training bases or recovery facilities may cost. A sportsman with full job outside sport that make that for living will lose advantage to one that is only doing sport. An adequate nutrition program might often be expensive.

7) *Adequate support* - is essential in certain moments. That should come from trainer, team, family and society. The sportsman needs to be fully understood and encouraged. The trainer or mentor is the person with first responsibility in offering support. Some champions had some family issues and team became second family who offered support and made him cross over difficulties and reaching own goals. Family needs to support a future champion. His evolution may request some sacrifices and avoid of tensions to give his best. In certain situations, psychological support might help those aiming to become champions.

To become a champion is not easy nor convenient. The multitude of factors presented above are just few. Talent is a vector but without other factors fulfilled does not grant success.

Romania produced in time a great number of champions in many sports. However, most of them had not the best condition to train, neither best equipment. Some of them have been blamed by society when failed. They did not receive adequate support. Still their determination and skill of their trainers made them go further. They managed to make sportsmen to **control negative emotions**.

8) Mental training matters for success!

Setting up a positive mindset before competitions is essential. Positive anticipation reduces emotional reactions due stress before reaching performance.

Relationship between mind and emotions works on both directions: even if emotions are the result of cognitive interpretations, they might have impact on thoughts.

Before competition, the body starts preparation by producing hormones among them adrenaline. Attention focus on future actions, mind becomes more active.

This rise of excitation might be positive or negative for sportsmen. Adequate set up of mind consist in rationally orient emotions to foster success.

Some sportsmen associate this risen excitation with enthusiasm, with preparation of the body to face competition.

On the other hand, there are sportsmen who interpret physiological changes like risen cardiac rhythm as anxiety, worry and fear, with negative impact.

Mental training may include use of repetition of positive self - declaration.

Affirmation like: *I train hard and I am in a great shape!* - helps to concentrate attention on own person so positive feelings about competition shifts to optimistic.

We present an example of emotion management technique that might be used before competition:

Step 1 - sportsman closes eyes, empty mind and focus on deep breath, rhythmically inhaling by nose and exhaling by mouth;

Step 2 - remind a former victory, recreate and living the feelings of that event;

Step 3 – re-focus the attention on competition to start.

Emotions are important in sport. Even some persons have emotional side highly developed, if they take mental control and follow psychological instructions, sportsmen might reach optimal preparation for performance.

In general, self-trust tends to rise when the sportsman believes in own abilities and considers himself ready for a competition or event.

Worries and trust are two aspects at opposite sides of a continuum - when self-trust is strong will tend to eliminate worries from area of attention.

Negative emotions may influence performance - mentally and physically

First, negative emotions determine a slow of rhythm. Frustration and fury as they intensify, generate muscular tensions, breath difficulties and affect capacity of coordination of movements.

Also, quantity of energy decreases and fatigue appears.

Mentally, negative emotions become indicators of beliefs which disarm, sportsmen do not trust no more in themselves neither in their capacity to reach goals.

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