



PERFORMANCE
IN MOTION

By Dan DeMuth

PERFORMANCE IN MOTION:

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

PARTNERSHIP OF MIND AND BODY



In Steven Pressfield's book, *The Legend of Bagger Vance: A Novel of Golf and the Game of Life*, Bagger Vance and Keeler are discussing a player's natural swing and how it would be impossible for a professional instructor to change the swing to fit a preconceived idea of what it should look like. Bagger Vance said, "I believe that each of us possesses, inside ourselves, one true, authentic swing that is ours alone. It is folly to try to teach us another, or mold us to some ideal version of the perfect swing. Each player possesses only that one swing that he was born with, that swing which existed within him before he ever picked up a club" (Avon Books, Inc, New York, New York, 1995, p. 68).

After playing as the number one golfer on my high school team for four years, I went to college for a professional golf management program. While working mostly on my swing mechanics, rather than focusing on a target and my strategy to the game, I saw my scores go from the mid-70s to the mid-80s. It seemed that the harder I worked on my swing, the higher my scores became.

Earlier in my career, I had learned so much about the mechanics of the golf swing that it was like a game I did not know how to play anymore. No one asked me where I wanted to go with my game. I had lots of advice on how to swing, but learned nothing about how to focus on a target in order to win.

How Focusing On The Target Can Naturally Improve The Swing

Mark, a former local news reporter, was doing a story on my business several years ago. After going through some of my exercises and interviewing clients, he saw that my programs could improve his golf game without emphasizing mechanics.

Insisting that he wanted to work on his swing, I had him try the "club throw technique." The activity was done to help him focus on his target in golf and become more aware of his swing, rather than "fix" it. I learned the club throw technique through Fred Shoemaker of Extraordinary Golf. This technique allows golfers to see, by focusing on their targets instead of their swings, that they can hit the ball to their desired location more often. In this technique, the golfer takes a padded, oversized club and releases it during his or her swing toward a desired target.

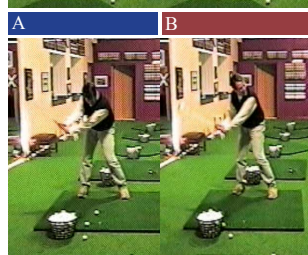
First, we captured his normal swing on camera in our golf studio. Next, I gave him an oversized club and told him to focus on a target on our simulated course. I then told him to throw the club at his target so we could capture his natural balance on film. As is the case with most golfers, aiming at a target helped Mark's movement naturally flow in that direction, loosening him up. His natural swing emerged without me having to "fix" it.

A. Ball Hitting B. Club Throwing



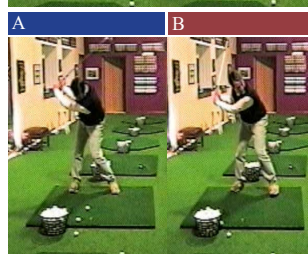
A-Tense and tight

B-Relaxed and balanced



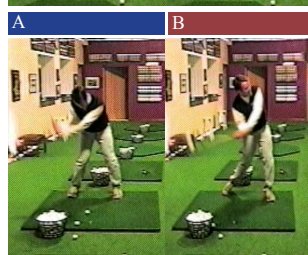
A Head down

B Focus on target



A Weight on left knee-out of balance

B Weight balanced over back leg



A Stuck at the ball

B Upper/lower body working together



A Weight going upward

B Weight transferring forward



A Not engaged with target

B Relaxed and engaged with target



A Tense

B Relaxed

Mark had always played down the right side of the fairway with a slice. After seeing his swing on film, he became aware of how to adapt to his natural swing and hit a draw.

By learning and understanding the changes in motion between ball hitting and club throwing, the golfer learns to value focusing on the target and discovers how good their swing can be.

Once Mark realized the importance of focusing on the target in golf, he began to see how he could apply the same principles to his work and personal life. He began to re-think what was really important to him and realized that he wanted to increase his income so that his wife would not have to keep a job that required so much travel. That became his new target, which he was later able to achieve.

Using Motion To Deal With Fear

As I have coached golfers like Mark with the clubthrow technique over the years at Performance In Motion, I have realized that focusing on specific targets can be applied to many more situations in life than just golf. For example, when businesses need to perform more efficiently, it is more effective to focus on specific time management goals, rather than trying to simply do things faster.

When making changes in business or golf, fear is common. People are often hesitant to change things with which they are already comfortable. This is where experiential learning through motion exercises can be of great help. Being told to try something new is just not convincing enough. How do you know it is going to work? This way of thinking prevents people from improving their performance.

The use of motion helps people see how changes in thinking can improve performance. By videotaping the motion of the normal swing and comparing it with the motion of the club throw technique, it is easy for people to see the difference. When the golfer is thinking about hitting the ball, the swing is usually tense. When the golfer is thinking about the target, the swing becomes freer. After realizing that changes in thinking can improve golf performance, the client can take this knowledge into business, reducing the fear of trying new things in the workplace and building confidence at the same time.

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. A former Minnesota PGA Golf Teacher of the Year, Dan applies his golf expertise toward coaching clients to strengthen the mind-body connection, resulting in permanent improvements to how they work, play, and perform under pressure. To learn more, visit the "About Us" section at www.performancein-motion.biz.