



# ***Applied Mental Strength Training for Athletes***

## **Guide to Self Scouting Exercise**

You have been asked to evaluate your athlete's mental game. Research confirms the skills presented are characteristic of successful athletes. In order to scout your athlete, we have provided this guide as a resource for you. The Foundation Skills are the first three – Managing Emotions, Managing Stress, and Motivation. Success Skills include the next three – Setting and Achieving Goals, Team Building, and Maintaining Positive and Effective Self Talk. The Performance Skills include – Self Confidence and Focus. Please carefully read these before completing the Self Scouting Exercise.

## **The Fundamentals of Sport and Life**

### **Manage Emotions**

*Successful athletes:*

- Accept that their emotions are part of competition and are able to use positive ones to their advantage. They are able to effectively identify ways they can effectively minimize negative emotions.
- Realize that managing their emotions is a choice and can choose to have a positive attitude.
- Respect the game and all participants involved.
- Pursue excellence not perfection and are able to learn from mistakes. They recognize others involved in competition are not perfect.

### **Manage Stress**

*Successful athletes:*

- Maintain perspective and balance between sport and the rest of their life.
- Effectively problem solve and assertively manage life and sport stressors.
- Utilize stress management skills that reduce stress and avoid and minimize using skills that are self defeating.

### **Motivation**

*Successful athletes:*

- Recognize rewards and risks of participation in their sport.
- Remember rewards when faced with difficult tasks or disappointments.
- Stay focused on rewards from participation regardless of outcome.

## **Set and Achieve Goals**

*Successful athletes:*

- Set long term and short term goals that are realistic, time oriented, and measurable.
- Create detailed plans for achieving goals for sport and for other aspects of their life.
- Accurately assess their own performance and progress toward goals.
- Commit to achieve goals on a daily basis and able to meet demands of their training programs and important life commitments.

## **Team Building**

*Successful athletes:*

- Understand that they are members of large and different systems that include team, coaches, families, friends, and others.
- Utilize skills that allow them to effectively problem solve with teammates, coaches, and difficult people.
- When needed, are able to tell others what they need and their thoughts and feelings about themselves and the team.

## **Maintain Positive & Effective Self Talk**

*Successful athletes:*

- Recognize effective and positive self talk that contributes to excellence in performance.
- Talk to themselves they would talk to their friends and family.
- Maintain self talk that is positive and effective despite mistakes and/or difficult conditions.

## **Self Confidence**

*Successful athletes:*

- Maintain self confidence when facing difficult situations.
- Primarily build confidence based on performance and their own assessment. Recognize that building confidence primarily based on other's viewpoint does not create *self* confidence.
- Utilize positive and realistic imagery to maintain self confidence when faced with difficult situations.
- Build confidence and identity from a variety of skills and aspects of sport and life.

## **Focus**

*Successful athletes:*

- Able to recover focus with a variety of imagery, self talk, and emotion management skills.
- Able to contain distractions created by self or others.
- Maintain focus on "here and now" regardless of past experiences or outcomes.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### **SELF SCOUTING EXERCISE**

With any skill athletes develop, they go through stages of awareness and competence. When evaluating these skills, please use the following framework to assess skill level.

**0-2 Unconscious Incompetence** – In this stage your athlete has very little knowledge of what it takes to be successful at a specific skill. They don't know, what they don't know

**2-4 Conscious Incompetence** - In this stage your athlete has the knowledge that they need to be successful and learning a skill, but do things that they know will limit their progress. Your athlete makes excuses for continuing to do those things or avoid dealing with brutal realities that are inhibiting their progress.

**4-6 Conscious Competence** – In this stage your athlete knows what they need to do to be successful and they are making progress toward competently performing the skill they are trying to learn. Your athlete still may have to explicitly think about what they are doing to effectively perform the task and may identify further obstacles to performing the skill.

**6-8 Unconscious Competence** – In this stage your athlete can perform the task without thinking. They are able to integrate all aspects of the skill to perform it. Performing the skill feels easy and effortless. Your athlete may start thinking about ways to further improve at the skill.

In column 2 rate your athlete's performance on a scale of 1-8 with 8 being the best.

In column 3 rate your athlete's team performance on a scale of 1-8 with 8 being the best.

In column 3 briefly identify any obstacles or brutal realities preventing improvement in the skill.

<b>Fundamental</b>	<b><u>Their</u> Performance</b>	<b><u>Team</u> Performance</b>	<b><u>Obstacles/Brutal Realities</u></b>
Manage Emotions			
Manage Stress			
Motivation			
Set and Achieve Goals			
Team Building			
Create/Maintain Effective Self Talk			
Self Confidence			
Focus			

When you have completed this assignment, we will discuss how and what factors you used to evaluate their performance. After we have discussed, we will develop a plan to improve performance in the areas needed.