

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a running track. The track is dark green with white lane markings. Several starting blocks are visible, arranged in a diagonal line across the lanes. The lighting creates long, dark shadows of the blocks on the track surface. A semi-transparent purple rectangle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing text.

every  
woman

Think like an athlete  
at work

Zana Morris

everywoman expert





**On a scale of 1 – 10 where 1 = never /most difficult  
& 10 = always / easiest**

## Poll One:

If you close your eyes - How easily can you bring up a picture/visually recall an object in detail?

## Poll Two:

How easily do you let go of past mishaps, failures or embarrassing moments?

## Poll Three:

When faced with a challenge or goal at work, how readily do you lock into the exact outcome you want/need to achieve?

# The mindset of an elite athlete

To approach your work with a high-performance mentality & use visualisation to move closer to your desired outcomes.

## 1. ELITE ATHLETES ARE EXTRAORDINARILY VISUAL

*“Elite athletes aren't just a cut above when it comes to speed, endurance and technique, but also in visual learning skills”*

Dr Lee. University of Waterloo.

*"A good hockey player plays where the puck is. A great hockey player plays where the puck is going to be."*

Wayne Gretzky





## The mindset of an elite athlete

### 2. ELITE ATHLETES KNOW THEIR OUTCOME - THEY HAVE A VISION:

They know their end result- and work backwards on the processes and skills, drifting their attention to the outcome and the future to stay motivated and excited.

*“I hated every minute of training, but I said, ‘Don’t quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life a champion”.*

Mohammad Ali

*“A goal ...often serves simply as something to aim at.”*

Bruce Lee

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# The mindset of an elite athlete

## 3. ELITE ATHLETES SEE 'FAILURE' AS THE PATH TO SUCCESS

The best athletes believe that adversity happens for them, not to them. They have a short-term memory of their mistakes and a long-term memory of their successes

*“Losses have propelled me to even bigger places, so I understand the importance of losing”.*

Venus Williams

*“I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed”.*

Michael Jordan





## In Summary

Be as visual as you can and learn to learn visually

Know your outcomes and have a clear vision

'Failure' = Success: Learn to have an automatic, long-term memory of successes

How our mind works  
Conscious vs Unconscious







## Cybernetics

How our unconscious programmed, or learned, habits lead us to an outcome - for better or for worse.

So how can we re-learn and change programmed behaviour?

## The power of visualisation – re-learn and change programmed behaviour

When we visualise in an effective manner, it programs the subconscious mind to recognise and move in that direction.

The brain and the subconscious mind don't know the difference between something we visualise and something that is real.

It “remembers” the feeling of that state we visualised. **And it automatically aids us in taking steps towards it.**





## Remember

*“Elite athletes are a cut above in visual learning skills.”*

### Example:

*Michael Phelps, with a track record of 23 gold medals, won gold & set a world record despite not being able to see for the last 75m of the race as water filled up his goggles.*

As Phelps’ long-time Olympic coach, Bob Bowman, explained:

*“He will see it, exactly the perfect race. And he will see it like he’s sitting in the stands, and he’ll see it like he’s in the water. And then he will go through scenarios - what if things don’t go well? [... you know if my suit ripped or my goggles break...]*

*...he has all of this in his database, so that when he swims the race he’s already programmed his nervous system to do one of those”.*

## 90% of all Olympic athletes now use visualisation techniques

*“Visualisation helps to prepare and to teach you how to respond to a situation before it happens. To achieve your goals by conditioning your brain to see, hear, and feel the success in your mind.”*

Shannon Rollins, clinical hypnotherapist

Researchers now conclude that properly performed techniques may improve motor skills, grow muscle strength, decrease anxiety, increase self-confidence, and improve concentration.

*“picturing others in motion warms up the “action brain” and helps us figure out ...how we can coordinate our actions with those around us. Over time the brain learns our routine movements, allowing these actions to become more automatic and fine-tuned.”*

Srini Pillay, asst clinical prof. psychiatry, Harvard Medical School





How to Visualise:  
Your Future (Goals)  
&  
Your Past (Successes)



## The Practice – 1.

1. Know & write your outcome → *For all tasks*
2. Be visual → Practice to see more effortlessly

Goal: To train so that being visual and seeing outcomes, becomes an effortless automatic response



BEING VISUAL

Close your eyes...

# How many can you recall?

What is directly in front of you?

What are the colours/shapes/sizes?

What items are beside them?

How does the light fall on them?







Now open your eyes...

How accurate were you?

## The Practice – 2.

3. Understand *VAKGO* → Learn to use ALL senses to immerse in the outcome - to orientate towards the outcome you want.

4. Memory Management → Draw from your past

GOAL: Learn to use ALL senses to immerse in future goals & past successes - to create the future outcome that you want.



## VAKGO →

- Pick your outcome.
- Now Add VAKGO:

V = VISUAL: What you see

A= AUDITORY: What you hear

K = KINESTHETIC: What you feel

G = GUSTATORY: What you taste

O = OLFACTORY: What you smell



# VAKGO = Make it sharper

- **What can you see? (visual)**

*What are you wearing? What is the weather like, is it a bright day?*

*Who is with you & what do they look like?*

- **What can you hear? (auditory)**

*What do their voices sound like? What are you saying to yourself? -*

*Are there other voices/ traffic/birds, or is someone congratulating you? Sounds of clapping (award?), excited fans (scoring a goal eg football or hockey)?*

- **What can you feel? (kinesthetic)**

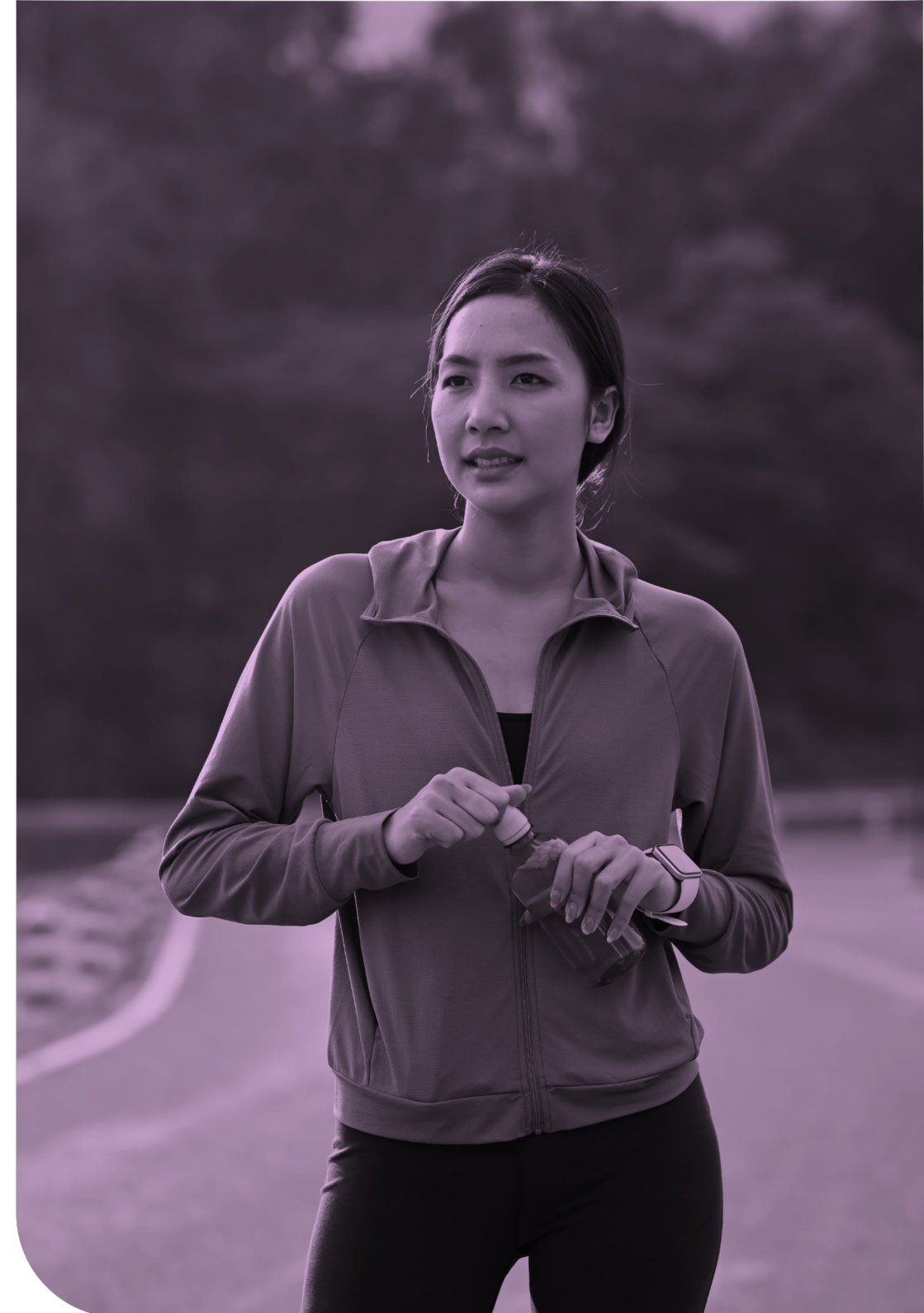
*Is it warm or cold or wet? Are you feeling excited/ nervous/ delighted/ relieved?*

- **What can you taste? (gustatory)**

*Are you drinking water or champagne?*

- **What can you smell? (olfactory)**

*Can you smell air conditioning/ rain/ perfume/ cut grass etc*





## Remember Phelps...

*“He will see it, exactly the perfect race. And he will see it like he’s sitting in the stands, and he’ll see it like he’s in the water. And then he will go through scenarios...”*

A close-up, profile view of a woman with curly hair, looking thoughtfully to the left. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter. The text 'Memory Management →' is centered over her face.

## Memory Management →

- Find 3 memories of success
- Choose 1 & write it down
- Visualise using VAKGO

## Visualise with VAKGO:

- **What can you see? (visual)**

*What are you wearing? What is the weather like, is it a bright day?  
Who is with you & what do they look like?*

- **What can you hear? (auditory)**

*What do their voices sound like? What are you saying to yourself? -  
Are there other voices/ traffic/birds, or is someone congratulating  
you? Sounds of clapping (award?), excited fans (scoring a goal eg  
football or hockey)?*

- **What can you feel? (kinesthetic)**

*Is it warm or cold or wet? Are you feeling excited/ nervous/  
delighted/ relieved?*

- **What can you taste? (gustatory)**

*Are you drinking water or champagne?*

- **What can you smell? (olfactory)**

*Can you smell air conditioning/ rain/ perfume/ cut grass etc*





**Remember: Add the questions, and don't be afraid to practice, repeat, exaggerate.**

**Your mind does not know the difference between this visualisation and reality**





## Reminder...

Visualisation conditions your brain to see, hear, and feel the success in your mind.

Helping you to prepare for and to learn how to respond to a situation before it happens.

## Reminder...

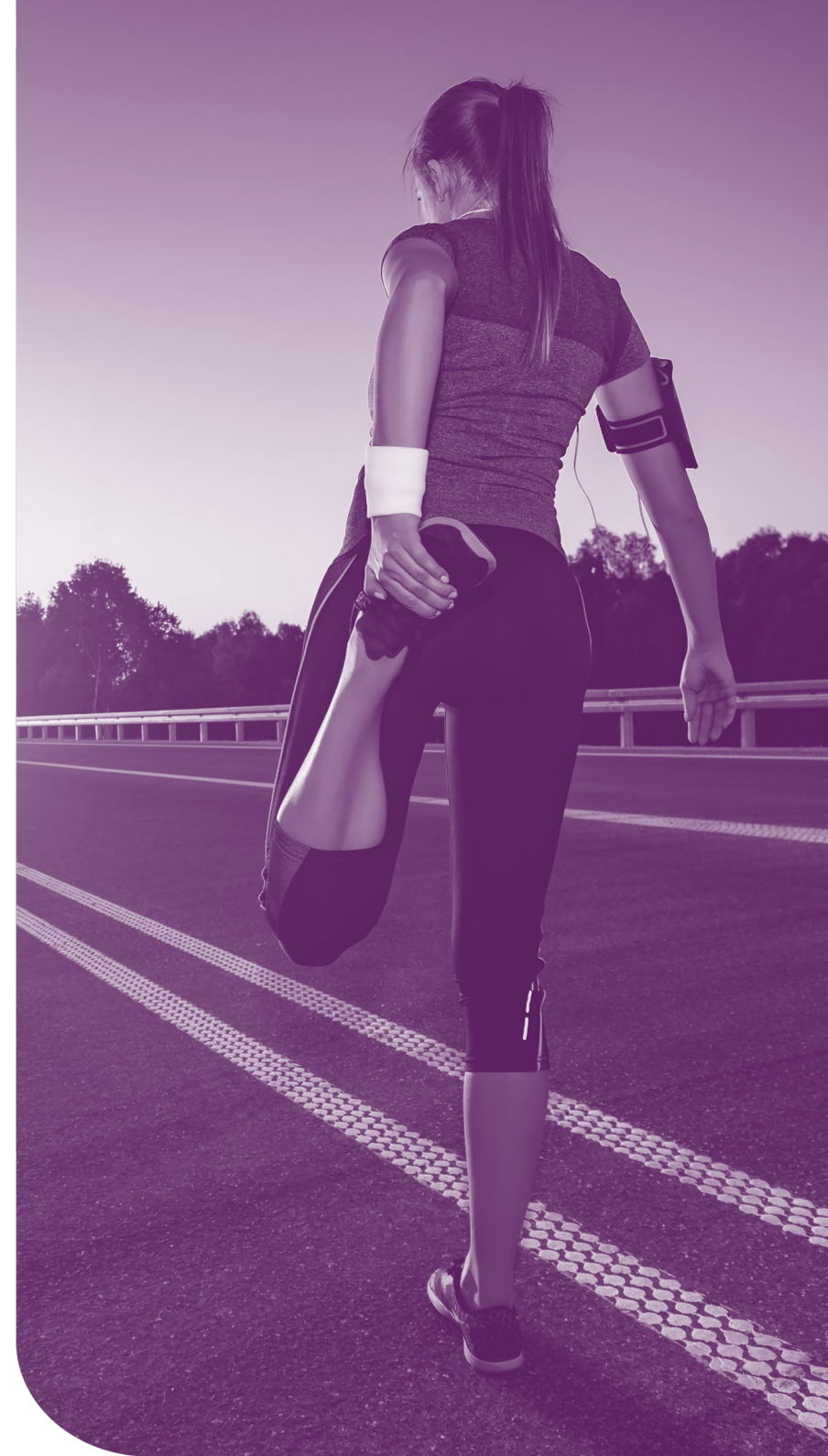
When we visualise in an **effective** manner, it programs the subconscious mind to recognise and **move in that direction**. It “remembers” the feeling of that state we visualised.

And it automatically aids us in taking steps towards it.



## Reminder - Elite athletes:

1. ARE EXTRAORDINARILY VISUAL
2. KNOW THEIR OUTCOME - THEY HAVE A VISION
3. SEE 'FAILURE' AS THE PATH TO SUCCESS AND HAVE A LONG-TERM MEMORY OF THEIR SUCCESSES





## The mindset of an elite athlete

*“A man who wins is a man who thinks he can”*

Roger Federer

*“If you dream and have the ambition and want to work hard, then you can achieve.”*

Mo Farah

*“I think that everything is possible, as long as you put your mind to it, and you put the work and time into it. I think your mind really controls everything.”*

Michael Phelps

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QUESTIONS?