

# The Secret To Beating Tiger Woods At Golf ... And, Its Correlation To Success In Business!

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The game of Golf, although difficult to master, can nevertheless be narrowed down to three fundamental disciplines: 1) The Power Game [Driving & Iron Play], 2) The Short Game [Finesse / Shots within 100 Yards] and 3) Putting.

Success in golf is largely focused on mastering each skill 'to the best of one's ability' and in so doing, a player's talent or the lack thereof, becomes evident.

Ask any golfer, even the pros and they'll tell you which of the three disciplines they are best at and which they find most challenging. By most challenging, they mean the skill in which they are least adept - resulting in the highest percentage of 'Errors' on the course.

In the book, Dave Pelz's Short Game Bible, author and golf short-game guru, Dave Pelz, studied the best players on the PGA circuit and compiled some revealing data. In his research, he ignored a player's swing fundamentals preferring rather to concentrate only on 'Errors Made' in each of the three disciplines averaged over thousands of shots and hundreds of games. More to the point, a Player's Performance Results.

He discovered professional golfers, on average, had an error factor of 7-8% when driving [including irons]. In the short or finesse game their error percentage jumped to a surprising 13-26% and he found top PGA golfers - the best of the best - enjoyed only a 50-50 chance of sinking a six foot putt. He referred to these statistics as a player's 'Percentage Error Index'.

That said; who among us would be surprised to find Tiger Woods with the best all round average Percentage Error Index amongst the pros? The fact is, Woods is an enigma. Like Michael Jordan or Wayne Gretzky, he is a rare blend of above average talent in the disciplines that count which is what separates him [them] from the rest. In Tiger's case, his ability to consistently achieve High Performance Results may make him the best to have ever played the game.

Despite his unquestioned abilities, though, experts and golf aficionados know he is not the best at any one of the three golfing disciplines. That is to say, recent PGA standings show Darren Clark with a 2.9% error factor as the best driver, Phil Mickelson, master of the short game and Ernie Els the best at putting with a 1.678 average.

Tiger is not the best at any one discipline - currently ranked a surprising 51st in the Putting category. He is still, nevertheless, the best at the game and toughest to beat!

## The Power of Three

Hypothetically speaking, imagine for a moment what would happen if the rules of golf were changed, just a little? What if players were allowed to take a 'Team Approach' to improve their chances of winning? Simply put, Tiger would play against a team of three. Clark would do all the driving, Mickelson would work the irons and Els would only putt.

The answer is not all that mysterious. With a team approach Tiger Woods would not stand a chance and the stats clearly bear this prediction out. In fact, any combination of three players, one from each discipline [listed in the PGA's Top Ten] would overcome Wood's formidable talents. In the end, the only mitigating factor would be LUCK – a rather ironic twist for those who have ever played against the Tiger.

Although the game of golf is and will always remain an individual sport, the point not to be lost here is if experts were indeed allowed to compete as a team, three against one, using only their dominant strengths, they would automatically improve their win-potential becoming an indomitable force fueled by an unbeatable Percentage Error Index. To put more succinctly; regardless of factors like reputation, flair or swing-fundamentals, they would achieve Better-Performance-Results and Better Performance Results are EVERYTHING!

Winning golf strategies and business? Where's the correlation?

Few will argue the entire business landscape has been on a slippery slope for the last three decades. Suffice it to say, much has changed and many mistakes were made at all levels in all industries. Little more needs to be said except to ask, "What have we learned?"

Over the years I have waxed a great deal in articles I've written about changes in how companies market and sell, the people they got to do it and how fundamentals as uncomplicated as that have been anything but static.

Another look in the rearview mirror shows the 1980s ushered in the computer to mainstream business along with the new 'Technological Era'. Traditional salespeople suddenly became redundant due to their lack of computer and techno skills. That was their flaw despite the fact they knew how to sell.

Industries tried to compensate by quickly adopting a new 'Sellers Model' the Technical Sales-Specialist more affectionately known as the Techie. For a time this strategy seemed to satisfy the need to have frontline sellers who were knowledgeable [comfortable] with the ever-changing complexities of new products and solutions in what was fast becoming an ever-converging marketplace. That was, however, until the end of the 80s when a major flaw was discovered in the Techno Sellers – They couldn't SELL!

Looking for answers to why profitability was dwindling and customer loyalty was a thing of the past, companies were shocked to find they had frontlines of 'Tellers' not 'Sellers'. Those in the trenches were blessed with knowledge and abilities in the technological genre but were sadly lacking in the discipline of Selling because it clearly contradicted their psychological comfort and expertise – Technology.

Lacking the skills to frame a professional sale, customers were left morally unencumbered and free to shop presented solutions to other Tellers for a better price. Sadly, too many companies learned this lesson the hard way and didn't survive.

In the 1990s, industries got to work rectifying the Sellers Model conundrum surmising Techno Sellers needed to change if they were to be successful. Generic Sales Training would surely remedy the problem, wouldn't it? And what about the natural sellers? Couldn't they be taught to be Technical Specialists too?

Well, anything is possible, especially in theory but often in practice, unlikely. In the absence of a better plan and few options companies spent most of the late 1990s investing considerable time and effort trying to change the spots on those who were asked to do a lot more with less money, time and resources.

There is no better example than the high-tech industries where, for a while, convergence issues meant network solutionists and telephony providers had trouble even defining their own markets and customers never mind addressing the challenges faced by frontline sellers. These tumultuous times spawned a great deal of unrest, dissatisfaction, high turnover and many corporate casualties.

You may now be asking, what if anything has this to do with Tiger Woods or the Percentage Error Index?

Unlike the game of golf which is not going to change, business marketing and sales strategies can, should and will.

### Team-Strategy Selling

In order to find credibility in the changes needed for today's corporate sales strategies, we must first subscribe to Dave Pelz's 'Percentage Error Index' golfing example discussed earlier in this article. Simply said; Tiger Woods, arguably the best player to ever swing a club, would prove no competition should he be challenged by any combination of three PGA top ten players from the three disciplines [Driving, Chipping and Putting]. The stats are irrefutable.

What we glean from this, is, a combination of competitors doing 'Only' what they are 'Best' at and nothing more, improve the Percentage Error Index to a level as to make the odds of winning, out of reach for an individual opponent – even the undisputed best.

Would the same 'Team Approach' stratagem, then, derive similar results for corporate sales? The Percentage Error Index factor, would it prevail? In a word, Yes.

Top sellers, like golfers, are a blend of strengths and weaknesses that in the end ultimately determine how well they perform in each of their respective disciplines. Like Tiger Woods, the culmination of their innate talents is the stuff that keeps them ahead of the pack. Like Tiger woods, their odds of success, predictably diminish should they compete against a team of vertical experts.

"You can't make a silk purse from a sow's ear" or "You can't change the spots on a leopard" – pick any analogy you want. The lesson to remember going forward in 2003 is we have to stop trying to change the dispositions or comfort levels of those we look to, to champion future corporate expectations. That's not to say employees can't change or improve but it should underscore the fact that a 'Team Strategy' designed to keep players in a comfort zone [intrinsic to them] utilizing only their natural expertise, is the formula that minimizes errors and mathematically enhances sales success.

Let frontline salesreps hunt and gather – create the opportunities for potential sales – that's what they're good at. Don't bog them down with paperwork. Let them be the team quarterback, the coach, if you will. Give them the autonomy to coordinate an approach utilizing a talent-pool of specialists whose vertical talents blend to provide uncompromising Trust and Rapport with customers by removing any Risk -thereby endorsing a positive atmosphere in which to do business.

They should be allowed to work as a team, be accountable as a team and most importantly, be rewarded as a team. That is not to imply remuneration should be equal. A hospital operating room works as a team but with compensations appropriate to each station.

Players should be clear on their responsibilities and the expertise they bring to embolden the team. There should be no doubt as to individual Performance-Results-Expectations. The 'Team

Strategy' should be honed and practiced much like an actor rehearses for a part. Make no mistake; each team player is an actor confidently playing a convincing role in his or her discipline focused expressly on: a) meeting the needs of the customer, b) neutralizing the competition for their own success, and c) the success of the team and company.

The Bottom Line:

Whether in sports or business, Performance Results, continue to be the quintessential challenge, and, the defining factor for success. A Team Approach utilizing only the vertical strengths of each individual is the winning formula that clearly ensures victory in the competitive corporate marketplace or on the links – even when confronted by masters like Tiger Woods.

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