



TECHNIQUE  
MANAGEMENT  
MENTAL  
PHYSIOLOGY  
EXCELLENCE  
FUN

## Functional Golf

Why is Tiger Woods, time after time, able to win tournaments, even though he maybe injured, not playing his best, struggling with his swing etc etc? Tiger Woods is the **MASTER** at what we call '**Functional golf**'.

### What do we mean by the term functional golf?

It means playing the game with a **mindset** that's going to **optimize your performance**. Functional golf is about understanding that just like there is an 'optimal way to swing', there is an '**optimal way to think**'. In the golf swing, coaches try to reduce 'wasted motion' and increase efficiency for power and consistency. It's the same in the 'thinking game' - learn to cut out the 'wasteful thoughts', and create a **more 'efficient' way to think**, for better consistency in your game.

### Dysfunctional thinking

Examples of dysfunctional thinking in a performance arena are;

*"I have to hit every shot perfectly in the middle of the club"*

*"I can't score well if I'm not swinging great"*

*"If I'm not hitting the ball my best I need to figure out why and what's going wrong with my swing"*

Thinking and buying into these type of thoughts will undermine your performance. Players like Tiger understand that performing requires a different mindset than practicing.

I once watched Tiger practice for 2 hours with Butch Harmon at the 2001 Pebble beach Pro-Am tournament. On the range his focus was intense. He was hitting good shot after good shot, but was getting frustrated because the ball was not doing EXACTLY what he wanted. Such was his frustration that at one time he slammed (and I do not condone this behavior!!) his 5 iron into the middle of the ball pile and they scattered everywhere. I then watched him later that week during the tournament, and he hit some really wayward shots but he did not have the same reaction—Tiger realizes that to perform your best you need to accept your non perfect shots and approach every shot with a **mindset of high confidence and enthusiasm**, regardless of the previous shot or hole.

### The keys to functional golf

One of the keys to functional golf is **understanding what the game is really about**. This may seem obvious, but if you compare the points below to the examples of dysfunctional thinking, you will see there is a big difference.

- getting the ball from the tee into the hole in as few strokes as possible
- During the course of 18 holes the game is designed to challenge all aspects of a player's game—different shots, handling different mental challenges, different conditions, bad luck/good luck etc
- It's only a game, a challenge—not life or death
- Nobody in the tournament has a perfect swing
- Managing your mistakes IS the essence of the game of golf

Here are some quotes from Tiger, all displaying examples of 'functional thinking';

*"You just have to stay in the moment. Golf is one shot at a time. You can't live in the past. You have to play the shot at hand. That's what I have always done"*

*I've always been a big believer of getting the ball in play and keeping it in play, whatever it takes"*

Does this mean you shouldn't care about your swing, your striking etc ? No, but it means that just like Tiger you understand that you build your boat in the boatyard, not attempt to rebuild it when sailing in the middle of the ocean.

In order to play functional golf every player needs to make a **commitment to learn to develop their thinking**, just like players make a commitment to improve their technique over time. And just like it takes time to form new technical habits, it **takes time to form new thinking habits**.

Are you interested in becoming the best performer you can be? At ECGA, we are not focused on only developing technically perfect swings, or a great physical condition, or teaching you to have a great short game. We look to develop the big picture—**your performance**—so that you can build and progress your golfing career.

Interested in learning more? Send an email to [info@elitecoaching.com](mailto:info@elitecoaching.com) and we will email back you our 15 page GMAP questionnaire, and then receive free of charge a summary of some of the key issues for your game.

# Tiger—why is he so good? 5 the critical success factors

Tiger, takes 8 months off, and within a few tournaments of his comeback wins again! Why is he that good? What separates him from the other top players like Garcia, Els etc? Is it his swing? His putting stroke? His physiology? His mind?

What do you think are the critical success factors that make him the Number One player? Here's what we think.....

- 1. PLAYS THE GAME AS A CHALLENGE, NOT LIFE OR DEATH**
- 2. STRIVES TO BE THE BEST HE CAN BE**
- 3. LIFELONG LEARNING MENTALITY**
- 4. KNOWS WHEN TO FOCUS**
- 5. PLAYS TOURNAMENTS WITH A FUNCTIONAL MINDSET!**



## Elite Player Programmes in Evian 2009

**A programme to suit the needs of every elite player.....**

### **TOUR SUPPORT**

Let us help work with you to find YOUR success keys, the keys that enable you to perform your best. We work with each player on a very individual basis, looking to identify in precise details YOUR needs and how best these needs can be met.

We work together with the player to design a schedule that fits in with your tournament commitments, and then our support is normally by telephone, some days in Evian and time together at several tournaments through the season.

Give yourself the edge this year by having proven performance enhancement strategies in place so that you give yourself maximum opportunity to realise your ambitions.



### **PART TIME RESIDENTIAL**

Together with the student a long term success map is created and then the student visits our base in Evian periodically, with regular contact by phone and email between visits to help monitor their game. This means that the student benefits from having regular support to help focus and direct their effort in a purposeful and productive way. This works very well as it allows players to play a full competitive schedule whilst at the same time structuring their development.

### **ELITE PERFORMANCE CAMPS**

These camps consist of 5 day (Mon to Fri) through specific dates during the summer. Places are strictly limited so if you are interested in learning more about these camps please send an email to [info@elitecoaching.com](mailto:info@elitecoaching.com) so you will be on our priority list when we email out the finalised dates and information for Summer 2009. We are also running some international camps in Autumn in Asia and UK—further details later this year.

### **MENTAL TRAINING BY INTERNET**

This typically entails mental training through 1:1 telephone sessions followed by homework assignments focusing on the mental game. Students begin by completing a detailed GMAP (Golfers' Mental Profile Assessment) and then an action plan is then created together and then delivered by telephone appointments.

### **KEY BENEFITS OF OUR ACADEMY**

- Use the latest technology in all areas—3D Golf Biodynamics, Kvest, SAM Putt lab, HeartMath Emwave, Statistical analysis etc
- Train at the best facilities, both in Europe (Evian) in summer and Australia (Royal Pines) during winter
- Have access to our range of coaching expertise including experts such as; Dr Patrick Cohn (PGA Tour mental expert), Ramsay McMaster (Golf Physiotherapist to many Tour Players), Ryan Lumsden (Golf Biomechanic expert) and Elite Performance Coach Jonathan Wallett
- Work and learn with like minded players in a competitive environment

But an even bigger benefit than those listed above is that we will be at your side to support you in your quest to achieve your dreams, and help gently guide you onto the optimal pathway, and then help you to stay on this pathway.

Interested in joining our pool of committed, ambitious elite players? Send an email to [info@elitecoaching.com](mailto:info@elitecoaching.com) for further information.