

The Course - Where Golf and Business Meet

Amundsen Davis Aerospace Alert
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After being lucky enough to hit the links a few times this year for business marketing purposes, including at the Aviation Insurance Association conference, the O'Hare Rotary Outing, and the Chicago Aviation Business Association, the age-old parallel of how golf strategies carry over to business have become more apparent. As a former collegiate athlete and now a professional becoming more and more familiar with the industry, here is my quick perspective.

First, focus. As Bobby Jones said, "golf is played mainly on a five inch course - the distance between your ears." While swing mechanics are also important, one way to fall off the rails is to allow yourself to become distracted. The game is played one shot at a time. You need to keep your attention tuned into that one swing. Worrying about the hazard in front of the 16th green will not help you when you need to avoid the fairway bunker from the 4th tee. The same goes with any assignment. Buckle down, put on your blinders to avoid distractions, and get it done. Then, move on to the next task. Obviously, this is easier said than done when you have several different items coming from various directions. But, by focusing on what is directly in front of you in the moment, it will make all the difference when you finally reach the clubhouse to tally your score.

Second, stay out of your own way. So what if your last shot wasn't ideal? The next one is your chance to minimize the damage. Don't let it slip by because you are embarrassed or don't think you can. Trust that you know what to do, visualize the result, and execute. A giant tree blocking your way to the green does not mean that the hole is over. Take a minute to analyze your repertoire of skills - are you better with a higher loft club to get the ball up and over the tree or is punching out under the branches more your style? It won't always be clear which option is the better choice. But, make a decision, have confidence in that decision, and let it fly. If it didn't work out this time, consider a slightly different approach for the next one.

Finally, follow through. We've all been there - within 50 yards of the hole, confident that we can snuggle the ball right up to the pin, only to pick up our head mid-swing causing the ball to go scalding across the green or chunk it and end up making no progress. If we had just committed and followed the swing through to the end, we would have reached our target quicker and without unnecessary hassles. Similarly, in the business world, connections are key. If you don't take the time and make the effort to create proper associations, goals

become that much further away.

At the end of the day, each person's game is different and will develop in his or her own unique way. Hope my brief two cents adds some color to your technique, both on and off the course. In the meantime, hit 'em straight!

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