

Insight Golf



We have uncovered another setting in which to teach executives about Insight Thinking, with some very useful side benefits

All golfers are familiar with what we call the “Insight State of Mind” — a free-flowing, undistracted, calm, and clearheaded ability to think. It is the state of mind they often seek, but have seldom found when playing golf — that is, until they learned about Insight Thinking. As more of our executive friends who golf started making this observation, at their encouragement we ran a number of experiments at local clubs to explore this connection. We discovered that the same methods we use for improving business decision making and performance seemed to lower handicap reliably (on average, 1½ strokes for a low-index golfer), improve enjoyment of the game, and most important, equip players with the ability to apply Insight Thinking back at work. We had uncovered another setting in which to teach executives about Insight Thinking, one with some very useful side benefits.

When you think about it, you take your mind wherever you go. If you learn how to use your mind in an effective and efficient manner at work, nothing stops you from applying that learning in other parts of your life, and vice versa. What is so useful about golf is the immediacy of the results, and the fact that so many aspects of the game model or even mirror life experiences. And, the tempo and outdoor setting seem to help people connect with the Insight State of Mind.

For many executive teams, Insight Golf may be a very effective and pleasant way to learn and apply Insight Thinking to improve decision making, solve complex problems, and improve teamwork.

Results

In our use of these methods, in business and in our golf trials, we have noticed a wide variety of results achieved during the program and/or shortly thereafter. They are summarized in the following list.

- having perhaps the most enjoyable golf experience of one's life (and insight into having all future experiences reach that level); deriving enormous pleasure from the game even when playing “badly”
- knowing what's important in golf and how to achieve it
- having anxiety, worry, and “over-thinking” vanish
- having tension almost disappear, to the extent that a bad shot will be an observed curiosity that will not follow you to the next shot
- having at least one important insight on why you play the way you play, and what you might do about it (if you wish); discovering a key element that leads to immediate improvement in one's game
- being “undistractable,” even when faced with troubling situations on the course or with partners
- being “immunized” against performance pressure and from the expectations of others
- playing more frequently “in the zone”
- reconciling one's dreams for golf with performance (which is not to say that performance will always get better; sometimes dreams change)
- deriving great pleasure from one's partner's play
- being the kind of person around whom others' golf improves or becomes more enjoyable; being the kind of person with whom others always love to



play

- during or within a few days of completing the program, playing one of the best rounds of golf in one's life
- over a longer period of time, seeing a discernible reduction in "bad" shots and an increase in consistency

Even though Insight Golf is about golf, people take their minds wherever they go. Thus, participants have frequently and naturally achieved important insights in other areas of their lives, such as:

*I am, have always
been more than I
have ever imagined
possible*

- a new opportunity or solution to an existing problem of significant value (i.e., worth multiple millions of dollars)
- clarity on a major life or business decision
- a discernible increase in frequency of insight
- the ability, in the normal course of interactions, to evoke more insights and the wisdom of colleagues
- deep insight into what matters in life and an understanding of what to do next
- improvement in the quality and richness of relationships

Basic Design

We have offered Insight Golf sessions ranging from a full day to a 2½-day program. The basic design remains the same and is centered on exposing participants to Insight Thinking Methods (ITM). We do this through a series of "lessons/sessions," discussions, and rounds of golf. Below is a model we have used for a long program designed as a stand-alone workshop, specifically for players to improve their golf. For business, ITM can be taught through shorter sessions focused on improved thinking, problem solving, teamwork, and decision making.

Day 0

5:00 pm	Group meets (light snack)
5:30 pm	Group Insight Thinking lesson
7:00 pm	Day ends: distribution of audiotape (homework)

Day 1

8:00 am	Lesson/group discussion
10:15 am	Golf (either 9 or 18 holes at participants' choice)
12:30 - 3:00 pm	Instructors available as people come off the course to debrief
3:00 pm	Distribution of 2nd audiotape

Day 2

8:00 am	Lesson/group discussion
10:15 am	Golf (9 holes)
1:30 pm	Closing lesson/group discussion
2:30 pm	Day ends

1 508 788 9890

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Insight Management Partners, Inc.