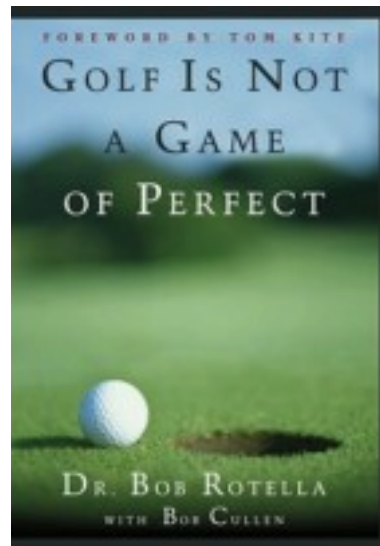


[10 Client Development Lessons from a Top Sports Psychologist](#)

By [Cordell Parvin](#) on September 9th, 2014

What could a top sports psychologist teach lawyers about client development?

If his name is [Dr. Bob Rotella](#), I believe you can learn a great deal. Nancy has every book Dr. Rotella has written, including the one below.



I recently read a Golf Digest article from 10 years ago: [Inside the Golfer's Mind: 10 things a player must do in a competitive round](#). Dr. Rotella begins with this statement:

Golf is a game of confidence and competence.

I believe practicing law is a profession of confidence and competence and I believe that you and I can work every day to become more confident and competent.

Here are the 10 things Dr. Rotella believes a golfer must do and my take on how they apply to practicing law:

1. Play to play great. Don't play not to play poorly. In law. I say work to achieve something rather than working to avoid something.

2. Love the challenge of the day, whatever it may be. In law you will have great days and boring days. You will have great triumphs and bone crushing defeats or disappointments. Don't try to be a perfectionist.

3. Get out of results and get into process. I have written about this many times. Focus on developing your skills, building your profile and your relationships. If you do it each and every day you will see results over time.

5. Playing with a feeling that the outcome doesn't matter is always preferable to caring too much. This gets back again to not being a perfectionist. Look, we all know that the outcome of whatever you are working on does matter. But, if you focus intently on that you will not make your best effort.

6. Believe fully in yourself so you can play freely. As you know I have written many times about the importance of fully believing in yourself. When you do, you can naturally respond to things you encounter.

7. See where you want the ball to go before every shot. I am a big visualizer. I visualize presentations. I visualize meetings with clients. I visualize where I want both to end up.

8. Be decisive, committed and clear. Clients want lawyers who are decisive, committed and clear. Trust your judgment.

9. Be your own best friend. If you are working on an important deal or an important case, or delivering an important presentation, it is ok to be nervous. As Bob Rotella puts it: "Make the butterflies fly right."

10. Love your wedge and your putter. It is hard to come up with a direct analogy here. But, my advice is to work on and master the small things. The big things will follow.

If you are an avid golfer, I am confident you will find [Dr. Rotella's books and audio](#) helpful.

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Cordell M. Parvin built a national construction practice during his 35 years practicing law. At Jenkins & Gilchrist, Mr. Parvin was the Construction Law Practice Group Leader and was also responsible for the firm's attorney development practice. While there he taught client development and created a coaching program for junior partners. In 2005, Mr. Parvin left the firm and started Cordell Parvin LLC. He now works with lawyers and law firms on career development and planning and client development. He is the co-author of *Say Ciao to Chow Mein: Conquering Career Burnout* and other books for lawyers. To learn more visit his Web site, www.cordellparvin.com or contact him at cparvin@cordellparvin.com.