



Stanford eCorner

The Importance of Self-Analysis

Steve Young, *Former NFL Quarterback*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1767/The-Importance-of-Self-Analysis>

Young talks about how it is important to step back and understand your own weaknesses. This allowed him to improve his ball throwing skills, even though he had a height disadvantage from other quarterbacks. According to Young, a great negotiator is able to understand his strengths and weaknesses through self-analysis.



Transcript

For negotiation, in my mind, you're going to need to stand back from yourself and say "What am I good at? Where are my holes? What gets me in trouble?" It could be a temper. I've got a temper and it crushes me in negotiation. In my case, I was 6ft. It just happens to be my profession. I've got a separate way with it. There are many other things where I have shortcomings. We all have them. What are they? Let's start to understand them and let's start mitigating those issues. If I'm going to succeed or if I'm going to reach my goal, I need to figure out a way around that one, else I'm not going to grow. Now, there are other things with having a temper that you could actually work on.

I could go to therapy or I could work on temper control. One of my best friends had the worst temper and now he doesn't. You could get rid of it but you can't grow. I'm not going to grow. I'm 6ft. I'm actually going to shrink right before I grow. I started thinking. I dropped back, I couldn't see. I just saw the receiver a second ago. I know where he is, I just can't see him.

What am I going to do? I'm going to throw it anyway, on faith - a brutal, brutal endeavor for a quarterback. You can't afford mistakes. Even in practice, if you make a lot of mistakes, people will be like "Hey, this is the NFL." It's embarrassing. I had to have that. Now I'm throwing blind? What was amazing about it was I started completing it. They weren't in the same right spot. They'd be ahead or high but they're being completed and no one cared. It wasn't like I turned to the coach and said "I threw a blind, coach! That one wouldn't have been completed but for my ingenuity." No one cares, even Jerry Rice. I said "Jerry, I'm going through this metaphysical process of learning to throw the ball blind. That's why the ball's not in the perfect spot.

You said put it right here." His response was "Well, I don't care. Put it right here." No one cares. That's why that self-analysis is so important. No one - especially your mom, because she loves you so much that she doesn't want to show you all the things you're horrible at - cares. You really have to be the one who steps back and says "I have holes." If you think you're that great, just recognize that you have them. Step back and make a study of it. If you want to be a great negotiator, it truly is about understanding. I can use your weaknesses, the ones that you don't understand about yourself, against you every time.