

Goal setting, visualisation and automation - an Olympic champion's mental formula for success

Overcoming obstacles and accepting challenges: Kristina Vogel reveals her secret tips, which can be transferred to everyday life

The German track cyclist Kristina Vogel is a two-time Olympic champion and nine-time world champion, and she recently crowned her career when she won the European

Championships. But her life was not always a string of successes, as the high-achieving star athlete revealed together with mental coach Anett Szigetzi to four participants in an exclusive workshop in Frankfurt/Oder on 11 December 2017. The event is part of the Chase Your Dream, No Matter What campaign run by the world's number one tyre and rubber manufacturer [Bridgestone](#) and is aimed at motivating and inspiring people to fight for their dreams despite facing adversity.

After Kristina Vogel was hit by a minibus during a training ride, she ended up in a coma. It seemed as if her track cycling dreams were completely destroyed. But Vogel herself never gave up hope. Once out of rehab, it was a steep climb to the top – claiming gold at the Olympic Games Rio 2016. How does one manage to develop such an attitude and overcome setbacks despite all adversity? Together with mental coach Anett Szigetzi, this exceptional athlete talked to participants about the right technique to overcome any obstacle and reveals her four top tips that can be easily transferred to everyday life.

Keep your eye on your goals

“In stressful situations, there is total chaos in your head”, said mental coach Anett Szigetzi. When this happens, she recommends focusing on a positive emotional experience in the near future. “It creates an inner drive that brings order in times when you are overexerted,” said the mental coach. “Focussing on positive things in the past helped me a lot with my serious injury. The first question I asked myself after waking from the coma was: Where is my bike and when can I get back on the track?” said Kristina Vogel. “I did everything in my power to achieve that goal.” And she was successful – after her accident, she reached the greatest achievement possible for an athlete: victory in the Olympic Games.

Automate processes

“One technique that many successful athletes use is automating,” said Szigetzi. This method, also known as visualisation, is intended to make processes as automatic as possible by playing the upcoming challenge through again and again in your mind. “Fear is removed when something becomes routine,” Vogel revealed: “By the time I get on the bike, I’ve played sequences through so many times in my head that I face the competition with complete calm.” Szigetzi added: “This technique can be used for all situations in life – from diving from the 10-metre board to a job interview for your dream job or an upcoming presentation.”

Think positive thoughts

“We have the ability to hear and understand up to 400 words per minute. Many of these dialogues take place in our heads,” said Szigetzi. “The aim should be for us to use these dialogues to place ourselves in a state of positive thinking. Instead of having thoughts like fear or nervousness before a presentation, such an

opportunity is also a chance to prove yourself and make a good impression. For example I don't waste any thoughts on what would happen if I fell or hurt myself," added Kristina Vogel.

Breathe properly

"It sounds oversimplified, but proper breathing is very effective," said the mental coach. Taking deep breaths in and out can have a calming effect on the body. When you inhale, the body is supplied with oxygen, which in turn boosts the brain. Long exhalation simulates the relaxation process. "For us athletes, breathing is also enormously important – our performance improves with proper control of lung function. You can improve your own performance by up to 20 percent with this technique," revealed Vogel.

From exam nerves to spider phobia, panic ahead the dentist or the stress of the unavoidable car drive to work – Germans have every conceivable fear. Yet all these fears have one thing in common: they represent a serious limitation in the day-to-day lives of sufferers. Many people have no idea how to overcome the challenges of their daily life. "You won't solve all of your problems with a few tips and tricks, but they can make your day-to-day life easier in some area or another," revealed Kristina Vogel.

This event is part of the Bridgestone *Chase Your Dream, No Matter What* campaign. Four ambassadors who never gave up and fought hard to achieve their dream of winning gold at the Olympics despite facing a great deal of adversity are part of the campaign – Olympic winners Fabian Hambüchen (gymnastics), Kristina Vogel (track cycling), and Laura Ludwig and Kira Walkenhorst (beach volleyball). The motivational campaign aims to encourage people of all ages, abilities and passions to find the strength to chase their dream and overcome the obstacles they face on life's journey. The *Chase Your Dream, No Matter What* campaign brings to life Bridgestone's goal of keeping you safe and on track on life's journey – just as Bridgestone's tyres do on the road – whatever the conditions. The aim of the campaign is to highlight Bridgestone's commitment as the official worldwide partner of the Olympic Games throughout Germany. The company plans exclusive events with the athletes like this event to inspire as many people as possible – with the respective sports and stories of the campaign ambassadors in the focus. In addition, Bridgestone carried out other measures on regional and local levels, among others the sponsoring of the International Stadiumfest Berlin (ISTAF) 2017, the longest-standing track meet in the world. For 2018, further exciting measures are planned.

Bridgestone Europe, with its head office in Brussels, Belgium, is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Bridgestone Corporation, world leader in the tyre and rubber industry, which has its head office in Tokyo, Japan. Bridgestone Europe operates an R&D centre, a test site and 14 production facilities and offices in more than 60 countries with more than 18,200 employees. Premium tyres from Bridgestone Europe are sold worldwide. The distribution companies Bridgestone Germany GmbH in Bad Homburg vor der Höhe, the Bridgestone Europe Swiss branch in Spreitenbach and the Bridgestone Europe Austrian branch in Vienna are amalgamated as the DACH region. As the Central Region (BSCER) they cover the most important European market.

Visit our media centre at www.bridgestonenewsroom.eu.

For more background on the campaign as well as videos of the athletes, please visit www.egalwaskommt.de and [Facebook](#). For more information on Bridgestone, please visit www.bridgestone.de.

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[\[1\]](#) Based on 2016 tyre sales. Source: Tire Business 2017 – Global Tire Company Rankings.

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