


CHEAT SHEET



WHAT IS A GROWTH
MINDSET AND WHY
SHOULD YOU CARE?

You've probably heard how important attitude is for success? Or how having a positive, growth mindset is more likely to help you achieve your outcomes, than having a negative, fixed mindset?

GROWTH MINDSET

Growth mindset is a strong belief and desire to learn, and an attitude that skills and ability can be developed. In contrast, a fixed mindset means thinking that skills and abilities are 'fixed'. This leads to us thinking that there is no point in having a go, as there is nothing we can do to improve.

Shifting from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset, can be the difference between saying/feeling 'I can't' or 'We've always done it like that' to 'I can't yet' or 'Let's try another way.'

Why is it important to have a growth mindset?

We know that;

- People with a growth mindset work harder, are more persistent, and are more open to challenges, than people with a fixed mindset.
- People with a growth mindset learn and grow faster and better, than people with a fixed mindset.

Is it okay to make mistakes?

We all make mistakes – and some are bigger than others! The important thing is how we react to them. Growth mindset is about always giving something a go, even if you get it wrong, and then learning from those mistakes for the future. If we take a growth mindset approach and make a mistake we;

- Reflect on what happened and why.
- Problem solve and think how we would do things differently next time.
- Are brave and have another go.

A growth mindset helps us learn from setbacks and mistakes.

Have you heard of bouncebackability? It's the capacity to recover quickly from a setback. It's also about understanding that, just because something went wrong on this occasion, it doesn't mean that it will next time.

For example, a person might get stuck when working on a new piece of software. Last time they had problems, they sent IT an email to book learning time. However, that meant waiting for the problem to be resolved, preventing them from getting on. Having reflected on this, they decide that this time, better options might be to look on the internet for solutions, or think of other people who use the system and ask for their advice.

A little bit of science...

Neuroscience tells us the brain is flexible and always up for learning.

So the ability to learn and take on new ideas and tasks is in us all, it's the belief of I can or can't that really is the sticking point. In short that's what growth mindset is, it's down to beliefs.

If we believe ability and intelligence are set; that we are or aren't born intelligent or with inherent skills, it leads to a lack of effort and feelings of helplessness - a 'what's the point?' attitude. People then attribute their failures to lack of ability become discouraged, even in areas where they are more than capable.

On the other hand, those who understand they haven't tried hard enough, haven't tried all possibilities or might not know all the answers, learn more and are more open to learning from mistakes.

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Getting out the box

The way we talk to people and see them can, in turn, make them behave in a certain way. If we have a fixed mindset about others we can put them in a box. For example, if you don't let someone have a go at something because you don't think they're good enough or you perceive someone else to be better, they'll never get a chance to learn.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Praise is great, when it's done the right way

- Recognise if you're giving more attention or praise to a certain person because of how you see them.
- Praise should be about effort and stretching yourself; trying new ways to succeed and positive self-development.
- Have regular chats about the process someone went through, or what their process will be for their future goal.
- Don't just praise someone when they're doing well without trying, praise should be given when people are really stretching themselves to have a go.

Set learning goals

- Chunking learning down into bitesize pieces helps people learn faster. For example, rather than saying a goal is to sell 12 more contracts a week, a bitesize learning goal might be to speak confidently about the product to more people.
- Collaboratively set learning goals and make sure people stretch themselves.
- Three to five bitesize learning chunks should be the most a person is working on.
- Help people discover the 'how' to a goal through questions, rather than telling them the answer. For example, 'What might be the action(s) or process to get you there?' What will you do next?

Feedback

Use feedback approaches such as;

- What went well (WWW) – praise the positive behaviours.
- Even better if (EBI) – help them think about how they can take it up one notch.

Become great at spotting emotional blockers

- Growth mindset is about understanding that struggling and failure is part of learning. Helping people think positively about this will help encourage them to have a go.
- People can get upset when they get things wrong or struggle. Stop and recognise this, and help them move forward.

Points to remember

- Help others understand that skills are learnable. Stretching yourself to learn feels difficult but that's when a real difference is made
- Know that learning is about perseverance, practice and not being afraid to make mistakes.
- Understand that everyone learns differently – so adjust your supportive style accordingly.
- Give feedback that promotes learning and future success, not just about 'yes it worked' or 'no it didn't'.

Remember that;

- a 'growth mindset' refers to the attitude to stretch yourself to learn
- personal development and continued learning are the fundamental elements of this way of thinking;
- when we struggle, that means good learning is taking place.