

# HOW LEADERS CAN DEVELOP A GROWTH MINDSET IN THEMSELVES & OTHERS

*3 Steps To Increase Engagement,  
Inspiration, And Determination*

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When you think about your intelligence, talent, and character, do you think of them as something you can improve and grow? Or, something you are born with that can't be changed?

Your answer has a significant impact on your quality of life, success, and wellbeing.

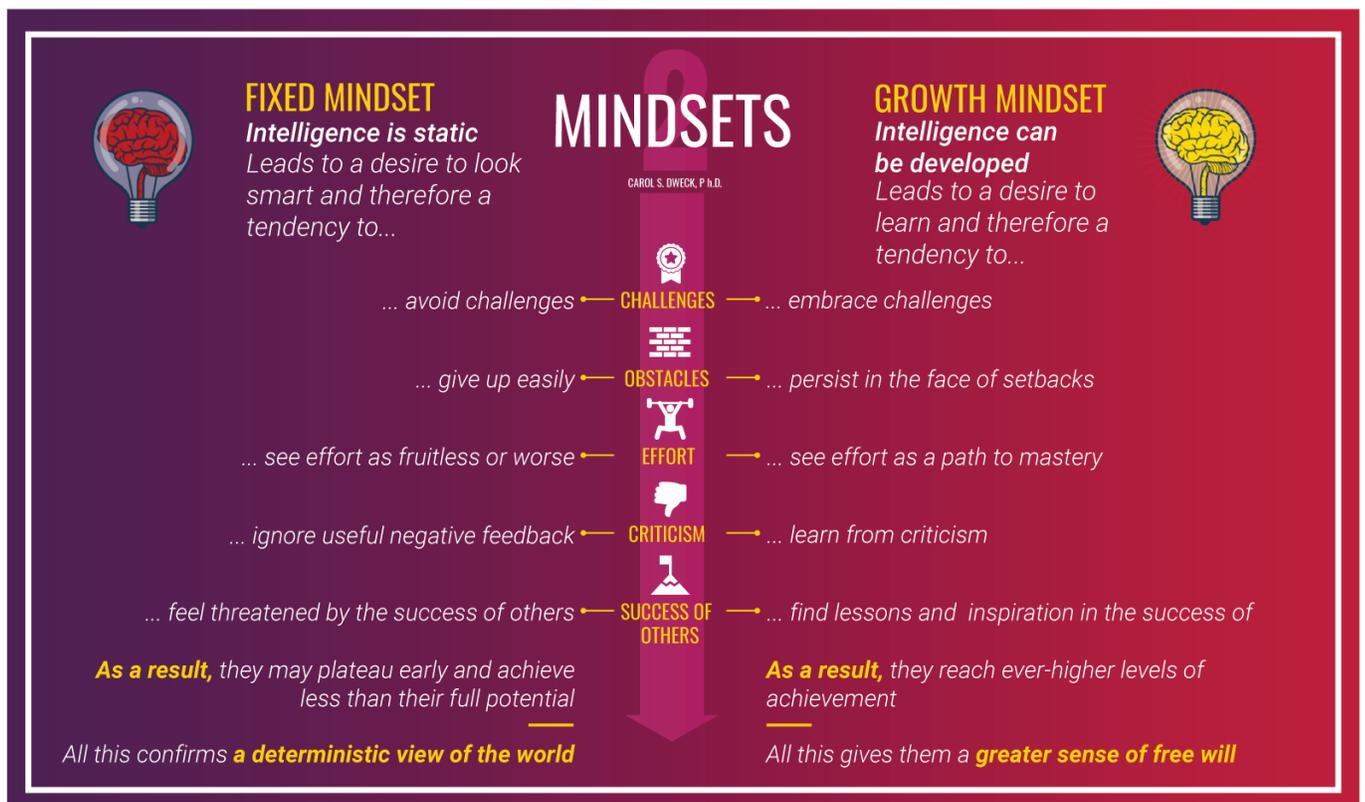
These two mindsets, called Fixed and Growth, were identified by Dr. Carol Dweck at Stanford University. According to Dr. Dweck, a lot of people trick themselves into personal and professional stagnation by having a Fixed mindset.

The Fixed mindset is based on the belief that our abilities are limited. It's basically a voice in our head that tells us that we were born with a fixed amount of skills and don't have the capacity to learn new ones.

For decades, this idea was thought to be backed by science. At the time, the common scientific belief was that after early adulthood, the human brain can't change, a concept popularized by the saying, "you can't teach an old dog new tricks."

But research now shows that we *are* capable of learning new skills and improving existing ones. And we don't need loads of scientific data to see this is true. If you've ever played a sport, learned to knit or played a video game as an adult, you KNOW that our brains are very nimble and that it *is* possible to get better.

If you really want to tap into your potential, you must shift towards having a 'growth mindset'. Growth mindset is the belief that ability, intelligence, and mastery come with constant learning and effort. Talent helps, but only gets you so far. Success comes from challenging yourself, learning and practicing skills everyday.



# GROWTH MINDSET IN THE WORKPLACE

Your mindset, and the mindset of those you work with on a daily basis will have a significant impact on the quality of work, and life, of all involved.

An environment with where a Fixed Mindset dominates will experience power struggles and conflict. When things get challenging or mistakes are made, people will be quick to blame. People will be averse to taking risks for fear of punishment and innovation will suffer.

All this results in a recipe for lack of engagement. High turnover, unhappy, and unhealthy employees create toxic work environments that cost money and affect quality of life.

## In comparison, employees who have Growth Mindsets:

- ✓ feel safe to take calculated risks, allowing them to have more personal accountability and responsibility
- ✓ collaborate with each other because they are learning and growing instead of positioning themselves to "look smart"
- ✓ demonstrate persistence and resilience in the face of challenges and setbacks
- ✓ understand that hard work and effort are required to master skills and are committed to improving
- ✓ are open to feedback because they see it as an opportunity to learn
- ✓ become inspired by other's success and want to learn from those successes
- ✓ look for new opportunities and ways to innovate

If you think your workplace can benefit from shifting to a Growth mindset, here are 3 ways you can help your employees make the shift.

## 1. Adopt A Growth Mindset Yourself

If you want those around you to adopt a growth mindset, you need to start with yourself. Success comes from challenging yourself, learning and practicing skills everyday. According to Dr. Dweck in this great article (click to open), there are simple 4 steps to help shift from Fixed to Growth:

### Step 1 - Learn to hear your fixed mindset "voice."

When starting a challenging task, listen to your internal mental chatter. Start to notice when you use fixed mindset phrases such as, "I'm just not good at this" or, "If I fail at this, people will think I'm a failure." The fixed mindset also forces us to place blame on outside factors. "This isn't my fault." "Who is to blame?"

### Step 2. Recognize that you have a choice.

You get to decide how you want to interpret challenges, setbacks, and criticism. If you go with a fixed mindset, you'll avoid challenges and seek others to blame. OR, you can choose to engage a growth mindset and approach those situations as learning opportunities. It really is up to you.

When you hear yourself talking from a 'fixed' perspective, talk back with a 'growth' vocabulary...

## Step 3. Talk back with a growth mindset voice.

When faced with a challenge, the fixed mindset often says, "I can't do it." That's your cue to add a very important word - 'yet'. "I can't do it yet." Then...

## Step 4. Take a growth mindset action.

With practice, you'll be able to choose which voice you listen to. Those voices are important, but ultimately it's your actions that matter. Make the choice to embrace challenges, to work hard, learn from your failures and get better.

**You know you are transitioning into a growth mindset when you:**

- ✓ focus your efforts on improving yourself.
- ✓ practice self-discipline.
- ✓ exhibit a positive attitude and resilience.
- ✓ embrace an attitude of personal responsibility and accountability.

While we all demonstrate a Growth Mindset at times, you want to adopt it as your primary mode of operation. **Signs you have slipped into a Fixed Mindset are:**

- ✓ believing you are unable to change your circumstances.
- ✓ thinking you're just not good enough.
- ✓ not dealing well with rejection, criticism, or feedback.
- ✓ avoiding challenges, risks, or opportunities.
- ✓ having a negative outlook on life and work and find yourself complaining a lot.

When this happens, use these questions and phrases to shift your attitude back to Growth Mindset.

**INSTEAD OF TRY THINKING**

✗ I'm not good at this	✓ What am I missing?
✗ I'm great at this	✓ I'm on the right track
✗ I give up	✓ What strategies can I use?
✗ This is too hard	✓ This may take time and effort
✗ I made a mistake and failed	✓ Mistakes are opportunities to learn
✗ I will never be as smart / talented /successful as X	✓ I'm going to figure how X does it and learn from that
✗ It's good enough	✓ Is it really my best work?
✗ Plan A didn't work	✓ What's Plan B, C, D...?

## 2. Create A Growth Environment

The beliefs you hold about others, and how success is measured are going to have a big impact in the workplace. **The following beliefs are essential to building a Growth Mindset environment:**

- ✓ All employees can learn and be successful.
- ✓ Employees should be supported in believing they are powerful learners.
- ✓ Employees should be challenged and rewarded for taking informed risks, and rising to challenges.
- ✓ Success is measured by effort rather than solely on outcome being achieved.

There are simple ways that you can do this.

For example, athletic wear company lululemon has a culture where everyone in the organization is encouraged to make decisions without checking with a team leader or manager. If it turns out there was a better decision that could have been made, it's delivered as learning opportunity, rather than a criticism.

## 3. Coach Employees In Growth Mindset

Creating a Growth Mindset environment starts with education and building trust that employees are safe to take calculated risks, make decisions, and focus on effort, rather than outcomes alone. After educating people on the above concepts, employees can be encouraged to reflect daily on the following questions:

Did I...

- ✓ work as hard as I could have?
- ✓ set and maintain high standards for myself?
- ✓ regulate my procrastination and distractions in order to spend time doing quality work?
- ✓ make good use of available resources and ask questions if I needed help?
- ✓ review my work for possible mistakes?
- ✓ consider best practices for similar work?
- ✓ produce work that I'm proud of sharing with others?



Team leaders can also reflect on these additional questions:

**Did I...**

- ✓ share my expectations clearly to my team?
- ✓ set and maintain a climate to learn from setbacks and mistakes?
- ✓ give authentic growth mindset orientated feedback?
- ✓ provide the time, resources, and answers if and when needed?
- ✓ praise effort, resourcefulness, and persistence?
- ✓ ensure that my team was engaged and motivated by their work?
- ✓ consider best practices for similar work? Did I encourage my team to do the same?
- ✓ focus on the reasons why we should embark on new opportunities or new ideas instead of the reasons not to?

## MINDSET IS NOT BLACK AND WHITE

It's important to note that mindset is not a black and white issue. One person can have a fixed mindset in one area of their life while simultaneously holding a growth mindset about other areas.

It's a bit of a spectrum and can shift over time, depending on a number of factors such as recent setbacks and successes. And it's also important to note that our mindset is a choice, once we're aware of it. Start listening to your own internal voices. Are they holding you back or are they trying to help you grow?

Reading Dr. Dweck's book has rocked my world. I had always assumed that I was, at heart, a growth mindset person. I was shocked (and fairly depressed) to learn that I've been pretty fixed in my mindset about many areas of my life. Fortunately, I now know that I can change. Our mindset is a choice. Once we realize that we can each control how we face challenges and setbacks, we can take steps to improve and grow.

The ball is in your court. If you're not happy with the way you process the world around you, step up and take the actions that will shift your mindset. I highly recommend the book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. It clearly explains both mindsets and gives practical tools to shift to a more positive and powerful way of thinking.



# TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

## WITH A UNIQUE TEAM BUILDING WORKSHOP OR KEYNOTE

A team building event is a perfect way to build on the principles of this download. Whether you are looking to increase engagement, deal with change, improve communication or ignite creativity, team building events motivate and unify your team. Depending on your team's specific needs, my unforgettable programs are customized to help you reach your goals.

Through the use of world-class humor and magic, some topics I can facilitate with your team include:



### The Secret of Highly Engaged Teams

An interactive session that teaches how to cultivate passion, commitment and action in your team.



### Master the Magic of Leadership

An Exploration of Influence, Connection, and Empowerment



### Sell More With Soft Skills

How Sales Professionals Can Tap Into the Power of Empathy, Communication & Cooperation



## ABOUT DAN TROMMATER

Dan helps teams improve engagement, better solve problems & boost performance with unique keynotes & workshops.

By using world-class magic, humour, stories & interactive exercises he delivers powerful messages about learning to see things from other people's perspective to improve communication & influence. This provides business and life changing opportunities for those who adopt it.

Find out how a customized program can help your next team meeting, event or workshop.

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