

# Growth Mindsets For Entrepreneurship

The model utilized in the One Plan 4 One Planet training is designed to equip learners with the perseverance and determination of a mindset that will support their journeys toward entrepreneurial, academic and/or employment success. By engaging in the activities outlined in the coursework, learners take ownership of their future while being guided to develop the attitudes, skills and behaviors that will enable them to succeed on the pathway of their choice – becoming an entrepreneur, getting through school or becoming gainfully employed in the Knowledge Economy.



## mīn(d)-iset, *n*

*The underlying beliefs that orient our behaviors and a way of thinking - a learned cognitive model that is acquired slowly and subtly, over a long period of time as the result of experiences.*

- Acquired unconsciously
- Acquired uncritically
- Uses the past to navigate the future
- Operates mostly without awareness
- Cognition
- Emotion
- Motivation
- Selection

Several characteristics are common when discussing the appropriate mindset to achieve success by acquiring Knowledge Economy skills. When becoming **problem solvers**, one should be **empathetic** in order to imagine a better way of doing things. Moreover, problem solvers are first and foremost **problem finders** – so it is important to ask good questions instead of simply asking questions that produce single answers. Start with “why?” and “how?”. All innovation starts from a question not an answer, and for that, one must be **observant** to apply **critical thinking**, constantly look around their world and **create connections**. Being **reflective** is where **deep learning** takes place. It allows someone to look at their progress or success to ask what worked and what didn’t, what could have been done differently and what could be built upon for next time. And when things don’t work out, being **resilient** and **persistent** will allow a person to rebound from failure and to turn good ideas into great ones.

“ *The best way to predict the future is to create it.* ”

~ Abraham Lincoln



Mindset

“ *Opportunity favors the bold. Entrepreneurial business favors the open mind. It favors people whose optimism drives them to prepare for many possible futures* ”

~ Sir Richard Branson, noted serial entrepreneur



**Risk Taking** is another hallmark of a mindset needed for success. Richard Branson is known as an adventurer and a prolific entrepreneur with an ever-expanding brand, Virgin. But as he explores in his new autobiography, *Finding My Virginity*, entrepreneurship is about much more than money; it is more about taking calculated risks that minimize negative outcomes and maximize positive outcomes. Calculated risk is generally undertaken after performing due diligence and accounts for any possible negative consequences, or identifying areas where the chances of success could be higher than the chances of failure. Keep the following tips in mind to increase the chances of only taking calculated risks with the potential for high returns:

- ☑ **Research** and **Due Diligence** help you understand every detail and nuance of a decision to be made.
- ☑ **Anticipate Potential Mistakes** by considering possible outcomes. Consider the positive outcomes, but really focus on the negative ones.
- ☑ **Set Goals** and **Checkpoints** that will keep you on track, put in place well before making any decision.
- ☑ **Have a “Plan B”** to handle contingencies. Decisions rarely go exactly as planned, and while you can’t always control results, you can control how you respond.
- ☑ **Learn to say “No”** both in your personal life as well as in business or a career. Saying no is especially important when it comes to calculated risks. See the above tips before jumping aboard every opportunity you find.

Don’t forget that **fear** is a major factor toward estimating risk. Although a person’s level of fear usually has nothing to do with an actual level of risk faced, fear can indeed cause a person to overestimate risk while lack of fear can cause a person to underestimate risk. Balance emotion with logic by examining the facts. Create a list of pros and cons as well as the potential risks versus benefits. Writing down the facts and reading them over will help you view the risk with logic - the key to balancing out emotions to identify potential drawbacks.

“ *The ability to triumph begins with you.* ”

~ Oprah Winfrey



Mindset

Stanford Psychologist Carol Dweck is one of the world's leading researchers in the field of motivation. Her research focuses on why people succeed and how to foster success, and was credited as having coined MINDSET.



“ *I have always been deeply moved by outstanding achievement and saddened by wasted potential.* ”

~ Carol Dweck, Ph.D., Credited with coining 'Mindset'

According to Dweck, whether they are aware of it or not, most people keep a running account of what is happening to them, what it means, and what they should do. Our minds are constantly monitoring and interpreting, which is how we stay on track. Mindsets frame the interpretation process. If you have a tendency to believe that you can grow learning-oriented behavior and a potential to accomplish great feats, you are said to have a **growth mindset** – the core understanding that abilities are malleable and not fixed, and critical in a range of circumstances, from school to entrepreneurship. A person can cultivate a growth mindset at any point in life. The growth mindset is based on the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts. Although people come to the entrepreneurship stage, for example, with different initial talents and aptitudes, interests, or temperaments, everyone can change and grow through application and experience. This is important because a growth mindset can actually change what you strive for and what you consider success. The **fixed mindset**, on the other hand, creates an internal monologue that is focused on judging; people with a growth mindset are also constantly monitoring what is going on, but their internal monologue is not about judging themselves and others in this way. While they are sensitive to positive and negative information, they are also attuned to its implications for learning and constructive action.

Many people are dreamers with the next great idea, but an idea without execution will always be just an idea and a growth mindset sets the foundation.



Mindset

# The Nature of Change

The adage that “the only constant in life is change” has profound implications for success in a variety of situations. Shifting risks associated with constant change can present a unique set of challenges prompted by three primary drivers.

- **Change Or Die:** Change occurs in response to advances in technology, increased competition and revisions to legal, regulatory or industry requirements;
- **Change To Grow:** Change prompted by a desire to increase a customer base, improve performance or pursue expansion strategies;
- **Advantageous Change:** Change is seen as an offensive positioning, such as a leadership transition, or a defensive positioning, such as rebounding from a scandal.



Change is a big part of being successful – it is both a survival skill and a success skill, which means that a person needs to keep adapting. Learn to be comfortable with the discomfort of change by taking small action steps. Full change never happens overnight, so doing one small thing at a time will lead to doing another, and then another. Start with an end goal and work backwards by breaking goals into small action steps results in a process you can control. Once you have accomplished one milestone, tackle another.



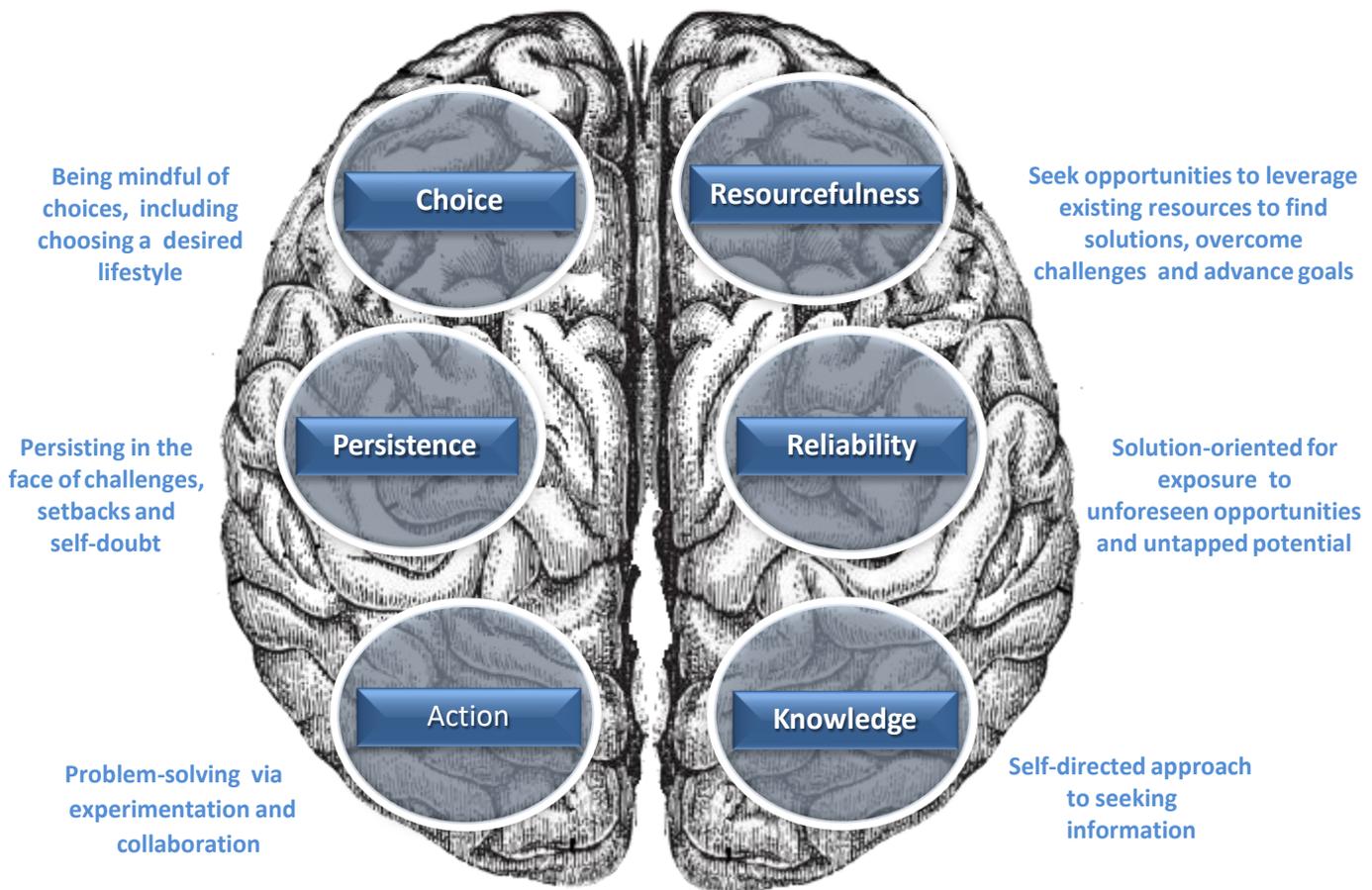
If you don't learn to embrace change and can't move forward, you **WILL** be left behind



Successful entrepreneurs quickly embrace a problem or opportunity and then become more thoughtful about the implications after the fact. Most often, windows of entrepreneurial opportunity open unexpectedly, briefly, and typically under conditions of risk and uncertainty. In order to respond quickly when such opportunities knock, entrepreneurs must be alert and tolerant of ambiguity. Experience in problem resolution makes entrepreneurs develop incredible “left brain/right brain” pliability – using the right half to expand expressive and creative abilities and the left side for complex cognitive behavior that supports decision making and problem solving.

## Mindset Concepts

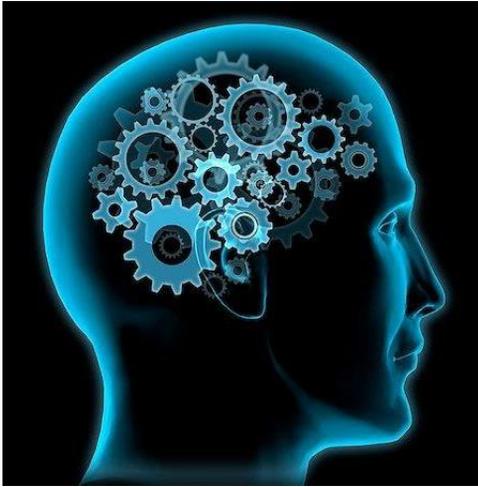
A mindset consists of the set of attitudes, skills and behaviors that individuals need to succeed, not only in entrepreneurship but also academically, personally and professionally. These include: initiative and self-direction, risk-taking, flexibility and adaptability, creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving. Other definitions include the ability to see opportunities, marshal resources and create value. Core concepts of a growth mindset include:



Acquiring a growth mindset is a critically valuable Knowledge Economy skill, and can be applied in many contexts while holding relevance for everyone, from public servants to academics, inventors to lawyers, students to teachers. Those applying a growth mindset are successful in their pursuits because they become resourceful and adaptable, no matter what path they choose in life.



# Internal Locus of Control



[loh-kuh s], *n*

*Locus of Control* is the degree to which people believe that they have control over the outcome of events in their lives, as opposed to external forces beyond their control.

A strong **internal locus of control** translates into individuals believing events in their life derive primarily from their own actions. This internal locus of control is applied to expectancies about the future and contributes to high achievement motivation that revolves around **self discipline**. Research on entrepreneurial leadership and orientation, management skills, and competencies in human capital resources cite a high need for achievement, risk-taking propensity, and a tolerance of ambiguity as attributes contributing to the success in applying these skills. These same traits have also been identified to have impact on organizational performance that influences business success and business processes. Both entrepreneurs and employees with high personal initiative and self discipline perform better in the workplace. Personal initiative studies concentrate on the self-starting nature of individuals mastering an internal locus of control: how they pursue success with their proactive attitude, how to seek and grasp opportunity with their proactive approach, and how to find any solutions or necessities to overcome barriers to achieve their goals and stay ahead of the competition. Initiative is goal-directed and action-oriented, and closely linked to an active strategy. It is also a psychological variable behind the reason whether a person has what it takes to take action and to be proactive and overcome barriers through persistence.

““ *The biggest source of self-discipline is to have a reason to complete a task.* ””

~ LinkedIn Learning Instructor Chris Croft

# Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness...

Critical thinking is **self-guided, self-disciplined thinking**. Although people who strive to improve their reasoning abilities will at times fall prey to mistakes in reasoning, human irrationality, prejudices, biases, distortions, uncritically accepted social rules and taboos, self-interest and vested interest. People who think critically attempt to live rationally, reasonably, and empathically. They use the intellectual tools that critical thinking offers – concepts and principles that enable them to analyze, assess, and improve thinking. They work diligently to develop the intellectual virtues of intellectual integrity, intellectual humility, intellectual civility, intellectual empathy, intellectual sense of justice and confidence in reason.

The discovery process of the entrepreneurial mindset enables individuals to recognize the characteristics of critical thinking, as well as “effectual reasoning”. Thinking entrepreneurially means believing in a yet-to-be-made future that can be shaped by human action.

“ *It is much more useful to understand and work with people who are engaged in decisions and actions than trying to predict the future.* ”

~ Sara D. Sarasvathy, University of Virginia - Darden School of Business

Rather than allowing themselves to be limited by conventional thinking, entrepreneurial thinkers tend to go above and beyond what is expected through critical thinking. They are on the lookout for ways to solve problems and create value. They are constantly searching for ways to improve existing products and services as well as inventing new ones. Those with an entrepreneurial mindset take it upon themselves to search for problems they can solve. They operate from that previously-discussed internal locus of control—a perspective that encourages them to identify and solve problems within everyday life.



# Self Discipline

Self-discipline also means delaying gratification. Articulating the bigger purpose behind each task on a “to do” list produces a clear understanding of goals and how tasks fit into the bigger picture. Having a reason to complete a task will get you closer to achieving a goal.

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The nemesis of self discipline is **procrastination**. Putting things off is not necessarily an issue of time management skills or of planning and preparing for future action steps. Psychologists say procrastination is more a result of subconscious issues like self-doubt, the fear of success or failure and other fears that make us put things off instead acting on them. Procrastination can also be associated with perfectionism – a person might procrastinate because he or she wants everything to be perfect. Occasionally, procrastination is the cure for tackling unpleasant things that need to get done. There are a million strategies out there for overcoming procrastination. Highly recommended first steps: analyze yourself to find the root cause of procrastinating and think proactively on how to spend your time most productively. If you fail on self-discipline, determine how and when it happens to be aware of what works and what doesn't work in getting back to being self-disciplined – find out in what environment you are most disciplined and put yourself in those situations. Remove temptations – electronic devices are the biggest attention grabbers from someone trying to be productive, with cell phones topping the list. Is your workspace clean and orderly – how much time is wasted trying to find things? Food is another distraction from becoming self-disciplined. Schedule time to eat correctly, with the proper nutrition that will keep you going. The less temptations to procrastinate a person faces, the better results they have in achieving their goals.

Examine the importance of an internal locus of control and how mindset influences critical choices made in pursuit of a vision



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