

4.6: Apply a Growth Mindset

Growth Mindset and Your Academic Pursuits

Revisit the significance of a growth mindset as it pertains to your academic pursuits...

In any academic endeavor, you will encounter times when you are faced with obstacles or difficulties. Perhaps you are taking a course that you are finding particularly difficult. Perhaps you received some difficult feedback in a grade that was lower than you expected. How can you move ahead in a way that prepares you for success?

Everyone encounters setbacks at times. When this happens, you have a choice of possible responses. Some people respond to setbacks by concluding that they may lack the ability to complete the course successfully. Others respond by concluding that the course or instructor is unfair, and blame their setback on an external force beyond their control. These responses are associated with what is called a *fixed mindset*.

Others respond to setbacks and negative feedback by asking what they can learn from the experience. Their focus is less on achieving a specific grade or result, and more on learning as much as possible from their experiences in college. Individuals with this mindset, which is called a *growth mindset* are more able to recover from setbacks and to go on to achieve greater success.

How do these two mindsets compare?

Growth mindset	Fixed mindset
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intelligence is not fixed, but it can be developed over time• Difficult tasks are worth pursuing• Feedback, even if it offers correction, is beneficial to support future growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intelligence is fixed, and cannot be changed• If a task is difficult, it should be discontinued• Negative feedback should be avoided or minimized

A growth mindset is associated with successful learning. Why? The growth mindset principles are supported by what we know about the brain and learning. Adult brains continue to develop over time through learning. Working to master complex material results in the development of additional neural connections. In other words, by learning difficult material, you can actually become smarter. If you believe that you are able to succeed by working hard, you are more able to persevere through the difficult moments in learning, and continue to make progress towards your learning goals. ^[2] ^[3]

Source: "[Adopting a Growth Mindset](#)"

Then, take some time to consider how employees of an organization that values a growth mindset would collaborate with others within a variety of organizational structures.

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