

Developing a

SUCCESS MINDSET

to Boost Your
Career and Business



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Developing YOUR Success Mindset

Why is it some people seem to succeed at everything they do? It doesn't matter if it's a personal or professional goal. They always seem to find a way around obstacles so they can create the life or career they've been dreaming of.

Perhaps you've always thought that success hinged on an external circumstance like a high IQ, wealth, a good upbringing, or a supportive partner. But if you study successful people, you'll quickly discover no one has a perfect life. In fact, many who are praised for their success are quite ordinary.

If you keep examining successful people, you'll notice there's only one thing truly different about them: their mindset. Mindset is what makes the difference. It sets those who are successful apart from those who are not.

Is Your Mindset Defeating You?

Shannon wanted to be an entrepreneur. She spent years bouncing from one business idea to the next. Each started the same way: she'd feel excited about pursuing the new business. She'd get the supplies or tools needed. Then she'd begin a marketing campaign.

By the six-month mark, Shannon would shut it down. She would say the market wasn't ready for her idea or that her ideal customers weren't willing to pay enough to make a profit.

She maxed out her credit cards trying to fund these ventures and was barely making enough to cover the rent. So, she'd get a job for a few months until she found her next big idea.

Shannon didn't realize her problem was her mindset. Her business coach had to point that fact out to her. Even though Shannon craved success, she feared it. So, every time she got close to a breakthrough in a new business, she would sabotage herself.

Sound familiar?

Ted was the opposite of Shannon. He was an employee at a well-known tech firm. He was reliable and always treated his clients well. Ted knew his boss frequently received positive feedback about his work.

But despite coming up for promotion twice, Ted couldn't seem to advance in the company. He was frustrated and overwhelmed, wondering what to do next. He knew something must be wrong with his approach but he wasn't sure where to start.

A mentor suggested the problem might be with Ted's mindset. Ted was afraid to stand up for himself and rarely asked for what he wanted. Instead, he let his boss take the credit for all his hard work.

Do you stand up for yourself?

Sarah was a lawyer who hated her job. She'd always dreamed of being a writer and traveling the world. But she'd followed her mother's advice who insisted she have a stable career in a good profession.

She was just a few weeks away from making partner in the firm when she started having regular panic attacks about it. She was miserable, but afraid to turn down the offer for fear she'd end up in poverty if she went after her dream.

A friend Sarah trusted pointed out the flaw with her mindset. Sarah believed that being a writer would mean years of financial hardship and struggle. She feared throwing her life away all for a "silly dream."

Are you letting fear hold you back?

Shannon, Ted, and Sarah are all smart and well-educated. But each one is being held hostage by a negative mindset. This mindset keeps them from living their dreams and creating the life they want.

You may relate to these struggles. Perhaps your dream is slightly different—maybe you want to be a six-figure blogger or start your own tech company. The good news is that you can achieve these dreams and so much more, but only if you're willing to work on your mindset.

Why You Can Choose Your Mindset

Most people assume their mindset is set in stone. They use expressions like:

- I've always been this way.
- Success doesn't come easy for me.
- A leopard can't change its spots.
- Good things just don't happen to me.

It's easy to believe that when you become an adult, you cease to grow. You might think that your abilities, skills, and habits are now permanent.

Some people call this mindset a fixed mindset. A fixed mindset can lead you to adjust your expectations for your life based on what you think is possible for you. For example, you might say, "Well, I was never good at understanding business, so I can't pursue my lifelong dream of becoming an entrepreneur."

What most people don't know is that there's a second mindset you can choose to embrace. This mindset is called a growth mindset. With a growth mindset, you recognize that though you may lack certain skills and abilities, they can be developed. You might say, "It's true that I struggled

to understand that business course I took in high school. But if I keep working at it, I can develop the skills I need to build a successful business.”

The important thing to understand about a **growth mindset** is it fosters resilience or an ability to try again even after disappointing setbacks and crushing failure. For example, your goal is to start your own hosting company. You need capital to buy servers and employ a programmer.

You go to the bank and apply for a loan. The loan officer takes one look at your business plan and smirks. He tells you that your business plan is too poorly written and jumbled to even make sense of.

If you have a fixed mindset, you might leave the bank thinking that you can't succeed now. You may say things like, “The loan manager was right. I can't even write a business plan. How the heck am I ever going to build a successful hosting company?”

But if you choose a growth mindset, you look at this setback as an opportunity to grow. You say to yourself, “Well, maybe my business plan does need some work. I'll go to the library and check out a book on how to write a business plan. I know if I study this topic, I can write a better plan.”

With the growth mindset, you can bounce easier. You don't think of your skills as stuck in one place, rather you view them as something you're continually evolving and honing. This outlook can help you overcome obstacles that you'll encounter on the path toward success.

How to Embrace a Growth Mindset

Once you make the decision to shift from a fixed **mindset to a growth mindset**, it can be hard to know what to do next. You might look up articles or books online only to find vague concepts that are difficult to put into practice. Here are a few concrete actions you can take right now...

Look at Something New as an Experiment

Part of developing a growth mindset is trying new things. It's easy to think we must do everything perfectly the first time we try it, but that's far from the truth. For example, you want to become a motivational speaker on topics like business and leadership.

You start attending Toastmasters meetings to develop your speaking skills. When it's your first time speaking, you put a lot of pressure on yourself to get it just right.

Instead of focusing on being perfect, look at your first speech as an experiment. Say something kind to yourself like, “I'm just experimenting with speaking. I'll use this speech to learn more about what my audience finds interesting.”

Challenge Yourself to Do It

When Jia Jiang realized his fear of rejection was holding him back, he changed up his mindset. He did this by challenging himself to ask for outrageous requests that would typically be met with rejection. He did this for 100 days and called it his [Rejection Therapy](#).

If you've been eager to try something new but fear has held you back, challenge yourself to do one thing for 100 days. For example, if your goal is to write a book, you could set a goal to write 1 page every day for 100 days.

Change “Never” to “Not Yet”

Carol Dweck spoke in a popular TED talk about [The Power of Not Yet](#). At a high school in Chicago, teenagers that weren't passing a class received a grade of “NY,” meaning “not yet.” The goal of this program was to encourage students to embrace a growth mindset.

When you encounter a situation that's beyond your skills or abilities, it's easy to retreat to a fixed mindset. You might say, “I'll never learn how to use Excel spreadsheets. I should give up.”

But you can shift your thinking to focus on a growth mindset. You can do this by saying, “I don't know how to use Excel spreadsheets yet.” When you approach a problem this way, you put the focus back on your growth, rather than your skills or abilities.

Acknowledge Your Discomfort

Sometimes, it feels scary to do something new or different. It can be tempting to downplay it or even retreat to safety. But if you have a growth mindset, you can acknowledge your discomfort and remind yourself that you can do it.

For example: it's time to have a difficult discussion about raising your rates with your best client. Instead of leading from fear, try saying, “I know this discussion will make me feel uncomfortable. But I can negotiate with my client calmly and professionally.”

Your Mindset Affects Your Career

Your mindset affects every area of your life - your relationships, your spirituality, your emotions, and even your career. If you've never considered it, here are a few key ways that your mindset can shape your career...

Mindset impacts your professional reputation.

Vince was a web designer at a small marketing firm. He often had a sour outlook and complained about the clients he was working with. When other employees had to work with him, they dreaded it.

His co-worker, Laura was also a web designer. But unlike Vince, she had a positive attitude. She was quick to help her co-workers and always went the extra mile for her clients. When the marketing firm folded, Laura quickly found a new job thanks to the positive connections she'd made previously.

Mindset makes your work harder...or easier.

David worked at an office supply store. He helped every customer he could and never complained about the tasks his manager asked him to do.

When Harry started working at the same store, he had a negative mindset. He didn't want to help customers and he avoided doing any extra work. Fortunately, David took Harry under his wing. He helped the younger man see that work could be difficult or easy depending on his outlook.

Mindset shapes your growth.

Whether you work at a small firm, a Fortune 500 company, or just for yourself, you probably want to advance. Maybe you want a promotion or to expand the business you've started.

Regardless of your goal, growth is almost always required to reach it. That might mean learning new skills, networking with more people, or discovering more about your personality.

When you have a positive mindset, it's easier to develop skills you need. This could partially be because someone with a growth mindset is more willing to work through the initial discomfort of learning something new. They understand that new things can be challenging and they give themselves grace, rather than expecting perfection the first time around.

Mindset colors how you view problems.

Some people see problems and never look beyond them. But a smart people recognize the problems and actively search for solutions, even if it isn't their job to find a solution.

Sometimes, the solution might be simply refunding a customer's money or listening to their complaint. Other times, the solution might be more complex like changing the way the company manufactures the product.

Regardless of the problem, people with a growth mindset view themselves as part of the solution. They spot trouble and they act. They take pride in their work. They work hard to ensure the company or brand goals are met while giving the customer a positive experience.

Developing a Business Mindset

An important part of advancing your career or running your own business is having the right mindset. Consider following in the footsteps of these smart professionals and implementing their tips.

Give value to others. This doesn't mean giving away free products or services. It means offering information that people around you will find valuable. You want to focus on sharing it with your customers, clients, and connections.

Jeff makes it a point to pass along value to at least three people each week. This week, he sent a list of blog post ideas to a friend that was struggling with their content marketing.

He referred his favorite virtual assistant to a young entrepreneur that was looking to outsource. Then he took the time to give personal feedback to a LinkedIn connection who wanted advice on how to improve his sales page.

Reach out to customers. Lexie is a manager at a business-to-business company that sells office supplies. After an order is delivered, Lexie makes it a point to call each client personally. If there's a problem with the order, she arranges to fix it right away.

These daily calls might be considered a waste of time to some but not Lexie. Because of her follow-up, customers proudly recommend her to other business owners. She always has a steady stream of clients and she loves supporting them.

Stay focused on where you shine. Marie was a successful business coach. She loved helping her clients and teaching them how to earn more money. Eventually, she began to create websites on the side.

As time went on, Marie noticed that her clients seemed confused about her brand and what exactly she did. She stopped getting as many coaching referrals because her customers began to associate her name with web design.

When Marie realized this, she decided to refocus on her true passion - coaching. She stopped offering web design as a service and she sold the brand to another solopreneur.

Network every day. Charlie discovered the value of networking when the company where he'd worked for over a decade closed. His mentor said he'd pass Charlie's name onto someone he knew. Thanks to his mentor's recommendation, Charlie had a new job offer from another company within just a few days.

Now, Charlie makes it a priority to network daily. He frequently checks LinkedIn to stay up-to-date with what's happening in his network. He also attends local business events and actively works to build his professional connections.

Anyone can develop a business mindset. Every time you encounter an obstacle or opportunity, simply ask yourself, "**What would a successful entrepreneur or employee do?**" Then act to resolve the situation!

How to Keep the Momentum of a New Mindset

You may be working hard to develop a growth mindset and let go of your previous mindset. But some days, it's a struggle. You may be wondering how to keep the momentum of your new mindset so you don't slip back into old patterns. Here are a few tips to keep you on track:

Take Tiny Steps

It's easy to lose momentum if you focus on making huge strides toward your goals. For example, if your goal is to become a graphic designer, you might put pressure on yourself to learn Photoshop in a week.

Instead, you should break this big goal into smaller steps. Maybe today, you'll work with the text feature and tomorrow you'll experiment with layers. Remember, tiny steps are just as important as the big ones.

Celebrate Progress

Every victory deserves celebration. If you never acknowledge your progress, you can become fooled into thinking you haven't made any. When you reward yourself, it's easier to remember your progress.

Your reward for making progress doesn't have to be huge. It can be something simple like a serving of ice cream for dessert, a walk in the park, or binge-watching your favorite series on Netflix.

Track Your Growth

It can also be helpful to keep a list of everything you've accomplished toward your goal. For example, if your goal is to launch your own company, then a few accomplishments on your list might be things like filing the paperwork to become an LLC, registering your domain name, and setting up social media accounts.

These actions might feel tiny but when you write them out, you can see how they connect and see how they're like links in a chain. When you're discouraged, you can look at your list to remind yourself to keep going.

Post Your "Why"

As you work on your new mindset, it can be helpful to create a reminder about why you began this journey. Maybe you started it to show yourself that it could be done. Perhaps you wanted to encourage your kids to dream big. Maybe you just wanted to prove everyone wrong.

Whatever your reason, create an image that captures your "why" and post it where you can see it. For example, Sam's first wife told him he was too dumb to succeed in business. So, he created a collage of an awards ceremony.

In the collage, he's receiving a prestigious award for his company and his ex-wife is in the audience, looking on with envy. This image motivates Sam to stick to his new mindset and keep working on his dream.

Be Kind to Yourself

On the road to improving your mindset, you're going to mess up. Maybe you encountered an obstacle and immediately found yourself consumed with negative thoughts and vibes. Perhaps you learned that you skipped a vital step when creating your website and you'll now have to create it all over again.

It might be tempting to blame yourself or focus on the negative when you encounter these situations. But try to flip them by looking for the positive. For example, Sharon accidentally deleted her WordPress database and lost her entire website. After a few days, she found this positive: she'd never again work on her site without taking the time to make a backup copy first. Yes, it was a hard lesson to learn but she now knows it won't ever happen again.

The trick to keeping momentum is to refuse to stop. Get up every day and be awesome. Even if you can only devote a few minutes to improving your mindset, keep working on it and leaning into what you really want.

Change How You View Setbacks and Failures

When you develop a growth mindset, you don't look at setbacks and failures the same way you did before. In the past when you had a fixed mindset, you may have viewed these failures as proof that you weren't good enough or that you were unworthy of the success you craved.

But people with a growth mindset, see failure and setbacks as opportunities to learn. Instead of shunning failure, they work hard to analyze it and figure out what happened and how they can grow from the experience. The next time, you encounter one of these events, try asking these questions:

What Surprised You?

Chuck was a six-figure blogger in the home repair niche. He had a strong following so he was surprised when he launched an eBook and only had a few hundred sales.

Curious, he began to dig into reviews and discovered that his audience expected a lot of instructional photos, not just images of the finished project. So, Chuck took this information and relaunched the book with more images. This resulted in a flood of new sales.

What Patterns Can You Spot?

You can learn a lot from failures. For example, Ben was an engineer at a well-known tech company. When he was asked to give a presentation to his boss and some senior executives, he got nervous and bungled the whole thing.

When Ben thought back on the experience, he could pinpoint other times in his life when he'd failed at an important speech or presentation. He knew this stemmed from his fear of public speaking, so he began attending Toastmasters' meetings. By doing this, he gradually became more comfortable on stage.

What Can You Learn from This?

Maddie started an online fashion magazine. She couldn't get any traction with it, despite using several popular marketing methods. Frustrated, she reached out to a business coach for advice.

The coach gently explained that Maddie's website was too ambiguous and vague. "I can't tell who your audience is. You need to be intentional with your branding. The moment someone clicks on your site, they should be able to tell if they're your intended audience or not."

Maddie took the advice to heart and re-branded her site. She geared the magazine toward women in their thirties who were busy professionals. After that, she noticed a steady increase in the number of subscribers and followers that she had.

How Can I Handle This in a Positive Way?

Dana's dream was to write and produce her own movies. Days before she was supposed to start shooting her second film, she got a call. Her funding had fallen through at the last minute. This left her scrambling to find new investors.

But Dana decided to focus on the positive in the situation. “I looked at it as I now had the opportunity to network more. I would walk into an event and think to myself maybe my next investor is here.”

Not only did Dana find a new investor, that investor also went on to become her business partner. What seemed like the worst obstacle was a beautiful growth opportunity.

Full Immersion Is the Best Way to Study Mindset

Evan was a sophomore in college when he took a semester abroad as an exchange student. His mother had gone through the same program when she was in college. She insisted that no one in the host family speak in English with her son.

After the semester was over, Evan met up with several other college students who had studied abroad. To his amazement, none of them could fluidly speak in the language of the country they’d visited.

It was then Evan realized his mother’s insistence on “full immersion” was a valuable gift. Like Evan, you’ll understand the benefits of a success mindset only if you fully immerse yourself in it. Try doing some of these things...

Read Books about Mindset

The content you read can shape your life for years to come. Choose reading material that challenges you to examine your mindset and overcome obstacles. A few good books that you may want to begin with include:

- [Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance](#) by Angela Duckworth
- [You Are a Badass](#) by Jen Sincero
- [Mindset: The New Psychology of Success](#) by Carol S. Dweck
- Or check out our Purpose Project: CompassRoseConsulting.com/Purpose-Project

Talk about Mindset

Find others who are interested in developing a growth-mindset and talk with them. Join a mastermind group led by a teacher who’s knowledgeable about mindset.

Look for groups on Facebook where members are making bold changes to their personal or professional lives. Bring up the topic to your family or friends. Discuss what a growth-mindset looks like and how it can impact them.

Clean Out Your Social Media

Make sure you have positive content around on social media. It can be tough when you’re trying to embrace a success mindset and those around you aren’t supportive. Don’t be afraid to mute

or unfollow people that are constantly negative. Don't let them steal your positive energy or make you feel poorly about yourself.

Fill Your Feed with Positive Topics

If you must remove some people from your social media feeds, replace their negativity with positive content. You can do this by following hashtags like #mindset, #success, #growth, #learning. Like Evan, you're looking to fully immerse yourself in this language.

Share Your Own Journey

As you begin to embrace a success mindset, you'll find that your life and business start to change. Don't be afraid to share this journey with others. Go ahead, post pictures about your new client or that amazing coach that you just hired. Let those who are following you know that you're experiencing a mindset shift.

Remember, a success mindset can be yours if you rise and claim it. You control your thoughts and if they get off-track, you can choose to flip the switch and focus on the positive. Your career (and your business) will be better for it.

Make it Happen – it is up to YOU!!

Donna

Check out the Purpose Project at CompassRoseConsulting.com/Purpose-Project