

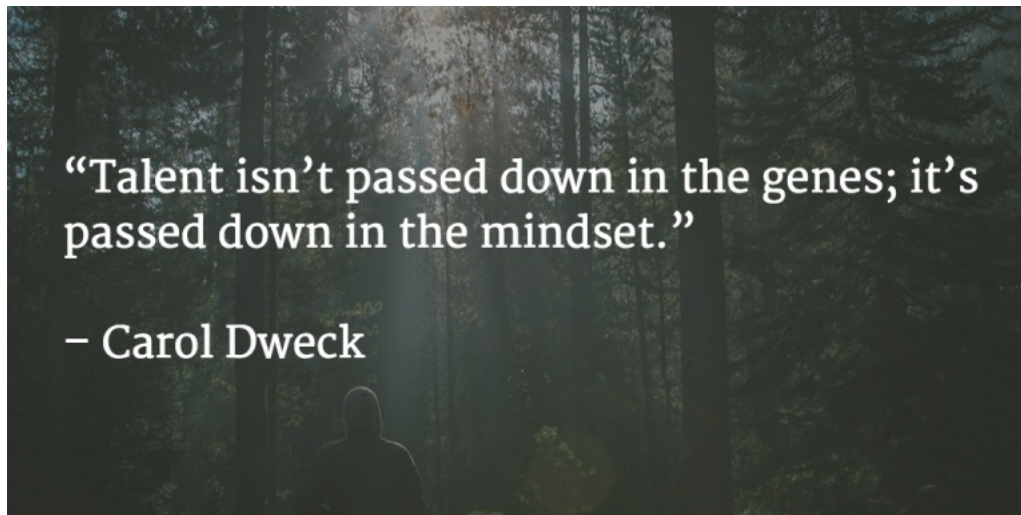
Mindset Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/mindset-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *Mindset* takes a look at the difference between people with a fixed and a growth mindset, how one trumps the other and what you can do to adopt the right one.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Look at your hands. How long have been this way? As long as you can remember, right?

That's because we have almost no control over our appearance and features, such as height, the shape of our nose, or the color of our eyes.

What we do control, however, are our skills and abilities, at least according to the latest research.

People with a **fixed mindset** believe talent is everything. If they're not gifted with the ability to do something, they think they're doomed to be a failure. Their skills seem to be written down in their genes, just like their looks, which is why they never try to improve in something they suck at.

To contrast that, people with a **growth mindset** believe that whatever they want to achieve is theirs for the taking, as long as they work hard for it, dedicate themselves to their goal and practice as much as they can.

Since our mindset has a big influence on our performance, both are worth taking a closer look at.

You might have heard the quote "*Hard work beats talent when talent fails to work hard.*" People with a fixed mindset take a different view. In their world talent is king.

Naturally, they want to look talented all the time. The hiring practices of big corporations like McKinsey or Goldman Sachs make this evident. They hire the best graduates in the world and then expect them to perform perfectly and instantly.

Instead of being trained on the new job, employees are thrown into cold water and monitored closely for errors. Whoever doesn't do a great job right away is instantly fired. This is hurtful for both sides.

Not only do **the employers rob themselves of some great people**, their black-and-white thinking also cultivates a fixed mindset in others. Since the applicants already **assume they're always being judged as good or bad**, the employers behavior turns it into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

As a result, **most employees spend their time trying not to look stupid** (instead of working productively), in order to not be branded as a failure forever.

Compare that to the growth mindset, where, if you give kids hard math problems, they love working on them and **want more of the same kind**.

Their desire to face more and tougher challenges doesn't necessarily come from wanting better grades, but from **the satisfaction they get from pushing themselves** as much as they can.

They take any chance they get to learn from the best, always try and test new strategies and adopt the mantra *"Practice makes perfect"*.

Both came in when the companies were down in the dumps, and both successfully turned them around. The difference lies in what happened afterwards.

Iacocca became complacent, he took all the credit, surrounded himself with worshippers and worried more about his own image than about the company. **Seeking approval** from others to compensate his low self-esteem led him to making bad decisions, like ignoring dwindling sales and even firing innovative designers, which brought the company right down again.

Gerstner, on the other hand, recognized the internal battles at IBM were taking away from teamwork and customer service, so he broke up old hierarchies and even put himself on an employee level to communicate well with anyone and everyone. By focusing on teamwork and **learning from past failures** he showed a true growth mindset and brought sustainable success to IBM.

He says: "I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

His Airness has spoken!

Note: Michael Jordan has recently become the first billionaire basketball player in history.

Trying to **avoid difficult situations** is characteristic of the fixed mindset, because the longer you spend time working on something, the less of an excuse you have to fail.

Had Christopher Reeve (actor of the original Superman movies) adopted this kind of mindset, he probably would have died soon after his riding accident, which paralyzed him from the neck down. Instead, he put up a tremendous fight, became an activist for spinal cord research and was finally able to move his arms, legs and even upper body.

Eventually, he even walked across the bottom of a swimming pool.

Surprisingly, **we are all born with a growth mindset**. Babies know no limits, they want to learn anything and everything. However, between the ages of 1 to 3 a mindset can already be determined.

Babies with a growth mindset tend to try and help other crying babies, while fixed mindset babies are disturbed by it.

Apart from our parents, our teachers also play a major role in how our mindset turns out. A bad teacher might tell a D student that she'll never amount to anything, whereas a good teacher would encourage her to study more and do better on the next test.

Lastly, **anyone can develop a growth mindset**.

For starters, try this: The next time you spill your coffee, don't say: "I'm clumsy!" and associate the failure with your identity.

Instead, see it as an external, one-time event and resolve to do better the next time, for example by saying: "What's done is done, I'll just mop it up and pay more attention the next time."

This way you'll spend more time working towards your goals and dreams, and less time worrying about what's wrong with you. You'll develop a growth mindset soon and be well on your way to reaching your full potential.

Mindset Review

I wish the summary had quoted the original study Dweck did to make her discovery, but even without it it did a great job at explaining where these mindsets come from, what consequences they have and a lot of real-world examples.

Who would I recommend the Mindset summary to?

The 37 year old who thinks it's too late to change careers, the 16 year old, cocky high school student, who never studies because good grades fall into his lap and anyone who believes talent is all you need and if you don't have it, you're screwed.

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