

SHIT HAPPENS: Handling Mistakes 101

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Errors happen all the time

- Crowdstrike Software Update on July 2024
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2024_CrowdStrike-related_IT_outages
- Epic Software fails
<https://www.cigniti.com/blog/software-failures-inadequate-software-testing>
- Medical Errors
<https://healthjournalism.org/blog/2023/07/medical-errors-are-the-third-leading-cause-of-death-and-other-statistics-you-should-question/>
<https://www.bmj.com/content/366/bmj.l4185>
- British Post Office Scandal
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Post_Office_scandal

Cognitive Dissonance



The discomfort a person feels when their behavior does not align with their values or beliefs.

~Leon Festinger, 1957

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive_dissonance

Cognitive Dissonance

- Cognitive Dissonance Examples

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/326738>

- Smoking

<https://www.libcblog.nl/articles/facing-the-facts-the-cognitive-dissonance-behind-smoking>

- Cognitive Dissonance in software teams

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/cognitive-dissonance-software-teams-erp-development-challenges-r-sszwc/>

Growth mindset

vs

- Abilities are flexible
- Importance of effort
- Mistakes are opportunities to learn
- It's ok to learn
- Looking for challenges
- Others can help

fixed mindset

- Abilities are fixed
- Importance of talent
- Mistakes are threat
- Looking for easy tasks
- Others judge
- I want to be better than others

Be a scientist!

- Theory is not enough: try things in practice
- Get fast feedback, don't create perfect solutions right away
- Errors can be used to improve theory
- Use control groups: AB tests in software development or divide problem into smaller parts and apply different solutions to compare



Build a safe environment

Reshape the culture of your team

- Every error is a learning opportunity, not a threat
- Encourage people to share not only success stories, but also failures
- Make conclusions from errors simple and easily accessible
- Praise the effort, not only results
- Encourage experiments



Books to read

<https://www.amazon.com/Mistakes-Were-Made-but-Not/dp/0544574788>

<https://www.amazon.com/Black-Box-Thinking-Matthew-Syed-audiobook/dp/BO0WKJV92M/>

<https://www.amazon.com/Mindset-Carol-S-Dweck-audiobook/dp/B07N48NM33/>

