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IMPROVE YOUR... **SUCCESSFUL MINDSET** **– GROWTH MINDSET**

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IMPROVE YOUR... SUCCESSFUL MINDSET – GROWTH MINDSET

GROWTH MINDSET

In a sports environment, we often hear the saying “Hard work beats talent when talent doesn’t work hard” but in practice, many people struggle with the mentality of “I do not think I am talented enough to succeed”.

There is no single, universal way to learn, accomplish or achieve something because what works for you might not work for others but the good starting point is to answer these questions: What do you want to achieve? What do the words **success**, **improvement**, **development** mean to you? What kind of **mindset do you have**?

There are many ways and strategies to become successful in what you do, but one of the beneficial variables to have is a ‘GROWTH MINDSET’. The term was coined and presented by Stanford University psychology professor Carol S. Dweck (1,2) and she suggests that there are two mindsets that influence how people think about themselves, about their abilities, and the possibility they have to improve – the fixed mindset and the growth mindset.

FIXED MINDSET VS GROWTH MINDSET



People with a fixed mindset tend to believe that they cannot develop and improve their intelligence, abilities, and skills. They think that these abilities are static, fixed, inborn, and unchangeable.

Every situation they evaluate as: “Will I succeed or fail? Will I look smart or dumb? Will I feel like a winner or a loser?” In every situation, they are worried about how smart or talented they are, and what will others think if they do not succeed.

Usually, they don’t try new things because they are afraid to fail, and they stick only to what they know. They tend to give up and quit when they do not learn easily and when they face the first challenges.

EXAMPLE OF “FIXED MINDSET” STATEMENTS: “If I need to put the extra effort that means I am not for it, or talented enough.”, “This is too hard, I’ll stick to what I am good at and not change anything.”, “If I fail, everyone will think I am not good enough and will not succeed.”

People with a growth mindset, on the other side, believe that there's not only a talent that defines us but that everyone can change and develop their innate abilities, learn through effort and commitment, and grow through that process. They have a hunger for learning, a desire to work hard, and discover new areas to improve.

When people with a growth mindset try and fail, they tend not to view it as a disappointment or frustration but as a lesson and learning experience through which they can improve and grow. They are not afraid to fail and are looking forward to the next opportunity for learning.



EXAMPLE OF "GROWTH MINDSET" STATEMENTS:

"If I fail it doesn't mean I will never succeed, it means I need to practice more or in a different way",
"I'll keep practicing and find new strategies, eventually I will make progress in my performance.", "I want to work on suggested areas because I want to improve."

HOW TO BUILD A GROWTH MINDSET?

▲ BELIEVE IN YOUR EFFORT

Believe that effort, persistence, and hard work can change your ability to learn and improve. If you believe that your efforts matter, especially when you are learning a new skill, you'll be more determined to face many challenges on the way.

▲ DO NOT COMPARE YOURSELF WITH OTHERS

Everyone has their own journey to success. Each of us is unique and has to deal with specific progress stages on the way – ups & downs. There are different circumstances and situations in which any of us have a chance to progress and improve. Do not compare yourself with others, focus on your own effort, determination and improvement.

▲ BE CURIOUS AND COURAGEOUS

People with a growth mindset are always eager to learn more, including new knowledge, skills, and strategies. They tend to be curious about the world around them, new learning sources, and new opportunities. Often, they express great courage through that process because they are willing to take risks even in the face of potential failure. Be curious and courageous to try something for the first time and make an extra effort even if it seems too hard.

▲ TRY, TRY, TRY

Keep trying. Try out new ideas and approaches to learning and solving problems. Even if something does not work the first few times, do not give up, but rather try it in a different way or with a new approach, and then try again. In the beginning, many things seem difficult or even impossible, but do not let first setbacks keep holding you back or discourage you from your intention to learn and improve.

▲ ADJUST AND MODIFY

Be capable of quickly adjusting to change and accepting challenges. Various problems and tasks require different approaches, strategies, and methods to be completed. Think flexible and be open to new solutions - turn on your 'solution mode' and active mindset.

▲ REFRAME DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

It is helpful to reframe certain problems and difficult situations as opportunities to learn and grow. Step back, 'look from above' and see it as an area to improve instead of your weakness and potential problem to your performance. Often, this approach can help you to see performance failures as new opportunities for desired change and professional growth.

▲ CELEBRATE SMALL ACHIEVEMENTS

When you celebrate your small achievements, you do not celebrate just the result but also the habits and the experience you went through. Acknowledging and celebrating the small wins will help you to establish and reinforce the habits that are important for bigger and greater achievements. The key is to become aware of the changes and efforts you've made on the way to progress. Keep trying and enjoy the process of learning as well as the results of that process.

As you have noticed, cultivating a growth mindset can help in your officiating career too. Being a referee open to new learning strategies, solutions, and suggestions to improve, with a strong belief that you can change your officiating with the right effort and dedication eventually may lead you to your desired career goal.

If you would like to read some book about this topic, here are the references:

- 1) Dweck, C.S. (2006). Mindset: The New Psychology of Success. New York: Random House
- 2) Dweck, C.S. (2012). Mindset: How Can You Fulfil Your Potential. London: Constable & Robinson Limited

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