

**Mindset exercise**

How would you know if you had a fixed or a growth mindset?

Some basic either/or questions:

1. Do you believe the level of intelligence you have is fixed?
2. Do you believe you can change your level of intelligence?
3. Do you believe the level of talent you have is fixed?
4. Do you believe you can change your level of talent?
5. Do you believe you can learn new things, but your level of intelligence or talent will stay the same?
6. Do you believe you can learn new things, and as a consequence your level of intelligence or talent will change?

You might have found it quite difficult answering these either/ or questions. That is likely to be because you will have a bit of both a fixed and a growth mindset (as we all do). However, if you confidently answered a) to the three sets of questions then you have a fixed mindset. If you answered b) then you have a growth mindset.

In practice most of us fluctuate back and forth. This is primarily due to our limiting beliefs.

So how can we eliminate our limiting beliefs and develop our growth mindset?

This requires change. There are 4 basic steps to sustainable change:

1. Raised awareness (this includes acceptance of our fixed mindset).
2. Focused attention (on whatever aspect you wish to change and improve – not on your growth mindset itself). The subsequent change and improvement will act as a spur and illustration for further growth.
3. Repetitive practice, practice, practice (on whatever aspect you wish to change and improve).
4. Engage in a purposeful relationship (such as the mentoring relationship - remembering to hold yourself to account).

So how might change and mindset be influenced by your key personality trait/s?

**D – Dominant**

* That famous Frank Sinatra song ‘I did it my way’ could very well be the D mantra. People who have a D style can we very determined and so can become rather fixed if they lack that magical ingredient; self-awareness.
* However, D’s have real strengths around seeing the big picture, goal setting, finding solutions, so those with self-awareness will seek growth if it aids their bottom line.

**I – Influencer**

* People who have an I style are naturally curious, interested and optimistic and so lend themselves to being growth orientated.
* I’s nevertheless can have key weaknesses, such as being impulsive and overly change driven at times. Think about the George Ezra lyrics ‘Give me one good reason why I should never make a change.’ I’s need reasons ‘not’ to change, so at times can be on to the next thing before growth has had a chance to make any impact.

**S – Steadiness**

* People who have an S style are more steady paced and seek harmony. They like the status quo and so if they lack self-awareness they can end up becoming fixed.
* The motto of our S’s is likely to be the great Musketeer’s refrain ‘All for one and one for all’. They are great listeners and reflectors. These styles want to know we are doing the right thing. And so with self-awareness they could embrace growth if that is seen to be the right thing to do.

**C – Conscientious**

* People who have a C style are motivated by the pursuit of excellence and doing things right. Their approach will be to follow clearly defines systems and procedures and so they can become fixed.
* C’s need that addition of self-awareness to really allow them to embrace a growth mindset. But they are highly self-disciplined, so if they can be convinced of the benefit, will become ardent followers of this approach.

**Blends**

It is worth taking some time for a short overview of the key blends also.

Key blends are likely to be:

* Dominant/ Influencer – D/I or I/D
* Influencer/ Steady – I/S or S/I
* Steady/ Conscientious – S/C or C/S
* Conscientious/ Dominant – C/D or D/C

**Dominant/ Influencer – D/I or I/D**

* People who have a D/I or I/D style are likely to have high levels of passion in what they do and will be able to inspire others to join them, which is great if they have a growth orientation. However, if they lack self-awareness and get out of control they can be impulsive, aggressive and dogmatically fixed.

**Influencer/ Steady – I/S or S/I**

* People who have an I/S or S/I style are likely to be positive and respectful of others contributions, and indeed naturally growth orientated. These styles are often described as affirming. However, if they lack self-awareness they can become fixed through an aversion to change and conflict.

**Steady/ Conscientious – S/C or C/S**

* People who have an S/C or C/S style are likely to be fair minded, methodical and consistent. If they lack self-awareness they can become rigidly fixed due to their fear of emotionally changed situations and ambiguity.

**Conscientious/ Dominant – C/D or D/C**

* People who have a C/D or D/C style are likely to be determined, logical and results orientated so will only view growth mindset from the perspective of what it adds to the bottom-line. However, if they lack the self-awareness and get out of control they can become highly insensitive, put a negative spin on everything, becoming cynical and critical and highly fixed.

**Self-reflection**

* Now that you know a bit more about DISC and the blends, take a moment to consider which of these most resonate with you. Jot down any thoughts, or points for further consideration.

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* Who do you know that you don’t see eye to eye with? Jot down any thoughts you have about this person’s potential style.
  + What are the key strengths this person brings to the situation, team or business?
  + How might you better communicate with this person now to enable better interrelationships?

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* How might this knowledge strengthen your mentoring relationship, or any other interpersonal relationship you are currently in?

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