

The Mindset Paradox:

*Why you are a "Growth Minded" Athlete
but a "Fixed Mindset" Leader*

3 Pillars of Great People Leaders



A "Fixed Mindset" isn't a Lack of Talent. It's a Protection Mechanism

In a fixed state, your brain literally shows no learning activity when reviewing errors.

You aren't learning; you're defending.

Where do you Live on the Spectrum and in what Context?

High
Degree of Risk
Low

THE SURVIVAL ZONE

*Amygdala Hijack,
Fight/Flight/Freeze, Protect the Ego*

The Persona: "The Defensive Expert."

Behaviours:

- **Polite Silence:** Nodding in meetings while privately guarding resources.
- **Complexity Bias:** Using jargon and data as a shield to avoid being challenged.
- **The Hero Trap:** Believing they must have all the answers to maintain status.

Biological Signal: High cortisol, tunnel vision, and a "shut down" response to errors.

THE MOMENTUM ZONE

*Parasympathetic state, Learning
Velocity, Calculated Risk*

The Persona: "The Strategic Architect."

Behaviours:

- **Learning Velocity:** Treating pivots not as failures, but as high-speed data acquisition.
- **Radical Candor:** Creating enough safety for the team to challenge the "80% vision."
- **Aggressive Unlearning:** Actively killing legacy processes that no longer serve the goal.

Biological Signal: Calmness, curiosity, and high cognitive flexibility (Parasympathetic state).

THE STAGNATION ZONE

*No growth, no challenge, no
movement.*

The Persona: "The Institutional Passenger."

Behaviors:

- **Check-the-box Culture:** Doing just enough to avoid notice or risk.
- **Fear of Variance:** Staying strictly within the lines of "how we've always done it."
- **Resource Guarding:** Protecting a small, "safe" territory rather than seeking growth.

Biological Signal: Apathy or low-level chronic anxiety.

THE HOBBYIST ZONE

Low friction, easy unlearning

The Persona: "The Beginner Enthusiast."

Behaviours:

- **Low Ego:** Happy to look foolish while learning a new skill (e.g., a poor backhand or a dead plant).
- **Iterative Play:** Failure is expected and holds no threat to personal identity.
- **Process Joy:** Focused on the "how" rather than just the "win."

Note: This is where your "Mindset Transfer" begins.

Low / Fixed

High / Growth

Growth Mindset

Map Yourself

Write in your activities, work, fun, hobbies, sports... where they fit.



Fixed Mindsets are Often "Triggered" by Specific Professional Threats:

Competitor Success: Feeling threatened instead of inspired.

Negative Feedback: Seeing it as an insult, not an invitation.


Team Failure: Blaming the "innate ability" of others.

How to Move the Needle from Hobby to Boardroom

Step 1: Isolate the language you use in your “growth mindset” hobby or sport (“I haven't mastered this yet”).

Step 2: Identify the physical feeling of “Curiosity” in that activity.

Step 3: Consciously “Copy-Paste” that feeling into your next difficult work challenge.



When you Shift to a Growth Profile in Leadership:

- **3x Higher** Adaptability in disrupted markets.
- **40% Increase** in team risk-taking and innovation.
- **Higher Learning Velocity:** Your team stops hiding mistakes and starts solving them.

**Your Expertise has a Half-Life.
Your Ability to Un-learn and Re-learn is
a Permanent Asset.**

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