

5 DIMENSIONS OF THE GROWTH MINDSET

**BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT
REPORT**

Test Name

Personal Details

Test Name

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Assessment Date: 16 Jun 2021

Report Date: 16 Jun 2021

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Introduction

This Growth Mindset Assessment Profile is based on Test Name's responses to the Growth Mindset Assessment which was completed on 16 Jun 2021.

The origins of the Fixed and Growth Mindset

Dr. Carol Dweck is a professor of psychology from the University of Stanford. She did research on why some children excelled in school and why some struggled. In the course of her work, she uncovered what is now known as the growth and fixed mindsets. In summary, the fixed mindset is the tendency to look at intelligence as fixed, that which cannot change later in life. It also tended to keep one rooted in their past successes, not venturing beyond the scope of their success, since intelligence is limited. After all, if they venture too far out, they may no longer be successful, and that would undermine all their efforts getting to where they are now. This tends to cause their decision-making to be laboriously slow – since they need to be 100% sure they will succeed before they do something. And since they cannot be sure, they vacillate. And at any sign that they might be heading towards failure, they will give up; so as to protect their fragile concept of intelligence and success.

On the other hand, the growth mindset is one that accepts that intelligence and knowledge can grow. They know that, after all, they don't know what they don't know; so staying within the relatively safe confines of their own intelligence will not uncover what they don't know. Hence, they are willing to "risk" their current success status to uncover what they don't know, often "failing" along the way. Yet they know that the best time one learns is when one fails and not when one is successful. So as they "fail", they learn, they adapt and they try again. As they test the limits of their knowledge and intelligence, they are rewarded with greater knowledge and intelligence, thereby creating a virtuous cycle of learning and growth. They understand that "failure" is the currency of intelligence, and the more they fail, the better they get at being successful. After all, failure and success are two sides of the same coin.

This created the baseline for GCA's research. We wanted to find out what drivers caused the growth mindset and if we could measure them. This led us uncover the 5 Dimensions of the Growth Mindset.

The Five Dimensions of the Growth Mindset

Over the years from 2015 till 2019, GCA teamed up with a psychology researcher who had a backend traits modelling system, to uncover what drivers impacted the growth mindset. Starting from more than 10, we slowly narrowed it down to 5 traits. These 5 traits – or dimensions – are the key drivers of the growth mindset. The five dimensions are:

- Learning
- Bounce Back
- Risk Taking
- Forward, and
- Pride

Learning

This dimension comprises your ability to learn, your love of new knowledge, your sense of wonder and your curiosity. It is no wonder that the growth mindset is also called the learning mindset.

But this dimension is not about being book smart. This is not about taking tests and passing exams. This is about finding things out; it is about experimenting with ideas, with concepts. It is about uncovering what you don't know, so that you expand your knowledge and intellect. It is about embracing "failure" for the richness that it provides.

Of course, one cannot deliberately fail at something; there is not much learning there. One must try his/her level best to do well and succeed, and by doing so, will get closer to being the ultimate success. And if not, then, one will learn. This is the Learning dimension.

Bounce Back

This dimension refers to one's resilience, one's ability to get up when one is down, dust the dirt off and move on. It is one's capacity to recover from a setback and not be overly weighed down by it. It is obviously about not giving up!

The thing about Bounce Back is that it is a little bit character, a little bit confidence, a little bit competence, a little bit connection and a whole lot of coping (5C's).

Character is obvious; we build resilience into our DNA over time. Every trial we face builds our character, and this empowers us to become more resilient and bounce back better.

Competence is also obvious. If we don't know how to do something, or what we need to do next, then our ability to bounce back is hampered.

Connection refers to the people we can call for help. We cannot do things on our own, especially when we fall. To bounce back, we need our connections to lend us a helping hand; just as we can be that helping hand for others in time to come.

Confidence is yet another key trait, and that comes when we have the above three in spades. Hence, you will see that all these come together to reinforce the Bounce Back dimension.

Lastly, coping. This is a BIG factor in bouncing back. By developing positive coping strategies like exercising, dancing, reading, etc, we can bounce back better!

Risk Taking

We are all familiar with the concept of risk, and for many of us, we try to avoid it! This is understandable. But there is benefit to risking oneself to learn because if we do not put ourselves out there, we will not be able to test what we know and what we don't. Of course, this does not mean that one can be reckless. This dimension is about taking small risks for the sake of learning, for the sake of growing, so as not to be stuck in the status quo.

What do we risk? Obviously if you are putting money down, then you risk that. Whenever money is concerned, we always say "fail fast, fail cheap"; meaning that if you are going to risk money, make it as little as possible, and get an outcome as quickly as possible. Rather than spending a huge chunk of money on one major project, break that up into smaller chunks of fast experiments. Fail fast, fail cheap.

What else do you risk? Well, of course you risk your reputation, especially if you pride yourself to always be right. You risk people laughing at you, especially if you get it wrong. You risk telling people you actually don't know the answer, which to some, is career suicide. Except that it isn't.

All the above risks are par for the course when you are trying to learn; and if you are able to put all those on the line, you will be able to go beyond what you know, into what you don't. And as we have said, the learning mindset is the growth mindset. So, a little bit of risk taking is good; just don't be reckless!

Forward

Forward is the direction we will want to take in MOVING! So here, the key is action. Ultimately, all of us need to apply ourselves to move toward our goal.

But, do you expect the journey to be smooth? Do you plan every single step of the way from Point A to Point Z before you take your first step? Do you need to be 100% certain about your outcome before you embark (well maybe not 100% but a high enough percentage)?

The thing is, by the time we confirm steps A to Z, and we are ready to move, step C would already have changed. So, by the time you got there, you would still be none the wiser from when you first started planning!

We are not decrying planning. Indeed, as Benjamin Franklin once said, "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail." The point is, there is a time for planning and a time for action. The planning is not to get you 100% sure of all the steps; it is to give you better confidence in moving ahead. But remember, the minute you step on that pathway, your route would have changed, and you must be prepared for that.

But if you fear the journey because you know it will be evolving and changing, then you will never get started, and then you will never get to where you want to be!

Pride

In a way, all the earlier dimensions are positive, but this one may have a negative connotation. Yet, we are not referring here to arrogance; we are also not really referring to your feelings of pride in your work. It is somewhere in the middle.

What we mean by pride is the tendency to be stuck in the past; of viewing your past achievements as “sacrosanct” and of not risking your reputation from your past achievements by doing anything that would jeopardise it.

It also means doing things today based on what you used to do; based on the successes that you achieved earlier. People who tend to have high pride (which means this is a fixed tendency towards this dimension) can be heard saying, “I have ALWAYS done it this way, and it worked just fine!”

There will be some situations where what you had done in the past is still valid today, but what we need to be mindful of, is when it ISN'T. Hence, when someone has a high pride tendency, we need to uncover which of past experiences still work and which are no longer valid, and then change those.

By acknowledging that one's ideas or experiences may be wrong, one opens up a growth tendency towards “pride” and uncovers more of what will work today.

Understanding the growth mindset assessment zones and scores

Our research had led us to identify that there are three zones of mindset, not two. While there are the fixed and growth zones, we uncovered a third - the transition zone. This is the zone where people could display a mixture of fixed and growth tendencies, depending on the situation. So for some situations, they might display fixed tendencies, and then for other situations, they could display growth tendencies.

The scoring range for each of the zones is as follows:

SCORING	
GROWTH:	≥ 3.4
TRANSITION:	$3.3 - 2.4$
FIXED:	≤ 2.3

For the Learning, Bounce Back, Risk-Taking and Forward dimensions, the higher the score, the higher the tendencies are for these dimensions.

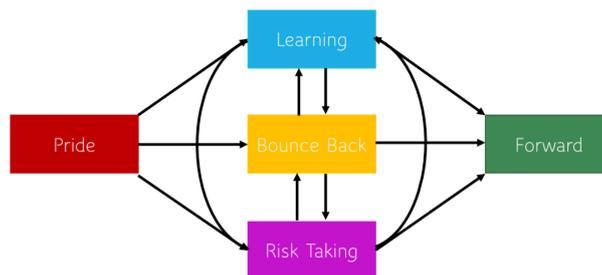
However, for the Pride dimension, the higher the score, the lower would be your pride tendency. Hence, if one scored 3.6 for Pride, it means that the person does not view his or her past successes as the solution for future problems, but is open to learning how to navigate the new normal.

Interrelationship of dimensions

At this stage, you would probably have noticed that one dimension impacts another, as another would impact yet another one. Obviously, if you can bounce back better, you can be more willing to take more risks. And, if you are more willing to take risks, you would be able to learn more.

You would also be able to see that if you are fixed in your Pride, you won't be able to learn. This will also impact on your ability to take risks as well as your bounce back.

Hence, there is a strong inter-relationship among the dimensions, as shown in this system map:

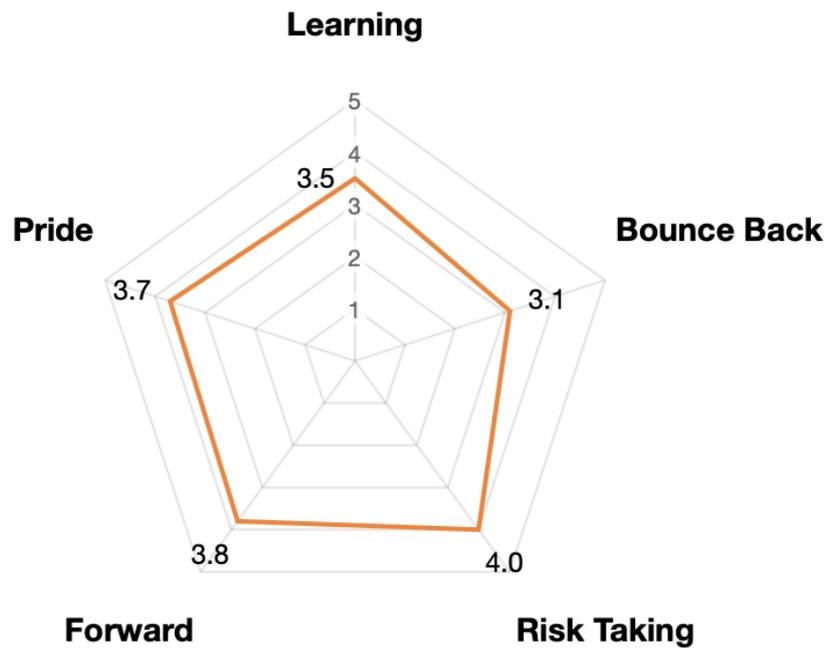


You will see that Pride impacts on Learning, Bounce Back and Risk Taking, and those, in turn, impact on one another, and all of them, finally, impact on Forward.

In other words, your tendency to learn, to take risks and to bounce back will all contribute towards your tendency to move ahead. But, all of these are controlled by your tendency to either think you already know the situation, or to acknowledge that what you know may not be enough to solve the situation.

Your Results

Your growth mindset assessment scores are shown here:



Analysis

1. Learning

Your Learning dimension is in the growth zone.

You have a growth tendency towards Learning. This means that you tend to uncover new knowledge in a wide range of subjects, either by way of formal learning or informally through experience. You are inquisitive and ask questions not to humiliate or embarrass but to understand and uncover. You also tend to be curious about the truth, asking questions with wonderment. In problem solving, you tend not to jump to conclusions but use both research and experiment to uncover what is really happening. You also tend to view “failures” as a means to learn something new, and change your tack from there. When it comes to reading, you find yourself interested in all types of information for the sake of finding new insights.

2. Bounce Back

Your Bounce Back dimension is in the transition zone.

You are in the higher end of the transition zone for Bounce Back. This means that you can display some fixed tendencies amid the growth tendencies for this dimension. Typically, someone with your score will tend to have a good support group or competence in the matter and this tends to provide you with confidence to rebound in the event of a setback. However, at times, you will tend to ruminate on the outcome, blaming yourself or someone else for it. You may at times be angry at yourself and this tends to stop you from letting go and moving on.

3. Risk Taking

Your Risk Taking dimension is in the growth zone.

This means that you don't take yourself too seriously. You tend not to mind that you, or others, laugh at your "incompetence". You are willing to test things out to see where your idea can take you. This means you tend not to count the cost of the experiment, knowing that whatever is the outcome, you will learn something. In problem solving, you tend to try the whacky and unconventional solutions without fear that you will be labelled "stupid" or "foolish" or any such negatives. You tend to be comfortable being wrong for the sake of finding out what is right.

4. Forward

Your Forward dimension is in the growth zone.

As you know, a growth score for Forward means that a person dives quickly into action, seldom truly understanding all the steps needed to be taken to get there. While you probably know what you want to achieve, you tend to prefer action to planning, taking whatever outcomes in your stride. To you, getting lost is part of the journey; after all, you will still learn something even when you are off the beaten track. However, there may be a tendency to be mired in regulation and pre-approvals that you did not foresee. This may cause you to be delayed in your execution as you wait for the necessary approvals. You may also find yourself putting in a lot of resources into something that might not pan out.

5. Pride

Your Pride dimension is in the growth zone.

What this means is that you are not fixated on your past experience, despite having successes and even

accolades. You tend to view each situation as new, and you prefer to listen to the ground on what is actually happening, rather than jumping to the conclusion of what you think is the answer; even if it turned out that your initial thoughts were correct. You tend to understand that each person connected to the situation will have an important perspective and you would like to hear them out before making a hypothesis. You also tend to view such hypotheses not as the “gospel truth” but as a work in progress that would need to be further shaped and confirmed as the solutions are applied. You tend not to take the “expert role” even though you may be viewed as one.

Self Reflection

Think through the above analysis for your growth mindset dimensions. Answer the following questions, and discuss them with your coach:

1. In what areas do I agree with the description of my mindset?
2. In what areas do I disagree with the description of my mindset?
3. How much of what I disagree to is based on my Pride getting in the way?
4. In what situations in my life have I displayed the mindsets outlined above?
5. What else have I learnt about myself?

Growth Mindset for Business Development

What is Business Development (BD)?

There is a big misconception that business development is sales; and the two are synonymous. There is another misconception that it is the same as marketing, since marketing is meant to develop the business as well. Speak to any business developer and she will tell you that she does not do sales, although she might have revenue responsibilities. How is it possible that on the one hand BD is not a sales function and on the other, it has revenue responsibilities? And more confusing, sales does not report to BD so how can BD fulfill its own responsibilities? The confusion has been exacerbated by job consolidations and role enlargements. So, to be clear, we first set out to define the role of Business Development; and it is from this definition that we create the Optimal Profile below.

Business Development is any activity that is aimed at growing a business; be it in terms of market development, product development or both. Hence, the activities of a business developer also include customer management (even though there is a customer service department, the two of which are not the same), strategic partnerships, channel development and even brand development. BD can be seen as a long-term capability.

Sales, on the other hand, is a short term capability. It is the conversion of leads into customers. It manages the sales funnel, attracting leads and converting them through targeted touch points into customers. Sales professionals will therefore perform product or service demonstrations, onboard customers to ensure that they know how to operate the products and services, and pass them onto customer service to maintain the sales relationship.

For example, supposing you are the BD of a health-tech company selling wearables. As BD, you will look to establish channels with doctors and pharmacies. You will also engage with government organisations to ensure you are in the approved list of vendors. You may also lobby the government to provide funding for wearables to ensure that the population adopt a healthy lifestyle. You would also establish agreements with insurance companies to give premium discounts for those who maintain a healthy lifestyle backed by the data from your wearables. Each of these can provide a separate income stream that separate sales staff can help build pipelines towards.

A business developer also works with product development to try to bridge the gap between customers' current unmet wants with new product offerings. If there is no product development department, then the BD can apply design thinking in a cross-functional team setting to meet those customer needs. Hence, there is some overlap in the job requirements of a business developer and a design thinker. (GCA also has the SDGM Report for Design Thinkers).

BD will also have to work closely with marketing to ensure that the right brand messaging is created and promulgated. The BD will ensure that the brand is protected and enhanced through her/his activities within different market and customer segments. It is marketing that will then create the collaterals, the copy and the pitch for these different segments.

As such, we can see that the business developer is the glue between sales and marketing, and works very

closely with senior management. In fact, one can even see the BD professional as the ambassador for the company, representing senior management and the Board in providing value to customers through the management of channels, partners, government agencies and markets.

Keys to becoming a good Business Developer

As you can imagine, the role of a business developer is rather strategic and this is a person who would require both high-level perspective and tactical strength in making those ideas stick. The keys to becoming a good BD professional are therefore also rather diverse. Here are some of the key requirements to becoming a good business developer:

1. Design thinking

As mentioned earlier, a good BD professional is one who is able to apply design thinking to uncover the needs of the customer and to bridge them with the company's products and services. Design thinking is such a skill that can provide that. It is a multi-disciplinary, customer-focused, problem-solving process that will allow BD professionals to drive product development in areas where other competitors either fail to recognise or find it too difficult to do so. Either way, this requires a strong learning culture, not just applying the corporate line onto the customer, but uncovering the deeper ethnographic connection between customer and product to meet unmet needs.

2. Strategic thinking

The business development professional needs to look at the big picture and see how all the different moving parts in the company come together to offer a holistic solution to all the different customer segments. This requires that the BD professional understand who is the company's customer, and equally important, who are not. This is because the BD professional knows that if one were to take a diversified, portfolio approach to business solutions, the company may well be too stretched to catch the nearest way. By focusing on who is their customer, and also who is NOT their customer, the BD professional can then adopt the right strategic focus to ensure that often-limited resources are well utilised with maximum outcome.

3. Be totally customer-focused

If there is no customer, there is no revenue. If there is no revenue, there is no business. No business can continue working out of their capital without revenue. In the end, if there are no earnings, the capital flows will stop. And the business will collapse. Knowing this end-to-end relationship between earnings and customers, the BD will adopt a pro-customer stance. Sure, operational excellence is important, so long as it exists to keep the customers top of mind and of operations. But when operations starts to ostracise the customers, the BD professional will be on the side of the customer and make representations to senior management to correct the misalignment. They know that no customer ultimately means no business!

4. Be intellectually opportunistic

The BD professional applies fuzzy logic in a mass of rational yes-no thinkers. Amidst the ebb and flow of business transactions, the BD professional is adept at spotting the diamonds in the rough and proceed to test those ideas out. Of course, she/he will never bet the bank on a hunch, but by adopting a fail fast, fail cheap mentality, the BD professional will seek out – or help seek out – the opportunities that lie just beyond the rational boundaries of yes-no thinking.

5. Relationship building

In creating new channel partners, the BD professional will need to be collaborative and not competitive. Since she/he is almost fanatical about the customer, she/he will pull in all the partners in a collaborative solution for the customer. The BD professional cannot stick to her/his guns based on company guidelines all the time otherwise there will be no win-win solutions to co-create. This is not to mean that the BD breaks company rules; not at all. It means that the BD will help structure new deals by convincing management that guidelines may need to be revisited and updated based on the progressive need of the business, the customer and the partners.

6. Embrace failure

As we test idea after idea, moving the needle closer and closer to market introduction, we need to “kill” old ideas and iterate them out to something new. We must risk being wrong, embrace failure and then move on to find the right idea. If we are devastated by being wrong, and we hold ourselves back because of that, we will never be able to iterate ourselves to a market solution. Failure is the root of learning, and learning is the root of growth. Good business developers know that there is no bad failure, just bad response to it.

7. Is goal oriented

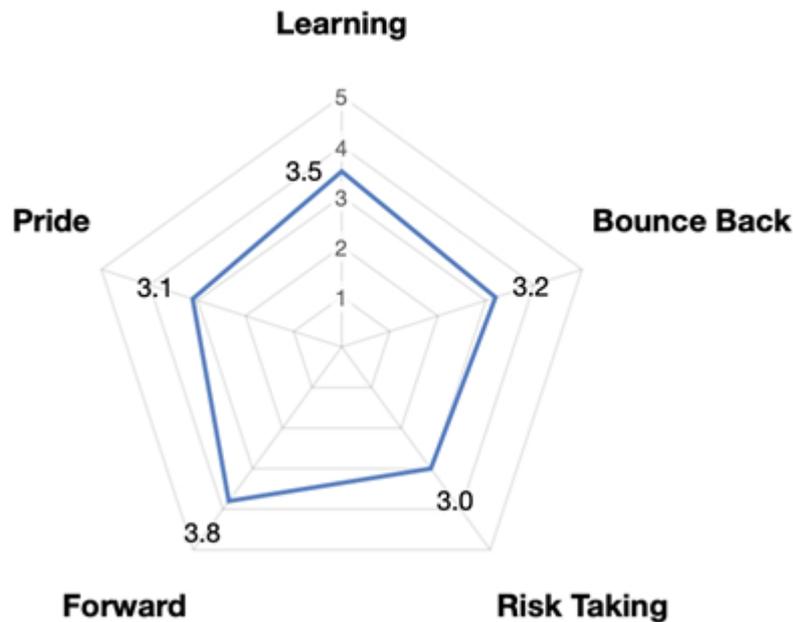
While the business developer knows that she/he needs to create relationships, that is not the primary role of BD. BD must ultimately hit business targets, again remembering that without revenue, there will be no business. Hence, the BD professional sometimes takes on a venture capitalist’s (VC’s) perspective, understanding that she/he cannot build partnerships serially, but in parallel. By being focused on the ultimate goal of the business, the BD professional knows how to spread the risks, so as not to bet too much on any one potential venture, but to manage the process like a VC, and deliver the business goals year after year after year!

The Optimal growth mindset profile for the Business Developer

An Optimal Profile is one which shows the 5DGM profile of successful growth minded business developers. When one displays the same profile as the Optimal Profile, it means that the person has the right mindset to deliver on the requirements of the job; but it does not mean that the person will. That depends on several other factors like competence, organisational culture and personal conviction which are not part of this assessment.

While one would expect that the Optimal Profile for the business developer is to have ALL dimensions in the growth zone, in fact, it is not necessary. While some scores may be high, they are not growth scores for all dimensions.

The optimal profile for the business developer is shown here:



Notes on understanding the term “optimal”

1. There is no specific ideal. The optimal profile is not an ideal profile, since there is no such concept.
2. The Optimal profile is a range rather than a specific score. The scores here are a reflection of the relative dimensional strengths. Hence, a plus or minus 0.2 score is still within the accepted “optimal” range.
3. Even if a person exhibits a different profile from this optimal, it does not mean that the person cannot be a business developer. It allows one to identify gaps in one’s behaviours which can be developed to get greater in line with the optimal.
4. Scores higher than the optimal are not necessarily better, nor are scores lower than this standard necessarily poorer. One needs to understand the impact of the dimension on design thinking before one can be certain.

Understanding the Optimal Business Developers Profile

1. Forward dimension is the highest.

As mentioned earlier, the BD professional will be required to be like a design thinker and be intellectually opportunistic by applying the hypothesis-driven process. This means that she/he will learn by doing, uncovering what needs to be done in developing the long-term business. Even if she/he has a high-level plan, which every BD professional should have, the “devil” is always in the details, and that can sometimes only be uncovered as the plan is worked and developed along the way. What areas does the BD professional move Forward on? Certainly, in relationship building, as that is one key element for BD success. This can even manifest itself through cold calling as the BD executive senses a great opportunity for collaboration or revenue generation. As the ambassador of the company, the BD professional needs to adopt all ways to

project brand value to the market. There is no manual for this; it is purely learning by doing. Product and market development are another area. Just because a product is successful in one market segment does not mean that it will be in another. Just where it will be and in what configuration requires, yet again, the learning-by-doing mindset. Hence, the Forward dimension needs to take on a more evolving approach, always working towards the goal, and uncovering the details along the way. It is for this reason that Forward is the primary growth dimension for the BD professional.

2. Learning dimension is the next highest.

It was mentioned that the business developer needs to be a lifelong learner as there is quite a bit to learn. In order to uncover the unmet needs of customers and create solutions for them, there is a constant requirement to discover, learn, understand, apply and then solve. Even after the solution has been created, the business developer is constantly learning to improve the outcomes, increasing the value to customers, increasing operational effectiveness, improving scale with lower costs. Hence, Learning is a key dimension for the BD. But it is not a high growth dimension. The optimal zone is only on the cusp of the growth zone (and straddling the transition zone too!) because the BD professional embraces knowledge within the needs of the business. True, she/he will need to constantly learn about the market, the customer, the competitors and the partners but that can come about through relationship building (part of the Forward dimension activities) rather than the traditional means of knowledge research and application. And it is not as though there is no one in the company she/he can't fall back on, since the CEO and senior management will all have her/his back in terms of the knowledge she/he needs to excel. She/He can always go back to them, or other senior stakeholders, to bulk up on the learning. As such, her/his tendencies for Learning, though still high, are not as high as Forward.

3. Bounce Back and Pride have similar strengths in the transition zone.

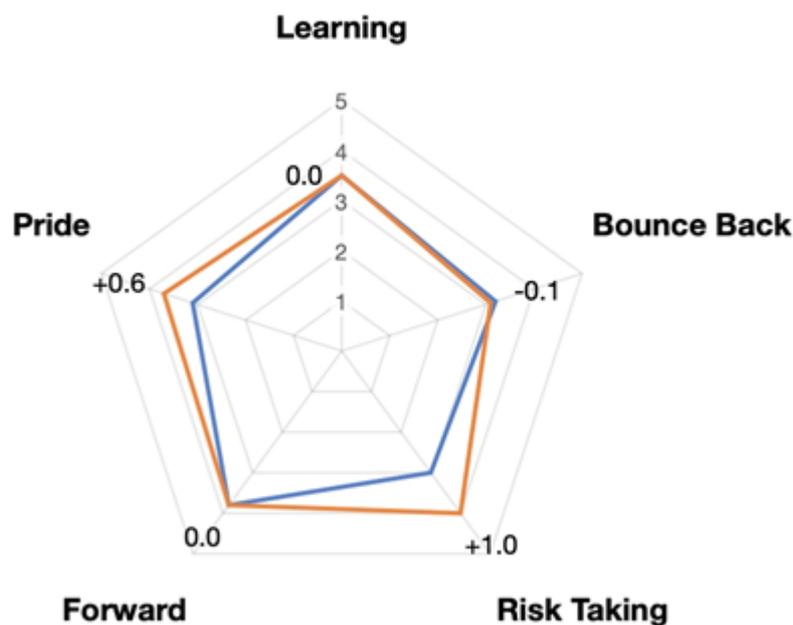
We did mention that the business developer needs to embrace failure to be able to uncover what is really happening and design the right solution for the customer. This iterative process of design, test, fail and repeat requires the business developer to have a supportive Bounce Back dimension. The same applies to Pride, as the business developer will need to check his/her own concept of right and wrong as he/she uncovers the true nature of the business through data. She/He needs to give up the surety of being right by one's experience and knowledge and embrace the fuzziness of customer empathy; because within that area of ambiguity may lie the solution that the business developer is looking for. Hence, the Pride dimension also has to be close to growth. But then again, why not a higher score? Why don't we need Bounce Back and Pride to both be in the growth zone? Let's take Pride first. Since the BD executive is an ambassador for the business and an extension of senior management, there has to be some element of swagger and confidence (maybe even bordering on overconfidence?) that is representative of a less growth score for the dimension. Without this confidence, channel partners and strategic alliances may second guess the true intents of the business developers, thinking that the business is on rocky ground and requires the connection of the partners. This is not the way to go into a strategic alliance. And without this swagger, the BD may also not be able to go up to their customer and convince them that they are making the right decision by buying the next generation product or service. All these require the Pride dimension to be less growth in nature. The same can be reasoned for Bounce Back. It does not need to be higher not because the BD can give up at any time he/she wants to, but because he/she is not carrying the weight of the "fall" all by himself/herself. Management is there to offer the support for BD because decisions made are usually made as a team, and hence, the whole team gets to pull the BD up if he/she should fall. In a way, therefore, the BD professional's Bounce Back tendencies are supported by the senior team and therefore individually, she/he does not require as higher a score.

4. Risk Taking is the least growth dimension.

Finally, one might expect that Risk Taking is higher for the business developer because he/she should be comfortable to risk being wrong, to risk one's good name, to risk one's reputation, to risk some capital, all to build new partnerships and alliances. However, that is not necessarily so. In fact, since the BD operates similar to a venture capitalist, they should err on the side of less risk, even if they have the ability to Bounce Back well. By adopting "fail fast, fail cheap", they spread out their risk, working to enhance being more right as they undertake more experiments. And finally, just as Bounce Back does not have to be too high due to collective decision making and responsibility, the BD does not need a higher preference for individual Risk Taking because all risk decisions are made and accepted as a team.

Gap Analysis

The intent of knowing the gap between our current scores and the optimal scores is so that we understand how our current tendencies either help us or hinder us in becoming a business development leader, and what we can do to develop ourselves to become better. Let us see how your profile compares with the optimal:



Points to note:

1. Your tendencies for each dimension meet the optimal profile when your score is +/- 0.2 from the optimal.
2. Your tendencies exceed the optimal profile if your scores are $\geq +0.3$ from the optimal
3. Your tendencies do not meet the optimal profile if your scores are ≤ -0.3 from the optimal.
4. It does not mean that if your score for a dimension exceeds the optimal, you are better than the

optimal.

5. It also does not mean that if your score does not exceed the optimal, you are worse than the optimal.

The following provides you with the meaning of your gap, and offers developmental suggestions to get you in a better position, if necessary, for each dimension.

1. Learning

Your Learning dimension meets the optimal.

You have a growth score for the Learning dimension, which is important for a business developer. As you adopt elements of design thinking in your job, where uncovering, learning and adopting new knowledge are key, your score demonstrates your tendency to do that well. And since you know that failing leads to learning, you also tend not to be afraid to fail although you would mitigate that risk and limit the fallout through collaborate decision making and learning. You tend to apply this sense of curiosity in your job, asking questions to clarify understanding and uncovering new areas of market and product development.

Development:

Continue to expand your areas of expertise. Get involved in how your customers interact with your product and service, visiting them in their natural environment where you see them using your product or service. Take time to understand their pains and gains, and what they are trying to achieve in using your product or service. And from this angle, try to uncover what everyone else is doing in this respect, identifying what you can emulate and what you do better. Then take this to your partners and co-create new markets and build new strategic partnerships. This will enable you to uncover new norms and mental models, pushing you and your business to greater heights. This is how we get from good to great.

2. Bounce Back

Your Bounce Back dimension meets the optimal.

At the higher transition zone, you tend to be resilient to failures, and are able to pick yourself up relatively comfortably. You have the means, the confidence, the knowledge and the coping strategies to help you and your BD work in specific areas. This means that so long as your experiments fall within certain limits, you know how to pull yourself and your team together to move on.

Development:

Bear in mind the 5Cs of resilience: Character, Connection, Competence, Confidence and Coping. Take each one of these and build on them, enlarging your scope over time. Apply these not just for yourself, but for your team, keeping them ever mindful of overconfidence. Constantly check in with senior management to ensure that your BD efforts are moving along the right trajectory and meeting your stakeholders' needs.

3. Risk Taking

Your Risk Taking dimension exceeds the optimal.

Being in the growth zone for Risk Taking does have its own risks. It is not that you would be reckless; but because different people in your organisation may not be able to accept as much risk to personal reputation as you, it would be wiser to err on the side of caution and dial down the confidence, lest it tips into overconfidence. And overconfidence can lead a team to make many wrong decisions, causing more time to undo, than the time it takes to be a little more cautious.

Development:

Be on the lookout for instances where you might be taking too much risk or where you might be too conservative. Learn to work with a coach to calibrate your response to such situations so that you do not inadvertently hold up the development of yourself or your team; or conversely, to bet more than the bank!

4. Forward

Your Forward dimension meets the optimal.

The primary motive of a business developer is to move ahead with a solution hypothesis to see if it will solve the business problem. While there is some element of planning, the business developer knows that she/he cannot rely on such plans because she/he does not know what she/he does not know. By trying to map out all the possibilities of what can happen and the contingencies to take when they do, they become unduly bogged down by planning, and not enough doing. Ultimately, the business developer knows that the answers lie just ahead of the current knowledge construct, and the only way to get there is to start moving. Your growth score reflects this tendency. Yet it also reflects an element of structured thinking that helps to guard against taking decisions haphazardly or burning too much cash as you are uncovering or strengthening the solution to your problem statement. Having a measured approach to execution while fearless in uncovering the business logic will help you and your business move further, faster.

Development:

Be on the lookout for either slowing down or speeding up. Sometimes, initial successes may cause a business developer to become bolder, and then start taking on more risk without sufficient due diligence – all in the name of moving forward. That has the tendency to tip the project into hubris, and might lead you to lose more time and resources when you have to backtrack. Conversely, also be on the lookout for taking more time than you normally do, becoming more fixed as you progress through the project lifecycle. This will have the effect of slowing the business, tipping the scales from growth to fixed. You might like to engage the services of a business coach to reflect this to you over time. You might also want to learn how to develop scenarios. This is a key management tool that business developers can use to give both themselves and their team, the confidence in going forward. It does not typically map all the steps, but it does so in broad strokes so that the strategic components of the decision are captured in the plan and worked on.

5. Pride

Your Pride dimension exceeds the optimal.

As a growth minded person in the Pride dimension, you tend not to brag about your expertise, but you do refer to them often not just to remind all of your repertoire, but also to help your team build their own skillsets. This influences the members of the team to uncover the expertise for themselves, treating knowledge as a means to share and grow the collective purpose. By understanding that context shifts experiential relevance, you are always mindful of the unique circumstances of a situation that might make your knowledge irrelevant. You thus tend to view your knowledge as a baseline to sharpen collective wisdom. You therefore tell yourself not to “throw the baby out with the bathwater”, but slowly pick what aspects of your knowledge are still relevant, and what aspects are new. However, this tendency may sometimes cause you to come across as unsure or less confident to customers and potential partners. Hence, as a BD, it may well be good to NOT have too growth a Pride score so as to command the confidence of all stakeholders.

Development:

Being a business developer means that you have to take risks, and that also means that you have to make the hard decisions. These decisions are driven both by your past experiences and knowledge, and by your gut instinct about the present. Hence, there is a fine balancing act between knowing the right course of action, and taking the time to find it out. After all, business developers have an edge over their corporate counterparts through speed, and the innate ability to sense out the opportunities before the larger organisation does. But speed also demands that the business developer stake a position confidently. This is where she/he will have to draw on her/his past successes, to rally the team in the face of ambiguity and uncertainty, and march ahead. And therein lies the secret of the successful business developer – in using an element of past successes to build on future outcomes. Learn to use just enough of the past to spur excitement for the future, but be aware of when it tips into hubris or arrogance.

Working with the Growth Mindset

The growth mindset

- works on openness
- works with experience
- works with humility
- works on possibilities
- works on failure
- works on solutions

1. It works on openness

The thing about the growth mindset is, you need to be open; open to learning, open to sharing, open to being wrong. It is only in an environment of openness that we can risk being wrong and not be judged for that. If these are not present, you would not be able to build a growth minded organisation. As such, as you build your business, you need to build a culture that does not hide behind structures, behind politics, behind power. It needs to be open to the truth, and it has to have a culture that does not shoot the messenger when that truth is uncovered.

2. It works with experience

Knowledge begets knowledge; growth begets growth. And these stem from experience. Hence, get your experienced people to share; get them to contribute. And if you don't have any, then go out there and get some experience yourself! Because that powers learning, which powers the growth mindset!

3. It works with humility

If we cling to our past achievements, thinking that we know the way forward today because we knew the way forward yesterday, then we might be in for a rude shock. Covid19 has changed the status quo for all businesses, and what used to work right up to March 2020, may well not be valid now. Hence, we as an business, must be humble enough to accept that we do not know what we do not know now, and go forward to learn anew.

4. It works on possibilities

Since we won't likely know what we don't know, and more importantly, what we used to know may not even be valid, then we need to be open (there we go again!) to possibilities. Since we won't know for sure, all we can do is churn out the possibilities, and go out there and TRY! If we are waiting for a sure thing to happen, nothing is going to happen; and we will be wondering why the bus has not stopped at our stand. There are no sure things in this world, only possibilities. It is up to us to turn the possibility into a sure thing through experiments, tests and trials. The faster we are able to convert the possibilities into a sure thing, the better it would be for us. But be reminded that your competitors are also seeking the same opportunities, the same possibilities. Hence, you need to embrace it fast or be left picking up the crumbs!

5. It works on “failure”

Of course, we don't deliberately go out to fail; but we also understand if we do not “fail”, we are not putting enough effort to find out what works and what doesn't. Hence, we should not be afraid to fail. We will identify the risks, mitigate those that we can, and accept it as a cost of doing business for those we cannot. You certainly cannot mitigate every risk away; and neither should you! If you have squared all your risks away (normally by getting smaller and smaller), then where's the learning going to take place? Where's the failure? But don't engineer a catastrophic failure; fail fast and fail cheap. Make the cost of failure small, and the speed of failure quick. As an business, you will thus be able to fail quickly, so as to learn quickly!

6. It works on solutions

Finally, the growth mindset is solution-focused. That means that it is not simply focused on a problem, but in finding a solution to that problem. Of course, not all problems will have a satisfactory solution; or even any! But every problem presents an opportunity, as we have seen with Covid19. None of us ever thought that our people can work from home over long stretches of time, and more importantly, to deliver on performance as though they were in the office. This calls into question the need to have such big and expensive offices. But that is just one “problem” among the long list of other problems. The key here is to help our business be growth minded, uncover the different problem statements, and be solution-focused.

Leading the team in times of uncertainty

In this segment, we discuss the element of motivation. Leaders all around want to get the most and the best from their people, to ensure that their performance is at peak level, while keeping them satisfied in their roles. Covid-19 has created a lot of uncertainties – from jobs to wages to performance management. Indeed, to move forward as an organisation, we need to embrace the growth mindset, especially so now that we don't know what we don't know, and the future is murky. We must help our people embrace greater flexibility, greater learning, greater growth!

Here are some ways you can lead your staff beyond uncertainty

1. Encourage them to take risks

Staying close to shore never helped Christopher Columbus; and neither will it you! In this period when your competitors are prepping to jump the gates once business is resumed, you too need to do the same. You certainly cannot be caught off-guard! So, your people will need to take some risks, and you as a business leader must encourage them to do so; but just be mindful not to bet the whole company on this one big gamble (that is the stuff of the fixed mindset!). Remember our mantra...

Fail Fast. Fail Cheap.

2. Reassure them that you got their back

The most difficult and painful thing to accept is after you encourage them to take risks and when they fail, you throw them under the bus! We have seen many such behaviours before in entrepreneurs but in this time of uncertainty, we need to reassess that position. We have to go into all our opportunities as a team. You may not be personally doing the heavy-lifting, but you got to have their back; you have to reassure them that nothing bad will happen to them if they are risking their position, their reputation, their competences for the company. Reassure them, not just by words – that is an important first step – but more importantly, by action.

3. Be the first to pick them up when they stumble

And they will. But don't operate your leadership from afar, be close to the ground. So when things go wrong for them, be the first to help out. Be the first to listen to them. You do not have to solve their problem – because we have seen how important it is for you to allow them to solve their own problems – but by being there for them, by giving them a new perspective, by offering them a way to bridge between them and other teams, you are providing them with exactly what they need at the time they need it. Be the first; not the last.

4. Set realistic, achievable targets

In times of uncertainty, our targets get out of whack! Performance cannot even be measured, rewards are hard to define, headcount is even changing! This creates a lot of uncertainty. What the successful

entrepreneur needs to do is set realistic, achievable targets; you want to stretch them but not demoralise them. Because, growth mindset or not, if we stretch people past their productive zone, they will be extremely unproductive and miserable. The growth mindset will turn to fixed; and your efforts of making to a new endpoint will be thwarted. So be careful when you set targets; stretch them and motivate them but don't be so unreasonable that they give up even before they try!

5. Understand that what worked in the past, might not work now

If the collective Pride score in your organisation is low, you need to be careful; it means a lot of people are stuck in the past. Imagine having 20 people in the organisation all telling you how you should do your job because 5 years ago, they did it in some manner which you should now follow! They would all have missed the mark! We need to learn to be adaptable by accepting, as an organisation, that we don't know what we don't know; and we must now form new hypotheses to test. It could well be that what we did in the past is still valid; but it could well be totally invalid. No one knows for sure, since the situation is so uncertain! So rather than saying that we know the way forward, say instead, "We know how to find the way out of this uncertainty!" And that way, for individuals and organisations alike, is not to do things as you had always done, but to identify what works now, and start doing that!

Conclusion

Design thinking is an enigma; no one knows for sure what makes it successful. What we do know is that it is a heady melting pot of competence, confidence and capability. It is not like mathematics or computing where once you know how to count or code, you can always do that; similar to riding a bicycle. Design thinking rises and falls based on the context, quite like the growth mindset. You can be super successful as a business developer in one endeavour and a catastrophic failure in another! But one thing is certain; there has never been a successful business developer who has never failed. Failure is the necessary path to success, and our attitude towards failure must be the same attitude towards success; that we all need them! But what brought us to success yesterday, can bring us to failure today; and that can bring us to success tomorrow. As such, in the ebb and flow of design thinking, we enlarge our experiences for each of the growth mindset dimensions, learning to adapt the right design thinking skills for the right situation; and at the same time, the growth mindset. Just as there is no one set of right design thinking tools, neither is there one set of right growth mindset profile. And while we have presented the optimal growth mindset for the successful business developer, we also know that different profiles will still allow you to be a good one. And as all good business developers do, we continuously develop; develop ourselves as we develop our business ideas.

We invite you to take the growth mindset assessment every 4-6 months to plot how you are developing yourself. You don't have to make any more payment for it, you simply go to www.growthconsultingtest.com and take the Basic assessment, noting your scores and how they evolved over time. That will support you in your quest to become a better business developer.

For more information on the growth mindset reports, corporate training, and coaching, please go to www.growthconsultingasia.com

You may also be interested in our other programmes:

- Strategic Thinking: The Right Decision EVERY TIME
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