



# The Power of Mindset

DELIVERED BY: NICK THOMAS

NOVEMBER 2023

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# Welcome and Thankyou

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60-minute session

Slides provided post-session

## **Nick Thomas**

- Background in Insurance Broking Sector. Sales and Sales Leadership specialist
- Widely qualified coach and personal development specialist
- Coaching, training and consulting – Insurance M&A

## **Nick Thomas & Associates**

- Up to the minute training solutions addressing the challenges of the modern insurance professional
- Technical insurance; sales, business and soft skills; customer service; management and leadership; performance, resilience and wellbeing



# Session Objectives

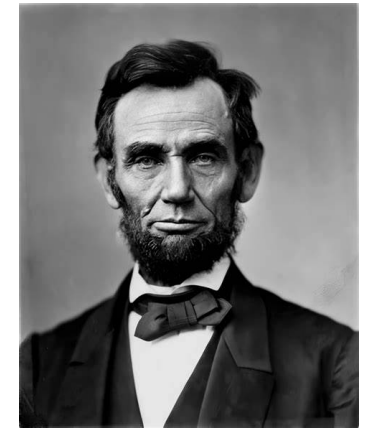
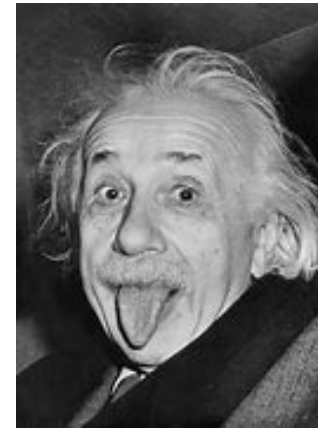
*'Begin with the end in mind'*  
Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

At the end of the session delegates will

- Have an insight into research on what drives expert performance and the nature of talent.
- Have an understanding of the difference between Fixed and Growth Mindset and how they affect our success, happiness, and resilience.
- Understand how to adopt a growth mindset in your own lives and how to develop and foster it in the lives of others.

# Talent and success

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- What is the nature of talent?
- What is the main driver for 'success'?

# The nature of talent?

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- ‘*The Role of Deliberate Practice in the Acquisition of Expert Performance*’ 1993
- Study of Violinists at Music Academy of West Berlin. Three sets of students:
  1. ‘Super talented’ – potential international soloists
  2. Expected to play in world’s top orchestras
  3. Studying to become music teachers
- No significant differences except by age 20
  1. Average 10,000 hours accumulated practice
  2. Circa 8,000 hours
  3. Circa 4,000 hours
- **NO Exceptions**

Dr Anders Ericsson, Professor of Psychology at Florida State University

Internationally recognized as a leading authority on the psychological nature of expertise and human performance

*‘We deny that these differences [in skill level] are immutable, that is, due to innate talent...Instead we argue that the differences between expert performers and normal adults reflect a life-long persistence of deliberate effort to improve performance’*

Ericsson and colleagues

# The nature of talent?

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## 10,000 hour rule [and opportunity]

- Ericsson – professional and amateur pianists
  - Amateurs – 2,000 hours by age 20
  - Professionals – 10,000 hours
- Laszlo Polgar [and daughters]– educational psychologist and early advocate of practice theory of expertise
- Roger Barnsley – Canadian psychologist. Canadian ice hockey age distribution
- Contradictions? Child Prodigies – Mozart, Woods et al

*'The emerging picture from such studies is that ten thousand hours of practice is required to achieve the level of mastery associated with being a world-class expert- in anything'.  
'In study after study, of composers, basketball players, fiction writers, ice skaters, concert pianists, chess players, master criminals and what have you, this number comes up'  
Neurologist Daniel Levitin in Malcolm Gladwell's 'Outliers: The Story of Success'*

*While Leopold [Mozart's father] was only a so-so musician, he was highly accomplished as a pedagogue. His authoritative book on violin instruction,...remained influential for decades. So, from the earliest age Wolfgang was receiving heavy instruction from an expert teacher who lived with him...*

*Mozart's first work regarded today as a masterpiece,...is his piano concerto number 9 composed when he was twenty-one.*

*Geoff Colvin, journalist and author 'Talent Is Overrated'*



# The nature of talent?

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Quantity AND Quality – deliberate and purposeful practice

- *'...the specialised learning used by top performers to attain master status and the deep concentration that is needed in each of those ten thousand hours'* **Matthew Syed Bounce: The myth of talent and the power of practice**
- *'...by striving for a target just out of reach [developing a new skill], but with a vivid awareness of how the gap might be breached'*
- The importance of **Failure** and instant **Feedback**
- Potential for high levels of **repetition**
- Once the skill is mastered, identify the next target [just out of reach]



# The psychology of success?

## The importance of failure...

*I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed*

**Michael Jordan**

*'Try again. Fail again. Fail better'*

**Samuel Beckett**

*'Failure happens all the time. It happens every day in practice. What makes you better is how you react to it'*

**Mia Hamm**

*Success is going from failure to failure without losing your enthusiasm*

**Winston Churchill**

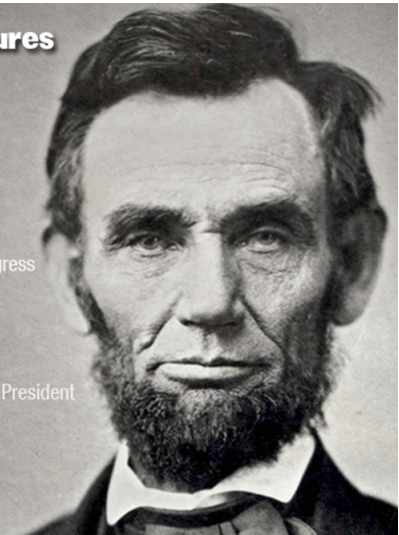


### Lincoln's Famous Failures

- 1832 Lost job
- 1832 Defeated for legislature
- 1833 Failed in business
- 1834 Elected to legislature
- 1835 Sweetheart (Ann Rutledge) died
- 1836 Had nervous breakdown
- 1838 Defeated for Speaker
- 1843 Defeated for nomination for Congress
- 1846 Elected to Congress
- 1848 Lost renomination
- 1849 Rejected for Land Officer
- 1854 Defeated for Senate
- 1856 Defeated for nomination for Vice-President
- 1858 Again defeated for Senate
- 1860 Elected President

**Abraham Lincoln**

InspirationBoost.com





# The nature of talent?

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## Deliberate and purposeful practice in the workplace?

- Do we establish the skills where we need to improve and the new skills to develop? *Or just attend the odd ad hoc training course?*
- Do we practice skills ‘just out of reach with a vivid understand of how the gap might be breached’. *Or do we forget about the training and file it away ‘for the future’?*
- Do we keep trying [high levels of repetition] and failing until we breach the gap?
- Are we allowed to ‘fail’? How is failure framed?
- Do we get instant feedback? Mentoring, Coaching, Ad hoc review meetings with managers? *Or a six month appraisal?*

*The average professional athlete... spends most of his time practicing and only a small percentage—several hours a day, at most—actually competing. The typical executive, by contrast, devotes almost no time to training and must perform on demand ten, 12, 14 hours a day or more. Jim Loehr, Performance Psychologist. Author of ‘The Corporate Athlete’*

*How might we adjust our approach to use the principles of ten-thousand-hour rule and deliberate practice in our working lives?*



# The psychology of success

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Angela Duckworth Ph D, MacArthur Fellow and Professor of Psychology, University of Pennsylvania

- Skill x Effort = Achievement [Talent is how quickly your skills improve when you invest effort]
- Extensive research across multiple fields of endeavour – West Point Military Academy, National Spelling Bee, Rookie Teachers in tough neighbourhoods, Special Forces selection, Salespeople, Chicago public school students
- Best predictor of success = ‘Grit’ – passion [and direction] and perseverance for very long-term goals
- Grit unrelated or even inversely related to measures of talent



2013 MacArthur Fellow. The “genius grant” goes to individuals in the arts and sciences who display extraordinary ingenuity and dedication to their work

*Grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals.*

*Grit is having stamina.*

*Grit is sticking with your future day in day out. Not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years. And working really hard to make that future a reality.*

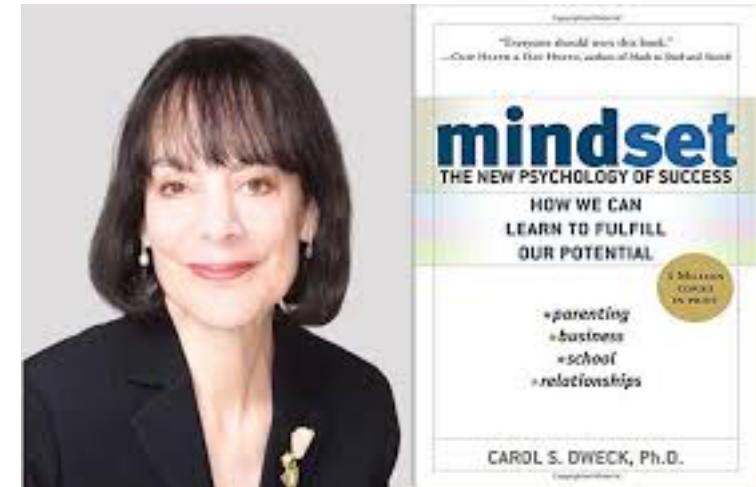
*Grit is living life like it's a marathon, not a sprint'*  
Dr Angela Duckworth

# Developing 'Grit' – Growth Mindset

*Our beliefs around the nature of talent can transform our psychology and our lives*

Experiment One – Three hundred and thirty students

- Questionnaire - beliefs on talent and intelligence
- Split into two groups: **Fixed Mindset** – believed intelligence is fixed/**Growth Mindset** – believed intelligence could be transformed through effort
- All students given a series of questions – eight fairly easy and four very hard
- Both groups were of equal intelligence and motivation
- The results?



**Carol Dweck Ph D** – Professor of Psychology, Stanford University. Widely regarded as one of the world’s leading researchers in personality, social psychology and developmental psychology

# Developing 'Grit' – Growth Mindset

## FIXED MINDSET

*The most striking thing ...was how quickly they began to denigrate their abilities and blame their intelligence for their failures...'I guess I am not very smart'...'I'm no good at things like this'. Only a short while after the difficult problems began, they lost faith in their intellect.*

*Two thirds of them showed a clear deterioration in their strategies, and more than half lapsed into completely ineffective strategies. In short, the majority of students in this group abandoned or became incapable of deploying effective strategies in their repertoire*

## GROWTH MINDSET

*The didn't focus on reasons for failure. In fact, they didn't even consider themselves to be failing. How did they perform? In line with their optimism, more than eighty percent maintained or improved the quality of their strategies during difficult problems. A full quarter of the group actually improved. They taught themselves new and more sophisticated strategies for addressing the new and more difficult problems. A few of them even solved the problems that were supposedly beyond them...*

*Thus, even though they were no better than the fixed mindset students on the original problems, they ended up showing a much higher level of performance*

# Developing 'Grit' – Growth Mindset

**Experiment Two** – first year students, University of Hong Kong. All classes at conducted in English but students arrive with differing language skills.

- Identified group with poor English skills
- Questionnaire - to establish Fixed and Growth Mindset groups
- Then offered remedial English language course
- The results? Growth Mindset group showed high level of interest. Fixed Mindset group **refused**.
- Fixed Mindset group were *'imperilling their chances at university simply to insulate themselves from the possibility of failure'* Syed – Bounce
- If you identify with success/talent/intelligence you will shy away from situations that may contradict this identity...

*'In the growth mindset you don't feel the need to convince yourself and others that you have a royal flush when you're secretly worried it's a pair of tens. The hand you are dealt is just the starting point... Although people may differ in every which way – in their initial talents and aptitudes, interests or temperaments – everyone can change and grow through application and experience'*  
Carol Dweck

**How might a growth mindset help you build resilience?**  
*'adaptation, or the ability to "bounce back" or quickly recover after adverse or stressful events'*



# Growth and Fixed Mindset

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# Growth and Fixed Mindset

## 'Know it all' vs 'Learn it all'

*'the talent mindset...the deep-seated belief that having better talent at all levels is how you outperform your competitors'  
'Don't be afraid to promote the stars without specifically relevant experience seemingly over their heads'*

*'...by putting complete faith in talent, Enron did a fatal thing: it created a culture that worshipped talent, thereby forcing its employees to look and act extraordinarily talented. ...it forced a fixed mindset...We know that people with a fixed mindset do not admit and correct their deficiencies'*  
Carol Dweck



*'Culture is something that needs to adapt and change, and you've got to be able to have a learning culture. The intuition I got was from observing what happens in schools. I read a book called Mindset. In there there's this very simple concept that Carol Dweck talks about, which is if you take two people, one of them is a learn-it-all and the other one is a know-it-all, the learn-it-all will always trump the know-it-all in the long run, even if they start with less innate capability'*  
Microsoft CEO - Satya Nadella

**Microsoft's Share Price Quadrupled Under Satya Nadella**  
Microsoft's stock performance since Satya Nadella was named CEO in February 2014\*

# Developing Growth Mindset

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- Praise effort [and smart working] not talent
- Awareness of 'Negativity Bias' – breeds fixed mindset
- Neuroplasticity and myelin – you can teach old dogs new tricks
- Inspiring examples
- Create a no fear [of failure] culture – allow people to 'fail' in a safe environment
- Ask empowering questions of yourself and others
- The language you use and the example you set
  - 'can't' vs 'not yet'...



## Examples?

- *How might you talk to/praise an employee who has done a great piece of work to promote growth mindset?*
- *...of empowering questions?*



# Developing Growth Mindset

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Replace **fixed mindset language** with **growth mindset language**

## Fixed Language

I've never been good at...

You're hopeless

That's the way it's always been done

We can't get this wrong

## Growth Language

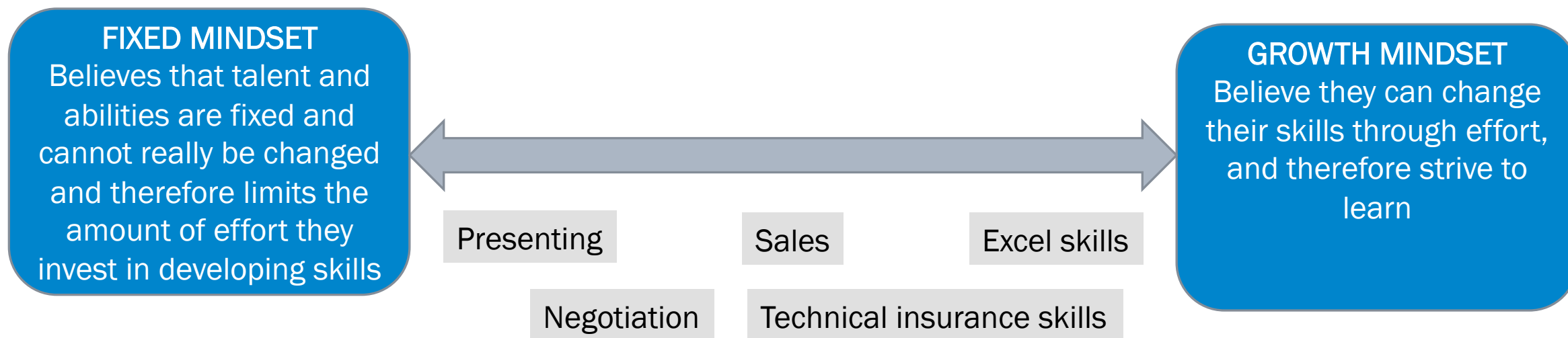
How can I get better?

You have the potential to improve

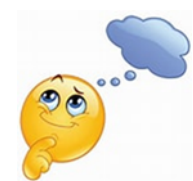
Let's try it out

What did we learn?

# Developing 'Growth Mindset'



**Mindset can be contextual**  
 In what areas do you hold **fixed mindset** beliefs?  
 In what areas do you hold **growth mindset** beliefs?  
 Where have you moved from **fixed** to **growth** thinking? How?  
 Do we need to have a growth mindset in all contexts?



**Performance = Potential - Interference [Gallwey]**  
 What gets in your way?



# Session Objectives – Revisit

Having attended this session you

- Have an insight into research on what drives expert performance and the nature of talent.
- Have an understanding of the difference between Fixed and Growth Mindset and how they affect our success, happiness, and resilience.
- Understand how to adopt a growth mindset in your own lives and how to develop and foster it in the lives of others.

# Thank you! Questions?

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Contact:

Email: [nick@nickthomasassociates.co.uk](mailto:nick@nickthomasassociates.co.uk)

Website: [www.nickthomasassociates.co.uk](http://www.nickthomasassociates.co.uk)

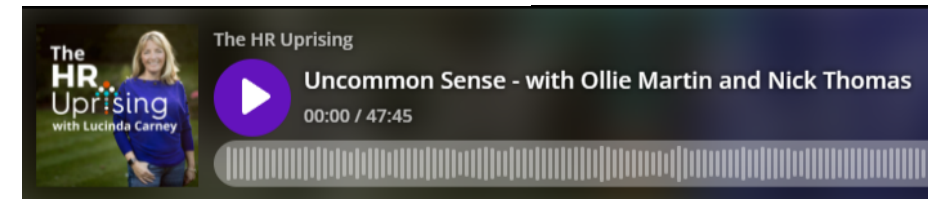
LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/nick-thomas-64046113/>

LinkedIn Company:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/nick-thomas-associates/>

*'Up to the minute training solutions addressing the challenges of the modern insurance professional'*

The logo for HRUprising, with 'HR' in purple and 'Uprising' in a lighter purple, with a colorful dot matrix graphic above the 'i'.

[Click here](#) to listen to Nick's latest podcast appearance on 'HR Uprising' talking about workplace performance, resilience and health