Want to Be More Successful? Neuroscience Shows Embracing a Growth Mindset Actually Changes How Your Brain Functions

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First, some background. If you aren’t familiar, research on achievement and success by Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck shows that most people embrace — whether consciously or not — one of two mental perspectives where talent is concerned:

- **Fixed mindset**: The belief that intelligence, ability, and talent are inborn and relatively fixed. Someone with a fixed mindset might think, “I’m not good at sales, so I probably shouldn’t try to start a business.”

- **Growth mindset**: The belief that intelligence, ability, and talent can be learned and improved with effort. Someone with a growth mindset might think, “I don’t have any sales experience, but with a little time and effort I can surely develop the skills I need.”

The outcomes of embracing a fixed mindset are less than positive. When you assume that you are who you are, and that you can’t change who you are — that you aren’t smart, or talented, or a natural leader, etc. — and you start to struggle, you almost immediately feel helpless and overwhelmed. Who you are just isn’t good enough. So you stop trying.

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