



3 Mindsets Determine How We Progress (or Stagnate)

There are three types of mindsets: the one who is stuck in the past, the one obsessed by the present, and the one who dreams of the future. One (or more) of these three mindsets influences every decision we make each day in our lives – whether that decision involves work, relationships, community, or other interaction.

We all navigate through these mindsets, either knowingly or unknowingly. Just being conscious of their existence and how each one influences our decision making, is critical in the way we progress as individuals – or, for some people, fail to progress and remain static.

What Is: The Now Mindset

In today's world, the most popular mindset is the Now mindset, humanity's oldest mindset. In fact, it goes beyond humans, as it represents the survival mindset that is easily observed in almost all animals. The Now mindset hunts when it is hungry, mates when it desires, and plays when it pleases. As the most addictive and pervasive mindset, its quick result-oriented nature releases enormous immediate pleasure and tremendous satisfaction.

In return, however, it restricts animals so they do not think about future needs. Why bother about the future if now seems to be the only thing to enjoy? They do not even think about the future when it arrives, but instead react to the future when it comes (essentially, treating it as Now).

This mindset is detrimental to anyone in business or any other social organisation that depends on long-term planning and development. How can a department head, for example, create a viable budget if the manager can only think about present items such as current salaries and expenditures – and not also be able to consider future goals, requirements, staffing needs, and other relevant parameters?

What Was: The Past Mindset

The Past mindset is probably unique to human kind. Many animals would not even be able to keep an extended memory, as they are mostly occupied with the Now. The Past mindset can be one of the most comfortable or uncomfortable mindsets, with many people failing (consciously or not) to escape it. Being stuck in the past limits the ability of many individuals to progress. Its heavy



weight on a person's mind blocks the individual from moving forward in a positive way.

Consider an employee who has made an error or received a poor job evaluation. If the individual is unwilling to relinquish that past failure and learn from previous mistakes, how can the person improve performance on the job or even dream of the possibility of a future promotion? Specific job training is a waste of money and resources for such employees who cannot comprehend that they can do better.

What Will Be: The Future Mindset

The Future mindset is the one we humans lack the most. We perceive the future as very difficult and undesirable because it remains a big unknown. In fact, many problems we face today in business, the environment, relationships of all sorts (national, as well as individual) – and recently to some degree in technology transformations– all result from not having a Future mindset.

Leadership needs the ability to utilise a Future mindset in order to grow the organisation, to recognise the potential challenges they will face, and to creatively arrive at solutions with a teamwork of Future-thinking colleagues. And yet, the

Future mindset must also work in tandem with the Past and Now, to understand what happened, what is happening, and what can happen.

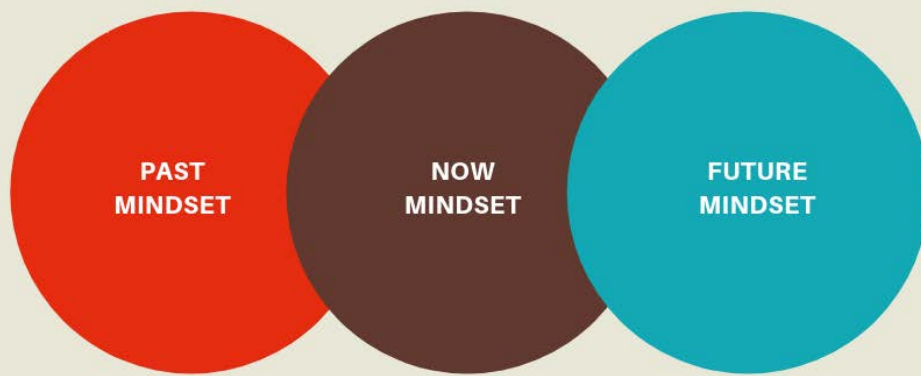
The News Is Not All Bad

Our over-indulgence in the present, inability to escape the past, and limited view of the future are increasingly dangerous, posing a significant threat to our long-term viability. Survival of our businesses as we know it, survival of our planet as we live it, survival of our nations as we develop them, and the survival of human kind as we imagine it will all depend on our ability to acknowledge the facts and make the necessary changes to avoid an undesirable future.

We humans will never be able to totally escape these three basic mindsets. It's human nature. We need to accept the fact that these three mindsets will continue to directly influence all the decisions and actions we take every day in our lives. But all three mindsets need to be in balance, with no one dominating a person's choices.

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3 MINDSETS THAT DETERMINE OUR DECISIONS



● STUCK IN THE PAST

● OBSESSED BY THE PRESENT

● DREAMS OF THE FUTURE



That said, there is a silver lining. We can always make things better and improve our chances of survival by being more conscious of what we are “capable” of doing as humans. One of the best ways we can move forward in our businesses, communities, and nations is by starting to ask the right questions:

1) What and how can we change, in ourselves and our surroundings, to encourage full participation in our workforce and communities to increase awareness of what is necessary to survival? What actions can we take to strive for ultimate efficiency and productivity overall, with maximum engagement of all stakeholders?

2) How can we help people to escape the cozy or uncomfortable Past and pull them away from over-indulgence of Now? What “social policies” can we “organically” develop to help individuals realistically think about the Future?

3) What key areas should we start transforming so that future generations do not fall into the same trap that we find ourselves in?

4) What measures do we need to consider so that whatever solution arises is sustainable in the long run?

It Is All About Mindsets and Nothing Else

One final thought. We need to stop defining people in isolated groups, such as generations (basically driven by age groups, it is totally absurd, archaic, and mostly irrelevant in today’s world). Although it is understandable why such a concept was conceived in the first place when the world was more static, it is increasingly difficult to buy into such an idea in today’s amazingly dynamic and super-actively connected world.

Survival is no longer about an age group, nationality, religion, race, or gender. It is all about similar mindsets that we can find in any age group, nation, religion, race, or gender. These mindsets are increasingly becoming the main source of lasting change. They represent the new leaders of the future, those who are heroic enough to dare to change for the better.



And finally, organisations that are able to find, attract, develop, and retain this new breed of leaders will be the ones that will evolve. The organisations that cannot will mostly fade away as do those who remain captivated by the “Now” mentality.

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EMPOWERING BUSINESS LEADERS THROUGH
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