

5 DIMENSIONS OF THE GROWTH MINDSET

DESIGN THINKING REPORT

Test Name

Personal Details

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Assessment Date: 14 Jun 2021

Report Date: 14 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 14 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.

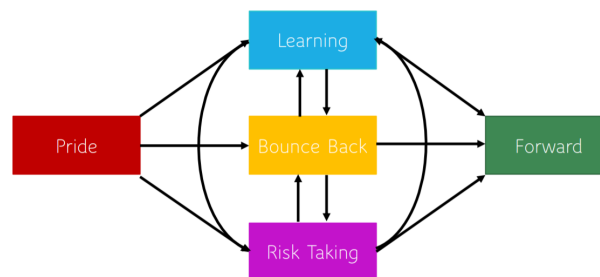
However, for the Pride dimension, the higher the score, the lower would be your pride tendency. Hence, if one scored 3.6 for Pride, it means that the person does not view his or her past successes as the solution for future problems, but is open to learning how to navigate the new normal.

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:

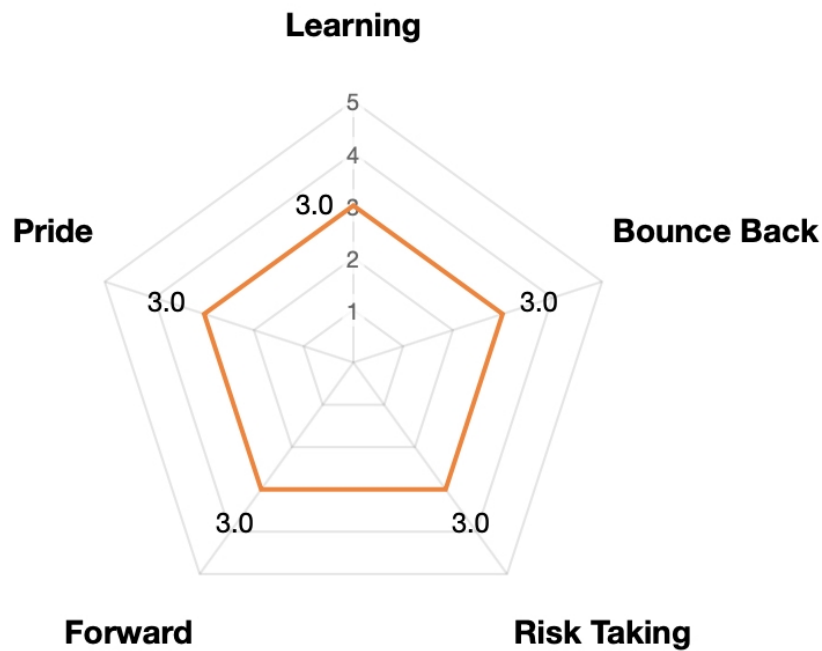


You will see that Pride impacts on Learning, Bounce Back and Risk Taking, and those, in turn, impact on one another, and all of them, finally, impact on Forward.

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 transition zone.

You are in the higher end of the Learning transition zone and this means that you are open to learning, and you tend to ask questions and uncover new knowledge in areas of interest. You also tend to seek out new areas of interest, testing out some theories. However, you tend not to stretch your inquiry too much, preferring to focus your efforts on areas that you know will lead you to elements of payoff. You also tend to view failure with some suspect. While you accept that failure is the root of learning, you also tend not to want to be seen as “continuously failing” for the sake of learning. As such, you won’t go “all in” towards learning from failure.

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 transition zone.

You are in the higher half of the transition zone for Risk Taking. What this means is that you tend to be more growth minded in your risks, not minding very much how people react to your “failures”. You may be comfortable being laughed at, or even be seen as a “failure”. However, there are some fixed elements that you might not be able to let go of. Some of them may be related to losing money, time or other resources when you are wrong. This will sometimes make you cautious, and that can slow down your decisions. Other fixed elements may be related to your sense of self, your abilities to be looked upon as a successful person. You may be reluctant to risk that sense of success for a chance to see what is right or what is wrong. This tends to make you measured in your response when you come up against these fixed tendencies. Otherwise, you are quick in your response to test new ideas.

4. Forward

Your Forward dimension is in the transition zone.

You are in the higher transitional zone for Forward. This means that you tend to have both fixed and growth behaviours in moving ahead. You have a higher tendency to prefer action over planning, although you will not sacrifice the time to map out all the steps you would have to take to get to where you want to be. Yet, you tend not to be totally rigid with the plan, preferring to let the situation unfold itself for you. You are likely to have contingencies planned for, especially at critical junctures of the journey, but these are more high-level ideas rather than tactical manoeuvres for each outcome. Ultimately, you tend to agree with Mike Tyson who said, “Everyone has a plan, until they get punched in the mouth!”

5. Pride

Your Pride dimension is in the transition zone.

You are in the higher transitional zone for Pride. What this means is that while you are confident in your convictions and experience, and you tend to use them to make your decisions about actions and the way forward, you will hear out the perspectives of others around you and take their point of view under consideration. However, in situations that are very clear to you that you are right and have seen the outcomes before, you simply make the decision and move ahead so as not to waste time. Notwithstanding that, you tend to spend some time contemplating whether your experience and your judgement fit the scenario, looking for areas where they diverge and then how you can bridge that knowledge gap.

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 Design Thinkers

What is Design Thinking?

Design Thinking is a problem-solving process that utilises visualisations and ethnographic inputs to uncover solutions that have not been undertaken before. It looks at a problem from customers' perspectives and unlocks the keys to delivering a better solution. Sometimes, it might be to build a better mousetrap— other times, it is to create a whole new mouse!

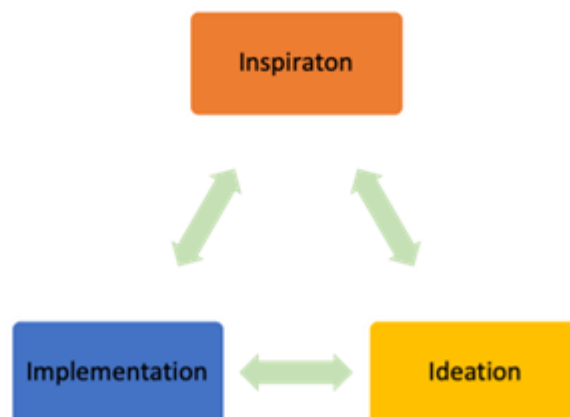
Some people say that design thinking is a form of innovation, others say that it is a systematic process of uncovering customer data and fitting process knowledge onto it. In reality, design thinking is all that and more! It can lead to product innovation, process innovation or even business model innovation. However, the KEY ingredient of design thinking is information. We need to uncover the right data, and follow that info-trail to reach the right customer solution.

There are some others that say that design thinking is simply an old idea in new clothes. Anyone who has knowledge of value chain thinking will be able to see that it is similar to design thinking. In fact, value chain analysis is a tool in design thinking, so they are not far wrong.

When we put it all together, therefore, design thinking is a multi-disciplinary business problem-solving toolkit that serves to address a customer pain point in the most innovative manner.

Models of design thinking

There are several models for design thinking: the IDEO 3-step model and the Liedtka 4-step model and the typical 5-step agile model. The IDEO model steps through the following phases:



The Liedtka et al model asks 4 questions:

- What Is?
- What If?
- What Wows?
- What Works?

Finally, the 5 Step Agile Process is as shown:



Regardless of the model used, a design thinker will:

1. Understand the customer or the user by uncovering the person's pain points in engaging with the company's products and services
2. Get into the shoes of this customer or user to understand the emotional highs and lows in navigating the product and service
3. Pinpoint the area of focus for product or service improvement
4. Come out with several ideas to meet the area of focus
5. Create a prototype and get inputs from the customer
6. Then testing these ideas out in the market before it is rolled out

Hence, you will see that a design thinker does not just come up with improvement ideas, she/he will implement these ideas through trial and error, prototyping and going to market.

Keys to becoming a good Design Thinker

Just as there are many different ways to become successful, there are many different ways to excel as a design thinker. Here are some of the key skills and attributes to becoming a good design thinker:

1. Have diverse skillsets

Repertoire is the range of skills that you possess. If you have a broad repertoire, it means that you are skilled in many areas that can support your design thinking projects. If your repertoire is narrow, then you have limited skillsets that you can call upon to give your ideas a boost. Skillsets are not difficult to acquire; it requires interest, learning and application. As a design thinker, you need to understand customer management, service quality, value chains, new product development, operations, marketing, sales. That is very broad scope indeed! The design thinker does not need to start with all these skillsets, of course, but she/he will need to develop them along the way. For a design thinker, learning is a very important skill. Lifelong learning, in fact.

2. Identify a problem to solve

The design thinker is very cognisant that she/he does not have all the resources to solve all the problems

she/he wants to. Hence, there is a need to focus; focus on the industry, focus on the people, and focus on the jobs to be done. The problem need not be some big, complex issue like solving world hunger. It is simply something that industry players have overlooked, or decided not to focus on due to its scale. The best way to identify problems is to look at the customer and see how she/he is engaging with the product or service. By taking on an ethnographic focus, the design thinker can not only identify the problem for one customer, but for a whole customer segment! And that will ensure greater customer value.

3. View situations from multiple perspectives

In order to identify new and novel ideas, there is a need to see things with different perspectives. The ability to shift focus and contemplate the product or service from different application angles will help the design thinker achieve that. This requires that the design thinker suspend his/her own judgement of what is right or wrong, and allow the customer to say so.

4. Be data driven

By suspending judgement, the design thinker is able to see the data that each market experiment yields in greater clarity, enabling her/him to call a spade a spade. As such, a design thinker is like a market researcher, allowing the information to lead her/him to the right conclusion for what is the possible solution to the market problem.

5. Test assumptions

One of the biggest stumbling blocks to design thinking success is to be blind to one's own assumptions. You may have heard that "Assume" makes an "Ass" of "u" and "me" – which is very apt in design thinking because if we do not follow the data and we assume that there is customer value in our idea, that we have the means to execute the idea and that we can do it to scale, we may well be setting ourselves up to fail even before we have started on the solution. Even if you are 100% sure that you have a winning idea, test them out – again and again.

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 design thinkers know that there is no bad failure, just bad response to it.

7. Act on the ideas

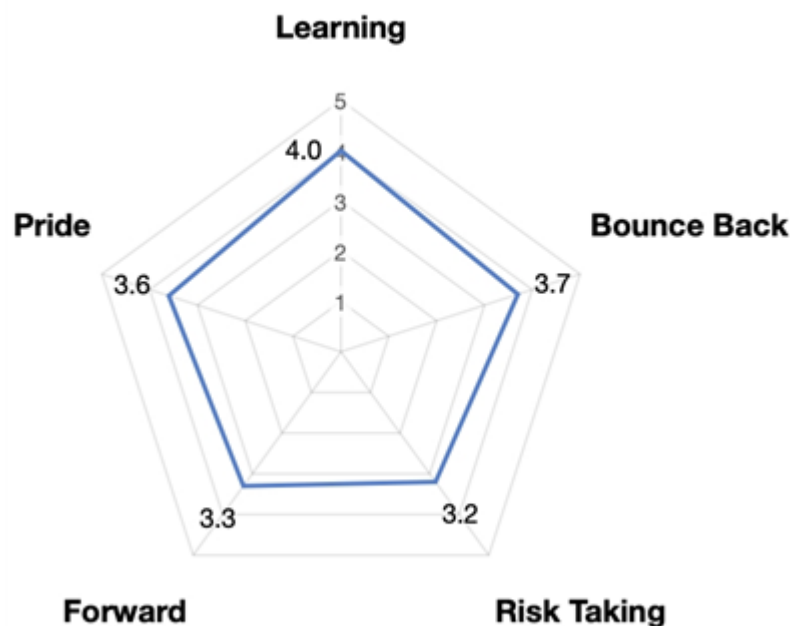
The greatest asset for the design thinker is her/his ability to act; in this case, to solve the problem. They say that ideas are aplenty but solutions are few. The design thinker will set out to solve the problem through the scientific method. Understanding that she/he does not have all the answers, the design thinker will map out the different hypotheses and run tests to confirm them. Unless the design thinker is inventing a better mousetrap, where secrecy might be key, other solutions will come with a large amount of co-creation. This means that the design thinker must be willing to share, to onboard different partners, and create value for the customers facing the problem. Yet having customer value is not enough; the solution must be able to be created. And knowing how to make one of such product might not be a problem, but what about making many such products? Can this be done economically? And finally, having scale is not enough if you cannot protect that. Hence, the design thinker needs to step through each set of experiments to finally bring the solution to the market.

The Optimal growth mindset profile for the design thinker

An Optimal Profile is one which shows the 5DGM profile of successful growth minded design thinkers. 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 design thinker is to have ALL dimensions in the growth zone, in fact, it is not necessary. While the scores may be high, they are not growth scores for all dimensions.

The optimal profile for the design thinker is shown here:



Notes in 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 design thinker. 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 Design Thinkers Profile

1. Learning dimension is the highest.

As outlined earlier, lifelong learning is a very important aspect for design thinkers. In order to uncover the problem statements and create the solutions for them, there is a constant need to discover, learn, understand, apply and then solve. Even after the solution has been created, the design thinker is constantly learning to improve the outcomes, increasing the value to customers, increasing operational effectiveness, improving scale with lower costs. Hence, if there is one dimension that should best define the design thinker, it would have to be the Learning dimension.

2. Bounce Back and Pride are the next strongest dimensions.

We did mention that the design thinker 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 design thinker to have a strong Bounce Back dimension. The same applies to Pride, as the design thinker will need to abandon his/her own concept of right and wrong and place his/her trust in the 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 design thinker is looking for. Hence, the Pride dimension also has to be within the growth zone.

3. Forward is just outside and just inside the growth zone.

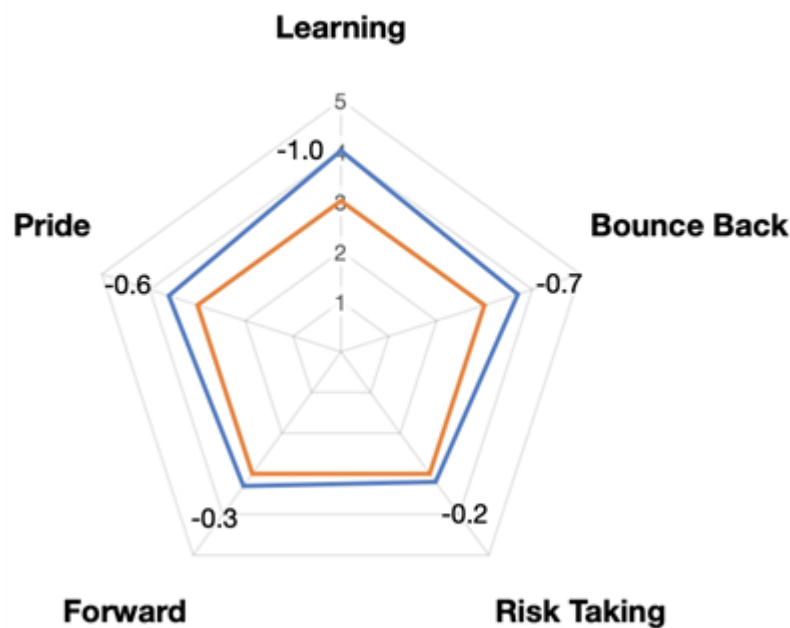
We always have to remind ourselves that the fixed score for Forward does not mean the person does not move, it just means that she/he takes on a planned approach to moving. When the score is fixed, it can be debilitating because the person needs to be certain of each step and the outcome of each step all the way to the end before she/he takes the first step! Yet, at this score of 3.3, the score is still high, where if we add 0.2, it falls into the growth zone. But why not higher? This is because design thinking is process-driven. While we may want to take several steps at once, it is not wise as the element of failure can be high. Hence, as we take each step, it provides us with useful data, and that data will help shape our next step. As such, there is an element of a planned approach within the evolving approach. As such, the score for Forward is just within striking distance of the growth zone.

4. Risk Taking is in the transition zone.

Finally, one might expect that Risk Taking is higher for the design thinker, but that is not necessarily so. In fact, since we are dealing with some unknowns, and we are taking the data-driven approach of uncovering what is and what is not happening, we should err on the side of less risk, even if we have the ability to Bounce Back well. By ensuring that we “fail fast, fail cheap”, we limit our risk profile, all the while working to enhance being more right as we undertake more experiments. In other words, we have to approach the design process with a risk mitigated mindset. But just so we are clear – a score of 3.2 for Risk Taking means that we still have to be able to put ourselves out there, to risk being wrong, to risk our reputation, to risk our experience and skills. If the data and experience is not in the company, the design thinker will need to risk being wrong in order to be right.

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 design thinking 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 does not meet the optimal.

Being in the higher transitional score for Learning, you do embrace the idea that failing can lead to learning, even though you will try not to stretch yourself too far to uncover new ideas. Your tendency to maintain some aspect of control over what you learn, and how you learn it, tends to hold you back. This will seep into your design thinking ideas; while you embrace innovation and new ideas, these are still within set limits. Indeed, you will want to try to control the extent of the downside of the innovation or new idea. This may cause you to either pull the plug on a project too soon, or to limit its scope.

Development:

You don't have to go crazy about it and suddenly become completely wild on innovation and new ideas. As it is, design thinking projects take on a structured approach, so that will be good for you. What you want to do is to scope the project large enough to allow new ideas to germinate and this will allow you and your team to flex the learning by doing mentality. Stretch yourselves to just beyond your capabilities, so that all of you either expand and grow, or they fail and grow. Either way, this builds resilience in the whole team, leading all to improve their Bounce Back and their Risk Taking over time. And growth minded team members will relish this opportunity while lesser growth minded ones will learn to develop. All in all, a very good outcome for a design thinking leader!

2. Bounce Back

Your Bounce Back dimension does not meet the optimal.

Even though you did not meet the optimal score, 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 business 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.

3. Risk Taking

Your Risk Taking dimension meets the optimal.

You are within the higher transition zone for Risk Taking, and that is just about the amount of risk that a design thinker should be comfortable with. In the higher transition zone, your Risk Taking is tempered with a little caution. Hence, while you have growth minded tendencies, you tend not to risk everything on a hunch. While you may stomach losing some portion of your investment to chase the solution, you do so with some hesitance. This makes you pause for a while to count the costs, not just financially, but also to your personal reputation. After all, being wrong can sometimes reflect badly on us and you will want to take some time to consider that.

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 business; or conversely, to bet more than the bank!

4. Forward

Your Forward dimension does not meet the optimal.

Being in the higher transition zone for Forward means that while you are comfortable to take that first step and commit resources to meeting goals, you also know that you cannot do it blindly and without at least an overview of the steps you would be taking to get to where you want to be. You are also comfortable to pivot your ideas if you come to a dead-end, chalking that to circumstances and learning along the way. This will give you and your team members the confidence and the drive to move forward, reaching first for the low hanging fruits, and then scaffolding that to higher and loftier goals. You always encourage your team to move ahead, but not without a plan, even though you know that all plans are bound to change. And therein lies the beauty of a resilient plan – it allows for change. And change is the currency of the design thinker!

Development:

Learn how to develop scenarios. This is a key management tool that design thinkers 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 does not meet the optimal.

In the higher transitional zone for Pride, you tend to have some fixed tendencies regarding your past experience and knowledge. You are confident in your abilities and the depth of knowledge and experience, and you make that known at times, even though you prefer to keep that to yourself while you hear out your team members. You are open to hearing what they have to say, and you are keen to see how your knowledge stacks up with the current information. While you are generally open to hearing what they have to say and will suppress your urge to correct them, you tend not to hold your peace when they are truly far away from the reality that you know to be true. For these cases, you will prefer to just tell them they are wrong, point them in the right direction, and tell them to move on. After all, you say, time is money! Yet, as a design thinker looking to uncover new knowledge, it would be wise to allow the process to disclose these truths by themselves so that you do not layer your own judgement on the situation.

Development:

Design thinkers always have these dual opposing needs – development and performance. Sometimes, it is so much easier to just tell people what is wrong so that we do not allow performance to slip. Yet, that will put paid all your efforts at uncovering new knowledge. You should learn to keep quiet, allow them to learn, while

you can engineer a fail-safe solution that will kick in when the situation turns for the worse. This way, you allow your team members to be self-sustaining, while you still manage the performance. A truly growth-minded win-win solution!

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 design thinker in one endeavour and a catastrophic failure in another! But one thing is certain; there has never been a successful design thinker 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 design thinker, we also know that different profiles will still allow you to be a good one. And as all good design thinkers 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 design thinker.

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

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