



# Resilience In Focus

## Mindset and Feedback: How Praise and Criticism can Influence Mindset in Others

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According to researcher, Dr. Carol Dweck, we all perceive our skills, abilities, and intelligence through two mindsets, fixed and growth. These mindsets are everchanging and can differ depending on the task or circumstance of the task you're doing.

### What Does a Fixed and Growth Mindset Look Like?

- **Perception of abilities:** *Fixed:* Unchanging; *Growth:* Constantly developing
- **Challenges:** *Fixed:* Avoid at all costs; *Growth:* Embrace as an opportunity
- **Setbacks:** *Fixed:* Quits; *Growth:* Perseveres
- **Effort:** *Fixed:* Worthless, not helpful; *Growth:* The key to mastery and growth
- **Criticism:** *Fixed:* Finds not useful, ignores; *Growth:* A method of learning
- **Success of Others:** *Fixed:* Stays away, feels threatened; *Growth:* Surrounds themselves, feels inspired
- **Overall Result:**
  - Fixed:*
    - Prioritizes LOOKING skilled
    - Plateaus early, not reaching full potential
    - Misses out on opportunities for development
  - Growth:*
    - Prioritizes DEVELOPING skill
    - Constant learning and growth
    - Reach higher levels of potential
    - Search for opportunities for development

### Can I Influence the Mindset of Others?

Yes! You have the potential to influence the development of either mindset in others through how you give feedback, criticism, and praise. Bringing awareness to how you provide feedback to others can help you incorporate more effective strategies of criticism and approval in order to help others develop a growth mindset, whether it be with your Soldiers, coworkers, Family members, or friends.

#### Criticism:

##### *Ineffective*

**What does it look like?** Criticizes the mistake or person without providing the information on how to avoid the error in the future.

**Example:** "I thought you were smarter than this."

**Influence on Mindset:** Reinforces failure as unchanging and lacks information for how to learn from it.

##### *Effective*

**What does it look like?** Identifies the process, behavior, or strategy that was ineffective and offers an alternative for how to improve.

**Example:** "It looks like you failed because of (mistake), maybe you should try (strategy) instead?"

**Influence on Mindset:** Reinforces learning as a process, and failure is an opportunity for growth.

#### Praise:

##### *Ineffective*

**What does it look like?** *Empty praise:* does not explain what exactly was done well. *Person focus:* Only praises talent or natural ability.

**Example:** *Empty praise:* "Good job." *Person focus:* "Wow an A+; you must be a really good test taker!"

**Influence on Mindset:** Lacks information to know how to recreate success in the future and harder to persevere through challenges that threaten reinforced beliefs of talent or natural ability.

*Effective*

**What does it look like?** An extension of empty praise and process-focused by identifying the process, strategy, effort, or resources used to enable success.

**Example:** “Good job, great idea to utilize (strategy), it demonstrated (effort).”

**Influence on Mindset:** Reinforces learning as a process and clearly identifies the keys to mastery.

**Additional Resources:**

- [ARD Mindset Feedback – Video](#)
- [ARD Mindset Feedback – Infographic](#)

**Book:**

- *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, by Carol S. Dweck

**Feature Article:**

- [How Praise Became a Consolation by Christine Gross-Loh](#)

**Journal Article:**

- [Article from the Developmental Psychology Journal](#)

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