



## **AWAKENING THE POWER WITHIN YOU** **(Enjoy Your Everyday Learning Mindset Life)** *Self-Enrichment and Inspirational series ...*

We live in an era of risk and instability. Globalization, new technologies, and greater transparency have combined to upend the business environment and give many people a deep sense of unease. And it has become virtually impossible for some executives even to clearly identify in what industry and with which companies they're competing. All this uncertainty poses a tremendous challenge for strategy making. That's because traditional approaches to strategy — though often seen as the answer to change and uncertainty—actually assume a relatively stable and predictable world.

As a being in today's technological world, we are going through two types of evolution – biological evolution as well as technological evolution. Biological evolution is driven by survival of the fittest, as adaptive traits are those that make the survival and reproduction of a population more likely. It isn't perfect, but at least, in a rough way, it favors organisms who are adapted to their environments. Technological evolution has a different motive force. It is **self-evolution**, and it is therefore driven by what we want as opposed to what is adaptive. The problem with technological evolution is that it is under our control and, unfortunately, we don't always make the best decisions.

In the last century, you got an education, then you got a job. But the future isn't going to be so clear-cut. Jobs appear in new sectors while other sectors shrivel away as markets change and technology evolves.

"In that kind of situation, knowledge and vocational skills could be more likely to get outdated more quickly than in the past," says Hiro Izushi, senior lecturer in innovation at Aston Business School in Birmingham, U.K., and director of the Centre for International Competitiveness, devoted to research on competitiveness. "If you move from one sector to another, there's a good chance that what you learned might not be applicable to the sector you're moving to." That means workers at all levels need to keep learning, whether to keep up with the changes or to move to emerging opportunities as new sectors develop.

"As we move to a knowledge economy, the number of jobs where people can simply turn up and be told how to do the job and be well paid for it is diminishing rapidly," says John Howkins, author of the book, "The Creative Economy," and chairman of BOP Consulting in London. "We need now to go on learning throughout our lives," he adds. "When somebody stops learning, now it's like they've stopped thinking, or at least being creative."

The basics like math and reading continue to be important, but the ubiquity of technology means we no longer need to memorize data—encyclopaedic information is but a click away. Instead, what we need is the ability to sort through mountains of information and decide which bits are important. What we need is exposure to several disciplines in order to have not just the creativity to come up with new ideas but also the ability to see how to translate something from the drawing board into an actual product or service. What we need are the interpersonal skills to work with collaborators or to lead teams.

Companies count on innovation more than ever to maintain a competitive advantage. Innovation requires three ingredients: **intellectual capital** that can be converted into something valuable; **financial capital** to fund the process; and **human capital** to sustain the entrepreneurial process, says John Kao, author of the book "Innovation Nation: How America Is Losing Its Innovation Edge, Why It Matters and What We Can Do to Get It Back," and chairman of the Institute for Large-Scale Innovation, a San Francisco-based nongovernmental organization that promotes societal cooperation for innovation. That raises the profile for "soft" people skills. "Mentoring and collaboration are much more important in a creative economy than in one based on fixed goods, output and repetition," says Mr. Howkins, the author.



Another soft skill rising in stature is **entrepreneurship**. It's not just for people who want to create their own companies. Established corporations are seeking more people who bring an entrepreneurial spirit, says Professor Huggins of Cardiff. He points to the University of Waterloo, in Ontario, Canada, which established a center for business, entrepreneurship and technology within its engineering faculty.

Employees in the future will require fresh thinking in both practice and behaviour. As with all technological development, there will be lovers and haters. There will be pros and cons. You must make choices every day to either embrace or resist the changes that technology facilitates. Keep in mind, there is an irrepressible human desire to innovate, so continuous change is inevitable. Innovation will bring a constant reassessment of how businesses operate. Your attitude will largely affect your success. I urge you to make a mind switch: be the person that stays relevant and inspires others by maintaining your curiosity about, and adopting, technologies that enhance the way we work.

The main question in this article is who will succeed and thrive in this technological evolutionary world?

It is interesting that over 20 years of business consulting, executive coaching, and training in various fields, I realized that **the view you adopt for yourself profoundly affects the way you lead your life**. It can determine whether you become the person you want to be and whether you accomplish the things you value – it's what I termed it as "learning mindset". At this juncture, you may ponder on the word "learning" as studying, taking courses, reading strategic books, etc. No, that's not what I am referring to. To give you a better sense of what is learning mindset, imagine that you are having a really bad day:

Walking into your business proposition, you thought that you nailed it with your senior management after all the preparations work that you have putted in. You got rejected by your CEO, after questioning you in various scenarios, which you cannot answered. That evening on the way home, you gotten a ticket for speeding. Being really frustrated, you call your best friend to share your day but only to be brushed off.

What would you think? How would you feel? What would you do?

When I asked people with fixed mindset, most of the answers I gotten will be: "I'm a total failure." "I'd feel rejected." "I'd feel worthless – everyone's better than me." In other words, they'd see what happened as a **direct measure** of their competence and worth.

This may be what they think of their lives: "Life is unfair and all efforts are useless." "Nothing good ever happens to me." "The world is out to get me."

Stop!!! Relook at the scenario, was there death and destruction, or just a rejection of a proposal, a ticket, and a bad phone call?

That's what fixed mindset does to people who cannot cope with failure – "I wouldn't bother to put so much time and effort into doing well in anything." In other words, don't let anyone measure you again. "I will not take any more initiatives, and will simply wait for instructions." "Yell at someone if I get a chance to." "Just drink and get drunk. Being sober is painful."

The interesting thing is when we are not coping with failure, we can feel just as worthy and optimistic.

This is where learning mindset sets the difference between a successful person and a mediocre person.

"I need to consider other aspects in business propositions, especially, the impact on the Company's values as CEO has pointed out. I also need to be more focused and not let my mind wonders when I am driving, it may cause lives. Jimmy is my best buddy, on many occasion he will always hear me out, he could be having a bad day himself."



“I’d look at what was wrong on my business proposition, and the numbers don’t add up, resolved to be more careful with the figures when working on trends. Pay the speeding ticket and must be more careful when I am driving. I will call Jimmy to find out if things are fine with him.”

You don’t have to have a mindset to be upset. Who wouldn’t be? Things like rejection or a rebuff from a friend or loved one are not fun events. Yet, people with learning mindset were not labelling themselves and throwing in their towels. Even though they feel distressed, they were ready to take the risks, confront the challenges, and keep working at them – believing that you can develop yourself – to becoming better.

*This learning mindset is based on the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts, your strategies, and help from others.* Although, people may differ in every which way – in their talents, interests, or temperaments – everyone can change and grow through application and experience.

There are people out there who are wasting time trying to prove over and over how great he or she could be, instead of cherishing their own qualities by getting better in whatever they set their mind to do. Reading the biographies of Steve Jobs, Jack Ma, Li Ka-shing, etc. I realized that they never set out to be great, they simply want to becoming better. The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it (even when it is not going well), is the hallmark of the learning mindset. This is the mindset that allows people to thrive during some of the most challenging times in their lives.

Even in the learning mindset, failure can be a painful experience. But it doesn’t define you. It’s a problem to be faced, dealt with, and learned from. The idea of trying and still failing is the worst fear within the fixed mindset, and this is the reason why many people give up even before they can put in all their efforts. The fixed mindset limits achievement. It fills people’s minds with interfering thoughts, it makes effort disagreeable, and it leads to inferior learning strategies.

Taking the journey of a learning mindset:

- What is the value behind the change? Values help you feel the fear and do it anyway because the result is important.
- What is the best that can happen if you take this step and make the change?
- Have faith in yourself. Faith is deeper than confidence. You need faith when you have no reference experience for the resources you need, but you go ahead anyway because you believe in yourself as part of something greater. You feel the fear and do it anyway.
- You can use a similar experience in the past as a reference experience if it is close enough to what you want.
- Find someone whom you trust and who believes in you. Ask them why they believe in you and what they have seen and heard that makes them think you have the resources you need to forge forward in your work or life.

Perseverance and learning mindset are vital elements of the drive to succeed. Remember, you are here, which means you have already overcome many different challenges – you are an overcomer! Nothing will be able to bluffer you because you will adopt a learning mindset to keep on learning and adapting to new technologies, world events, creating new products, and up your competencies values. You are more than a conqueror because you are a forever learner!

Your Joy is My Inspiration! Your Success is My Reward!

Your Favorite Author & Speaker  
Peter Ng