

Failing to Learn vs. Learning to Fail

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Dev
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Product
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Stop Chasing Buzzwords
Start Working Better

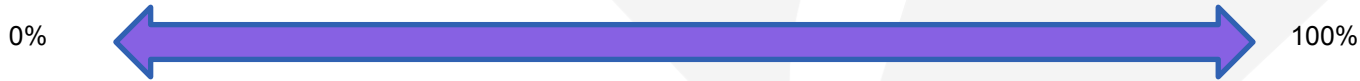


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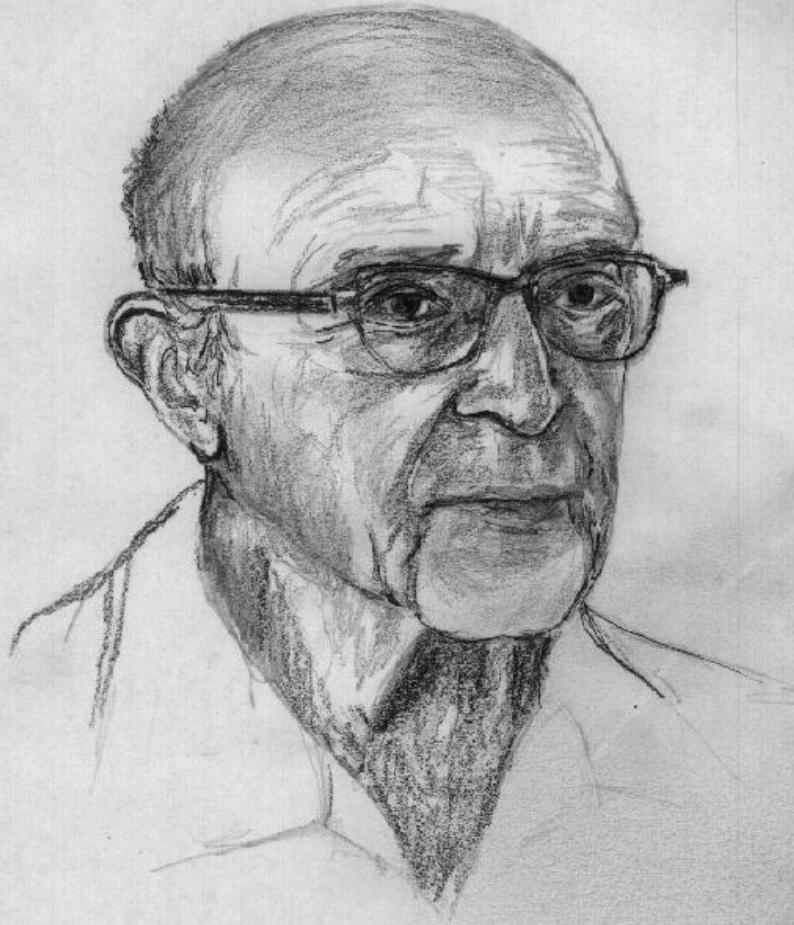
**You can learn new things,
but you can't really change how
intelligent you are.**






Do you call yourself lazy?





“We cannot teach another person directly: we can only facilitate learning”

– Carl Rogers



Why are you on stage, Sasha?





When the student is ready,
the teacher will appear

- Fake Buddha Quote

Resources



Books

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

Carl R. Rogers. *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy.*

W. Timothy Gallwey. *The Inner Game of Tennis: The Classic Guide to the Mental Side of Peak Performance.*

Betty Edwards. *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain.*

Malcolm Gladwell. *Outliers: The Story of Success.*

K. Anders Ericsson. *Peak: Secrets from the New Science of Expertise.*

Neil A. Fiore. *The Now Habit: A Strategic Program for Overcoming Procrastination and Enjoying Guilt-Free Play.*

Mihály Csíkszentmihályi. *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience.*

Edgar H. Schein. *Organizational Culture and Leadership.*

Papers

Chris Argyris. *Teaching Smart People How to Learn.*

Chris Argyris. *Action science and organizational learning.*

Sara Ghaffari et al. *The analysing of Marsick and Watkins Theory in Comparison with other Learning Theories.*

Natasha Tamiru. *Team dynamics: Five keys to building effective teams.*

Barry O'Reilly. *How to Implement Hypothesis-Driven Development.*

Shufen Xing et al. *Effects of Ability and Effort Praise on Children's Failure Attribution, Self-Handicapping, and Performance.*

Tom Clynes et al. *How to Raise a Genius: Lessons from a 45-Year Study of Supersmart Children.*

Julian C. Stanley et al. *Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth (SMPY).*

Auste Simkute et al. *Ironies of Generative AI: Understanding and mitigating productivity loss in human-AI interactions*



Personal Story



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Technion
Israel Institute
of Technology

Biology → Computer Science



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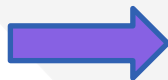
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of Technology

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Performance in Academic Ranking of World Universities by Subject Fields							
Subject Fields	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Mathematics	51-75	51-76	52-75	51-75	51-75	51-75	76-100
Physics	/	/	/	151-200	151-200	151-200	/
Chemistry	51-75	51-75	51-75	29	38	101-150	101-150
Computer Science	17	15	15	18	18	18	18
Economics/Business	/	/	/	/	/	/	/



Obviously, I need to study harder!





Well, this sucks, so...







This was classic Fixed Mindset





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"Everyone should own this book."

—CHIP HEATH & DAN HEATH, authors of *Made to Stick* and *Switch*

mindset

THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY OF SUCCESS

HOW WE CAN
LEARN TO FULFILL
OUR POTENTIAL

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CAROL S. DWECK, Ph.D.

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Fixed Mindset

You can learn new things,
but you can't really change
how intelligent you are.

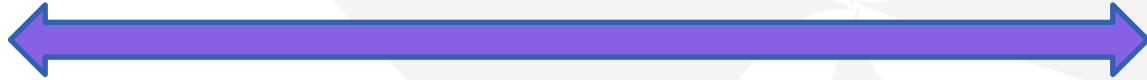
Growth Mindset

You can always
substantially change how
intelligent you are.



Mindset

Fixed



Growth



Mindset

Intelligence

Physical ability

Creative ability

Personality

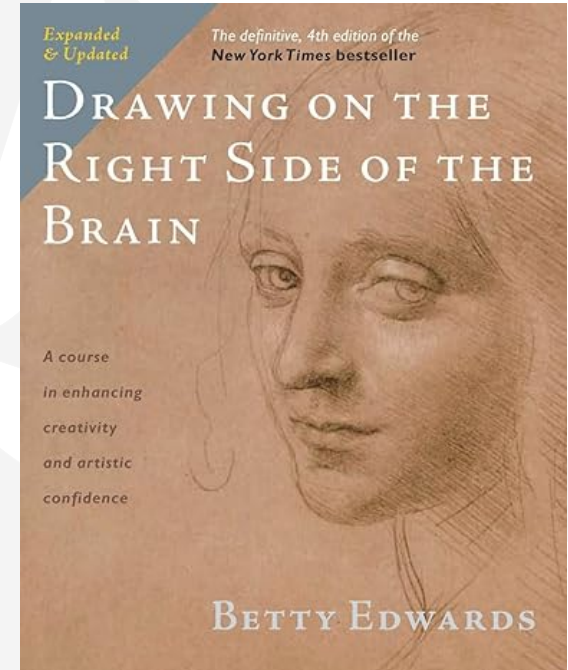




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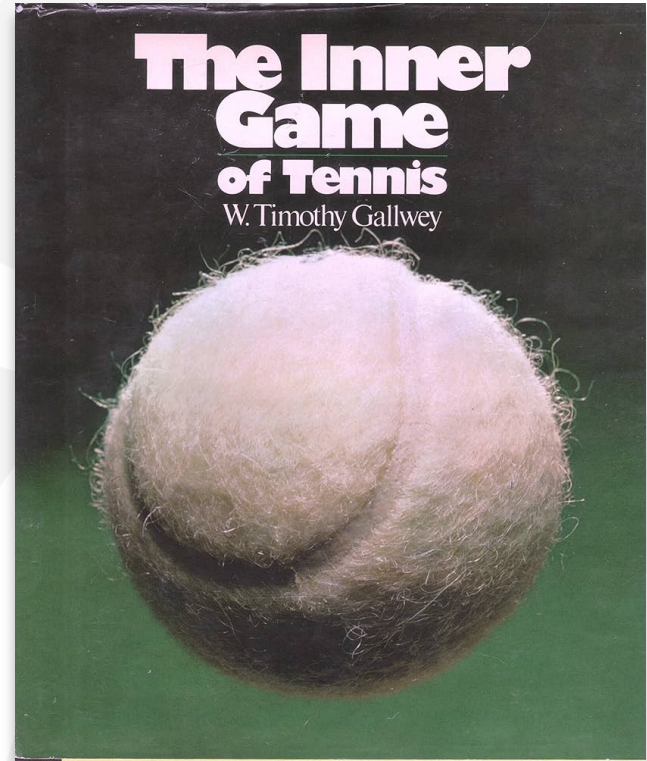


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“Fortunately, most children learn to walk before they can be told how to...”

– Timothy Gallwey





Wait, hold on...



What about talent?

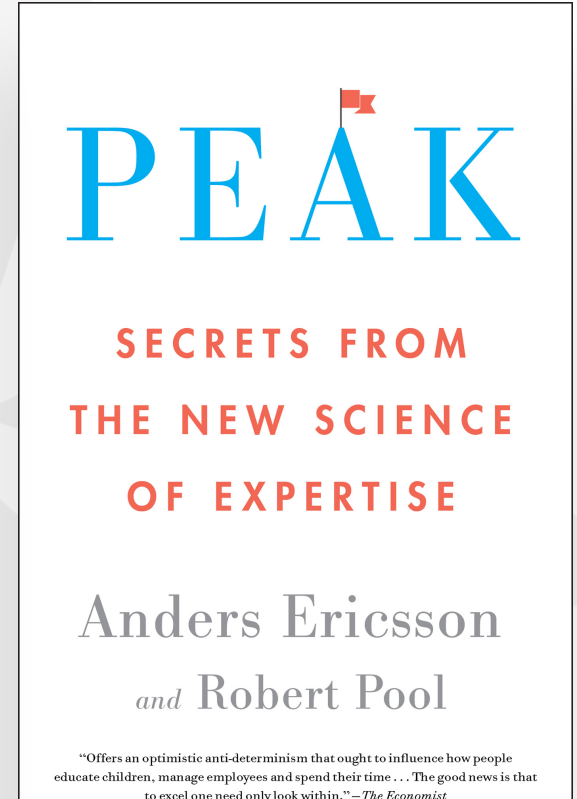
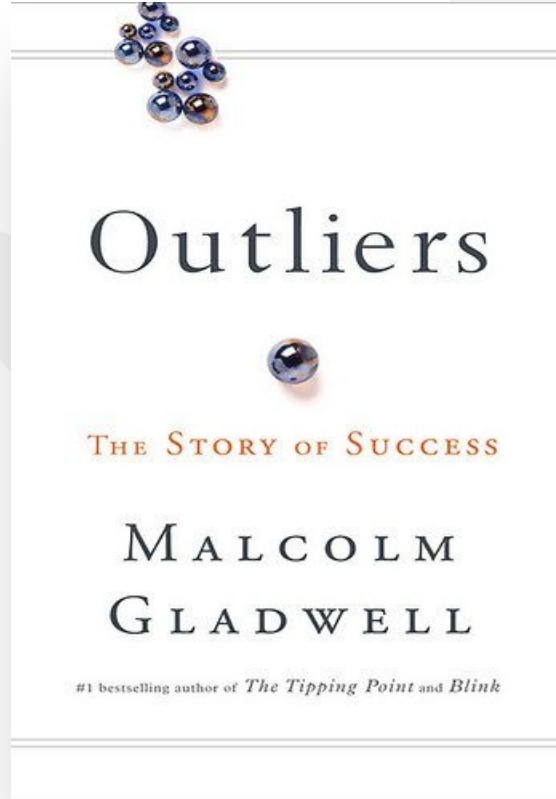


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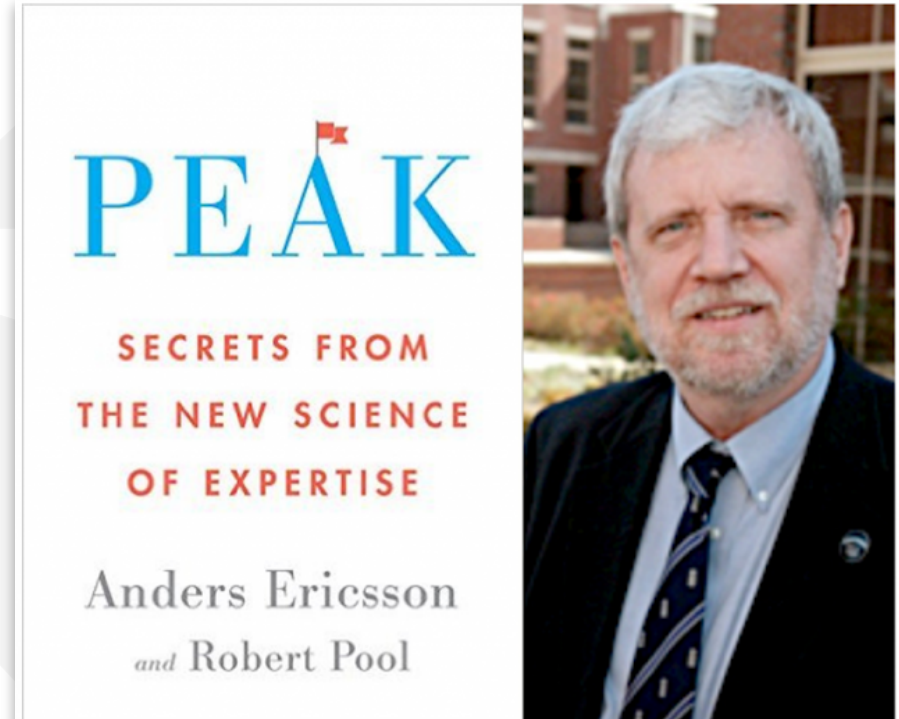


10,000 hour rule



Deliberate practice involves feedback and modification of efforts in response to that feedback.

– Anders Ericsson



Kind vs Wicked learning domains

Presence or absence of
immediate and accurate
feedback

– Robin M. Hogarth



Your starting point matters, but
Effort and Feedback are the key





Fixed Mindset

Growth Mindset

Inborn Abilities

Effort and Feedback



Assuming that you cannot exceed
your inborn abilities
is a highly **limiting belief**



Suffer while proving yourself
or
Enjoy while improving yourself





The stories we tell ourselves



I am Lazy



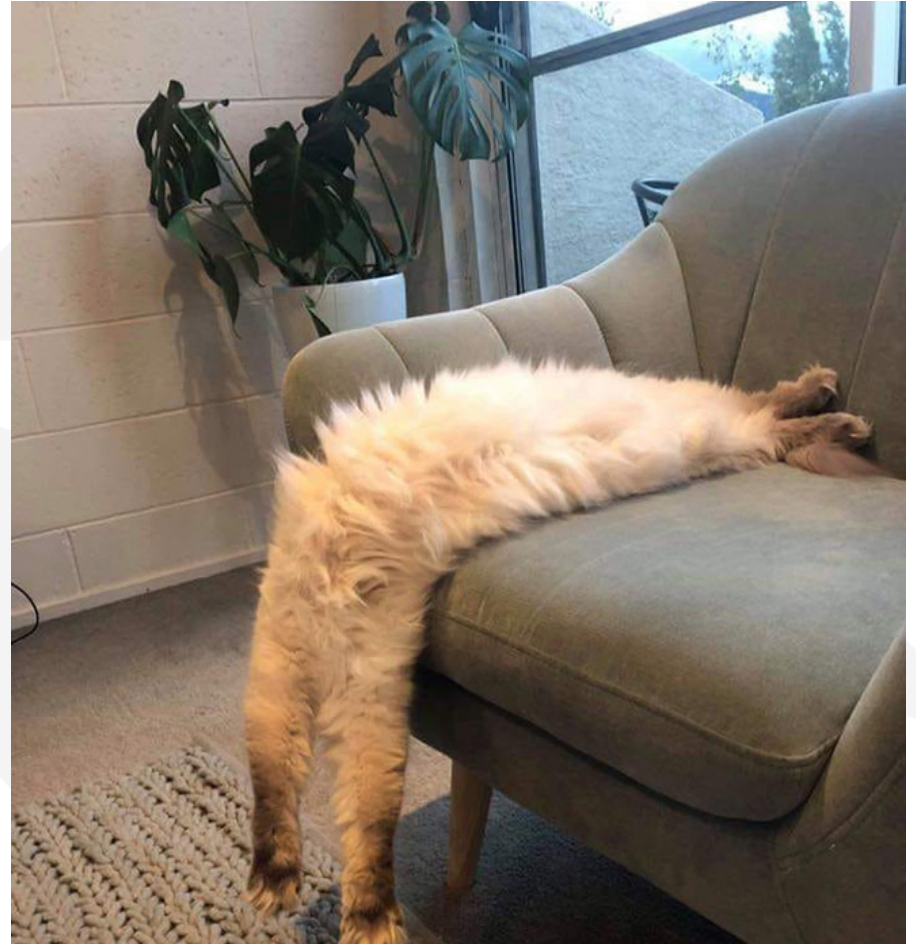
My children are Lazy



My employees are Lazy



Are you Lazy?



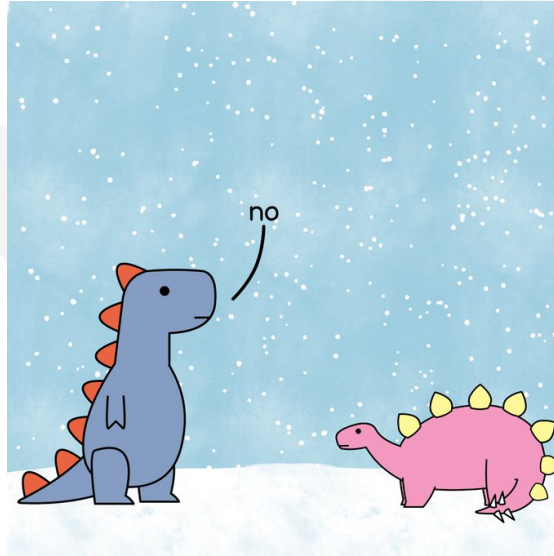
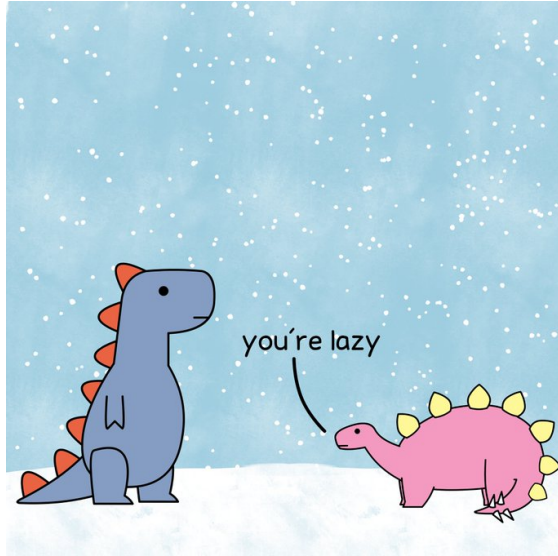


You are NOT a cat!



People are born with
intrinsic motivation, self-
esteem, dignity, curiosity
to learn, joy in learning.

- W. Edwards Deming



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Why are we procrastinating?





Fear



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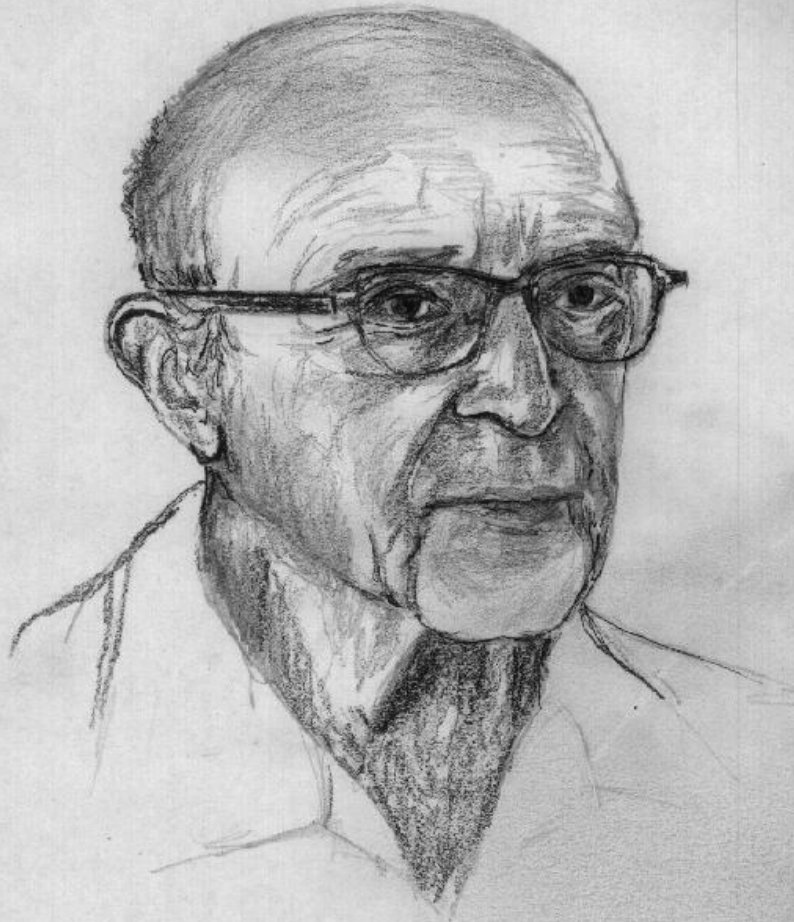
Fear is the enemy of learning





Threat to Self is the enemy of learning





“The educational system which most effectively promotes significant learning is one in which **threat to the self**, as learner, is reduced to a minimum.”

– Carl Rogers

The true challenge:
The game is rigged against us



Our schools are excellent at
reinforcing Fixed Mindset



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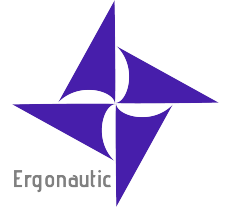
We constantly evaluate and classify students



The IQ test was designed by Alfred Binet
as a measure of progress



Praise



Ability

Effort

**Informational
Feedback**

Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6176062/>



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Our hero stories **erase** all mention of **effort**

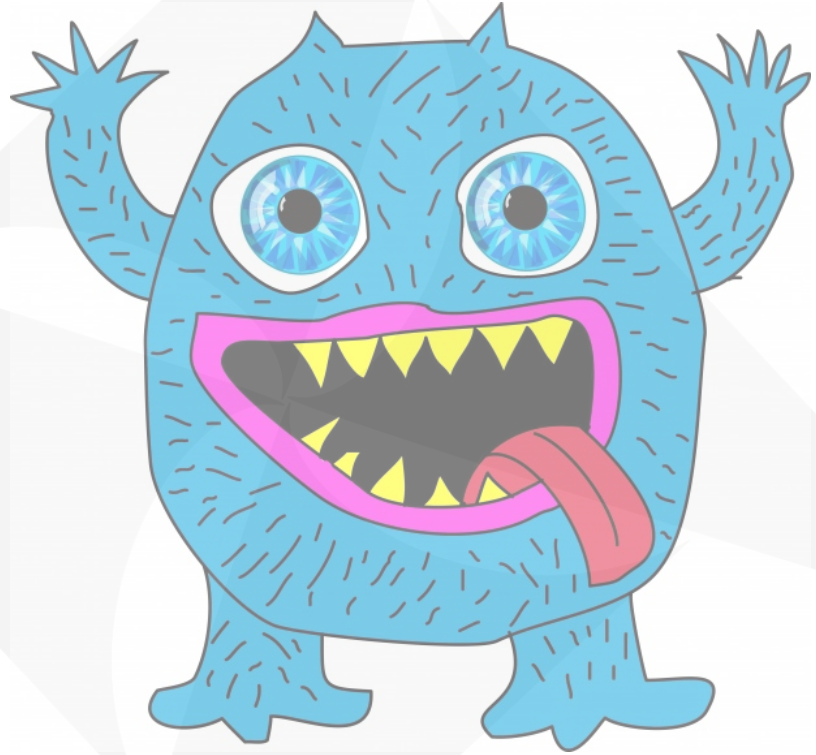


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Effort

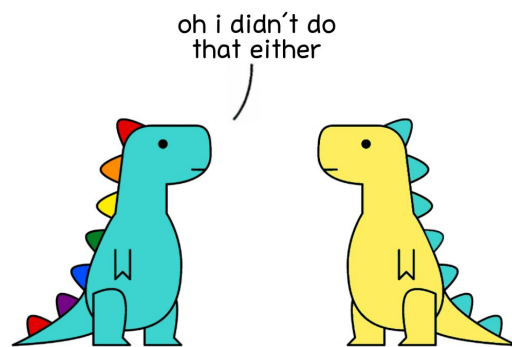
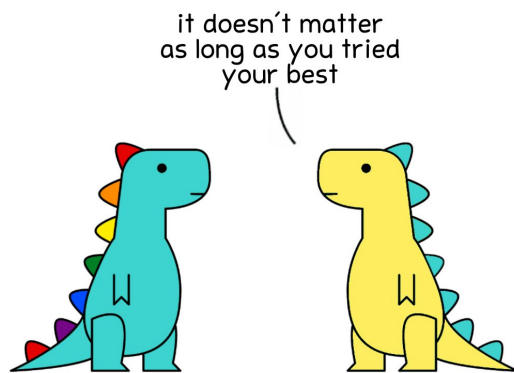
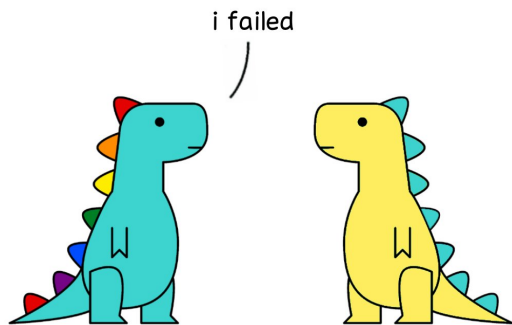


Fixed Mindset

“...effort is a bad thing. It, like failure, means you're not smart or talented. If you were, you wouldn't need effort.”

- Carol Dweck. Mindset.





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“The idea of trying and still failing -
of leaving yourself without excuses -
is the worst fear within the fixed mindset”

- Carol Dweck. Mindset.

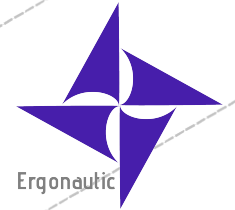


Self-handicapping

Creating or reporting performance obstacles to provide excuses for failure that don't threaten **self-worth**

Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6176062/>

Organizational Learning



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“No **organizational learning** can take place without **individual learning** and learning from the developments in the **environment**.

The organization has the power to **encourage or discourage** individual learning, and to learn from or to ignore developments in the environment.”



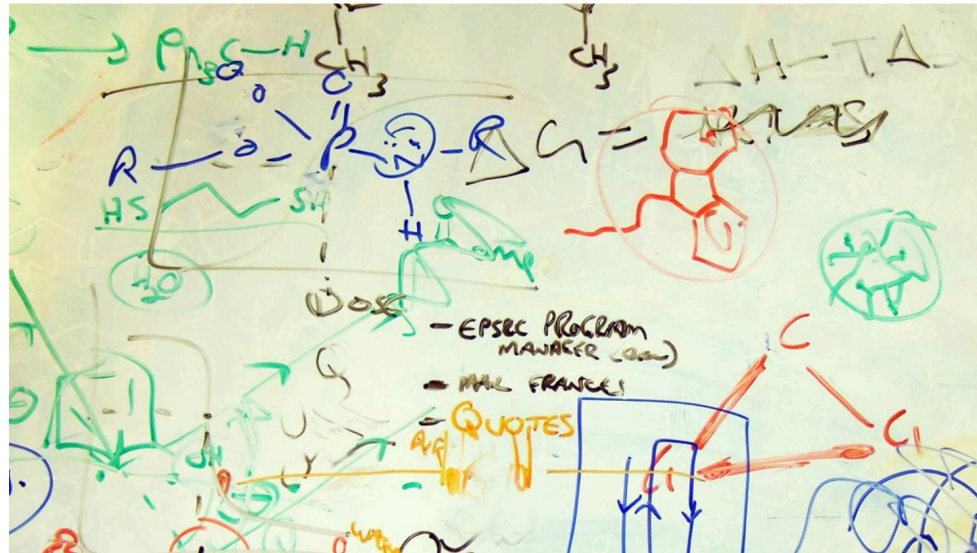
All learning requires vulnerability



Teaching Smart People How to Learn

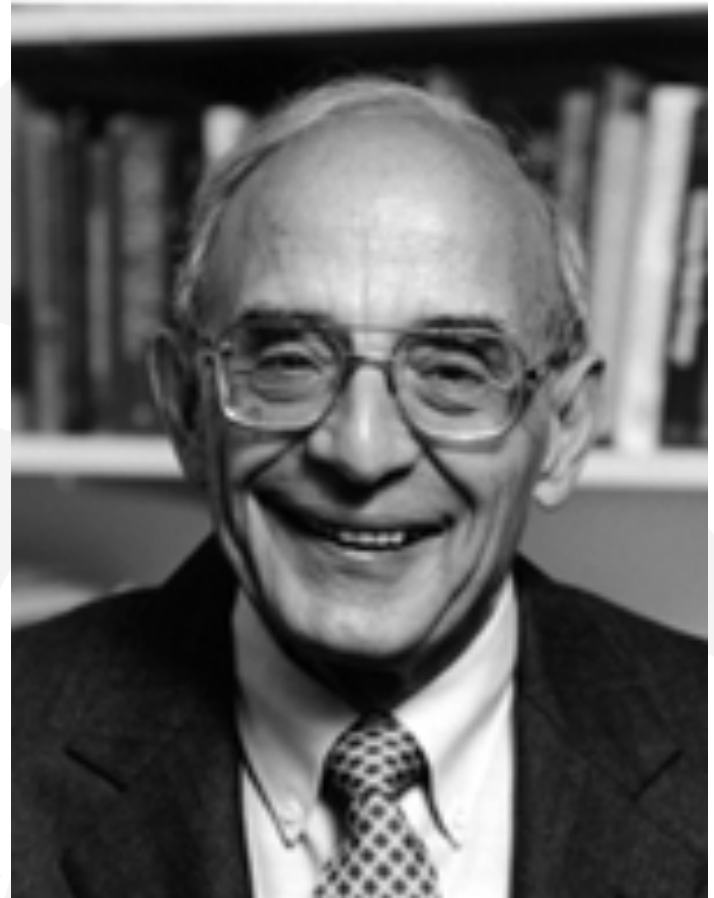
by Chris Argyris

FROM THE MAY-JUNE 1991 ISSUE



“Smart people don't learn...
because they have too
much invested in proving
what they know and
avoiding being seen as
not knowing.”

– Chris Argyris





Threat to Self is the enemy of learning



Our organizations are invested in
“saving face”



Theory of Action

The way the organization selects strategies to achieve objectives.

Source: Chris Argyris. Action science and organizational learning.



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Model 1 Theory of Action

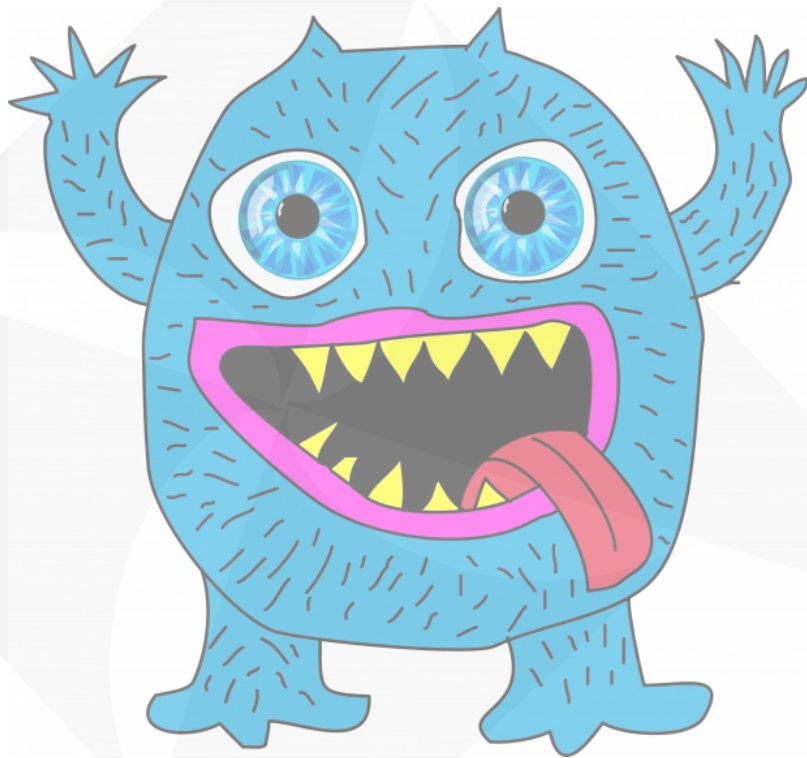
1. Achieve the purposes as I perceive them
 - Opinion-based objectives
2. Maximize winning, minimize losing
 - Maximize control
3. Minimize eliciting negative feelings
 - Save face for yourself and others
4. Emphasize rationality
 - Prove achieving defined objectives

Source: Chris Argyris. Action science and organizational learning.

Model 1 Values Summarized

Make sure the collected data **confirms**
the highest paid person opinion (**HIPPO**)

Mistakes



Google Research on Effective Teams

250 inputs

200 teams

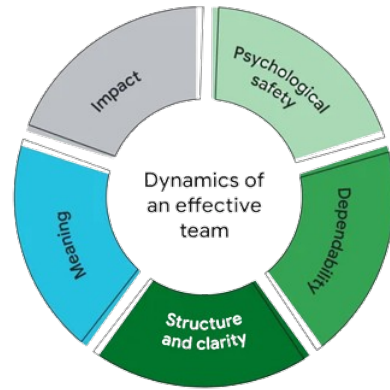
35 statistical models



Source: <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/intl/en-emea/consumer-insights/consumer-trends/five-dynamics-effective-team/>

Psychological Safety

Team's shared belief that it's OK to take risks, to express ideas and concerns, to speak up with questions, and to admit mistakes

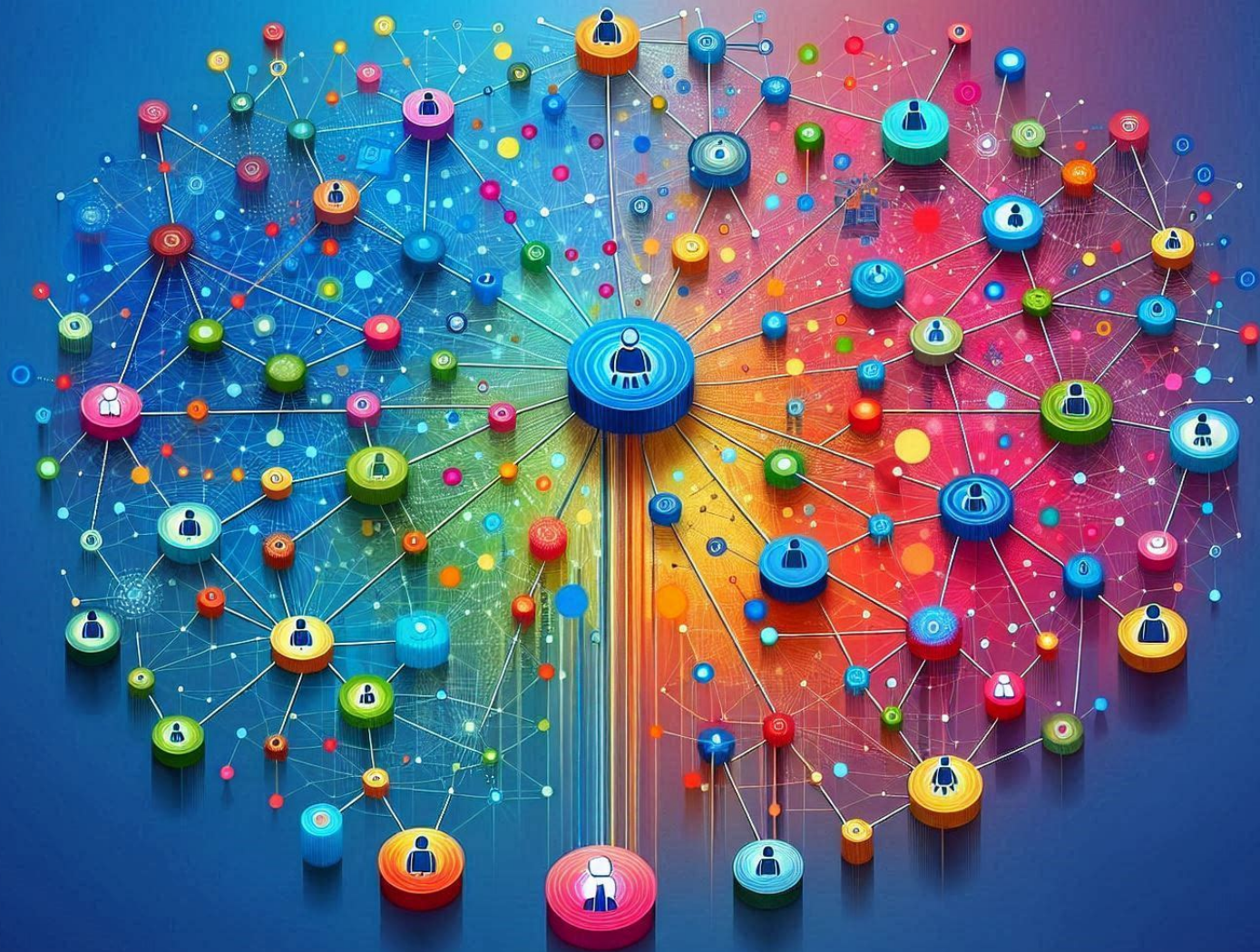


Source: <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/intl/en-emea/consumer-insights/consumer-trends/five-dynamics-effective-team/>



Fear is the enemy of learning







“What does it mean for an organization to learn?”

The learning is embedded in the **organizational network** in the same way the human learning is embedded in the **connections between neurons.**”

— Jabe Bloom

How do we get there?



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“Cognitive” learning



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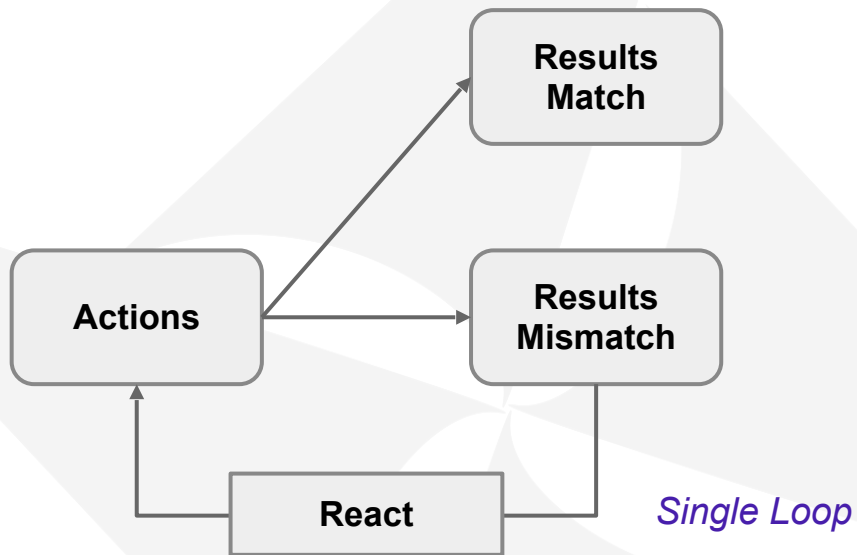
If knowledge was all it took,
we'd all have six pack abs.



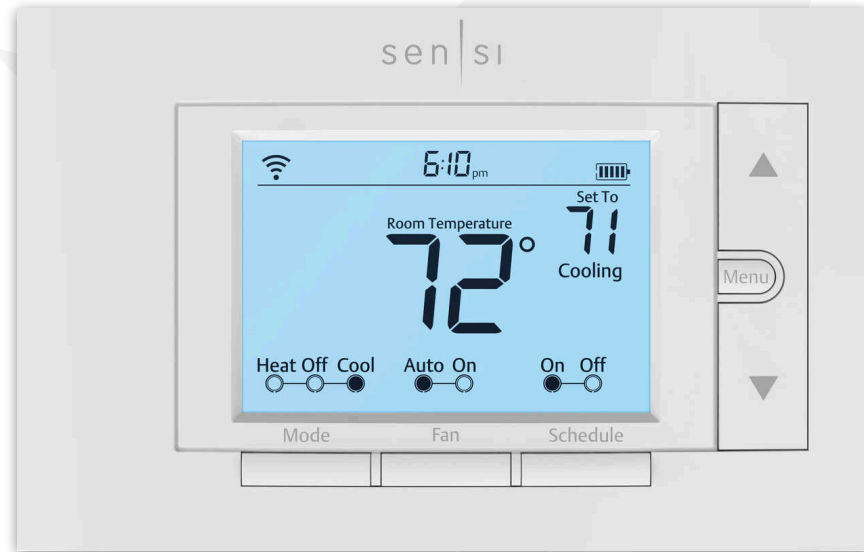


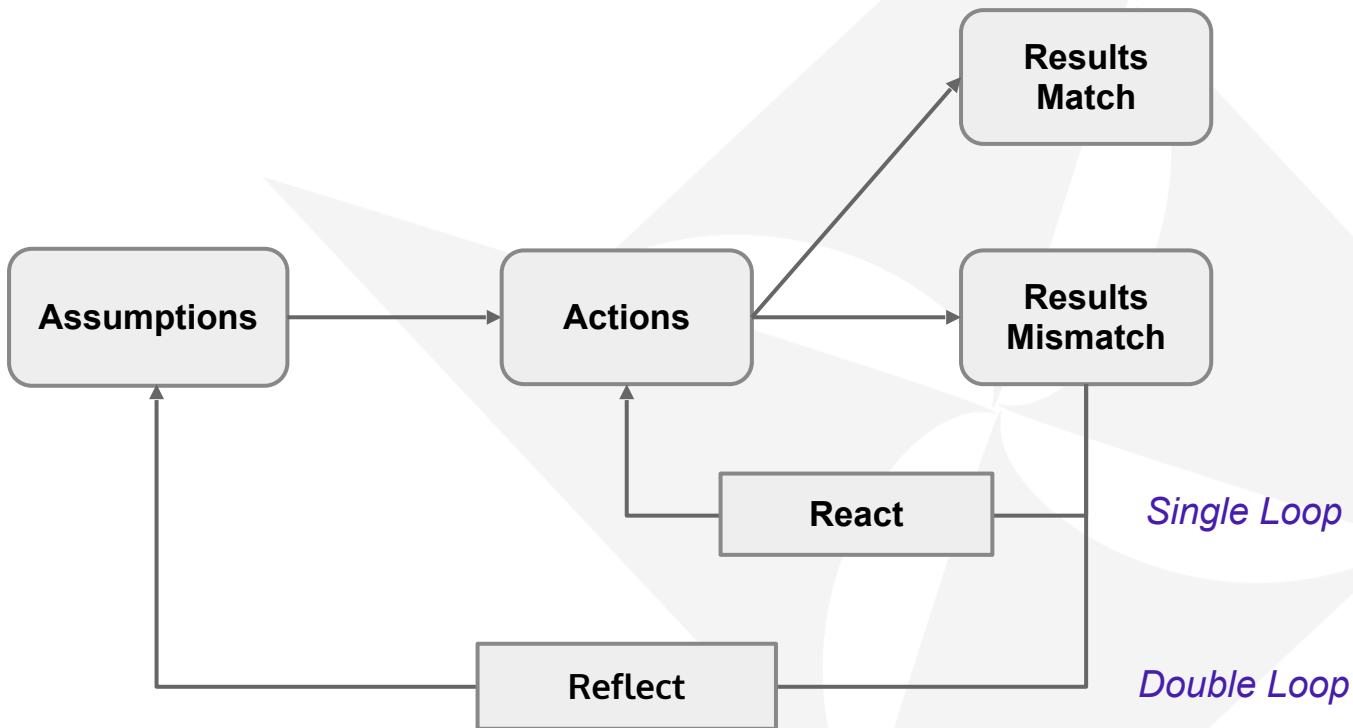
EQ skills require practice



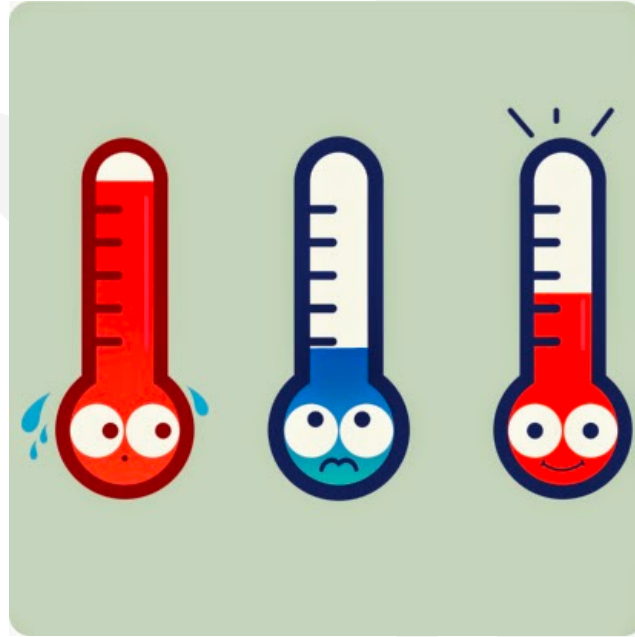


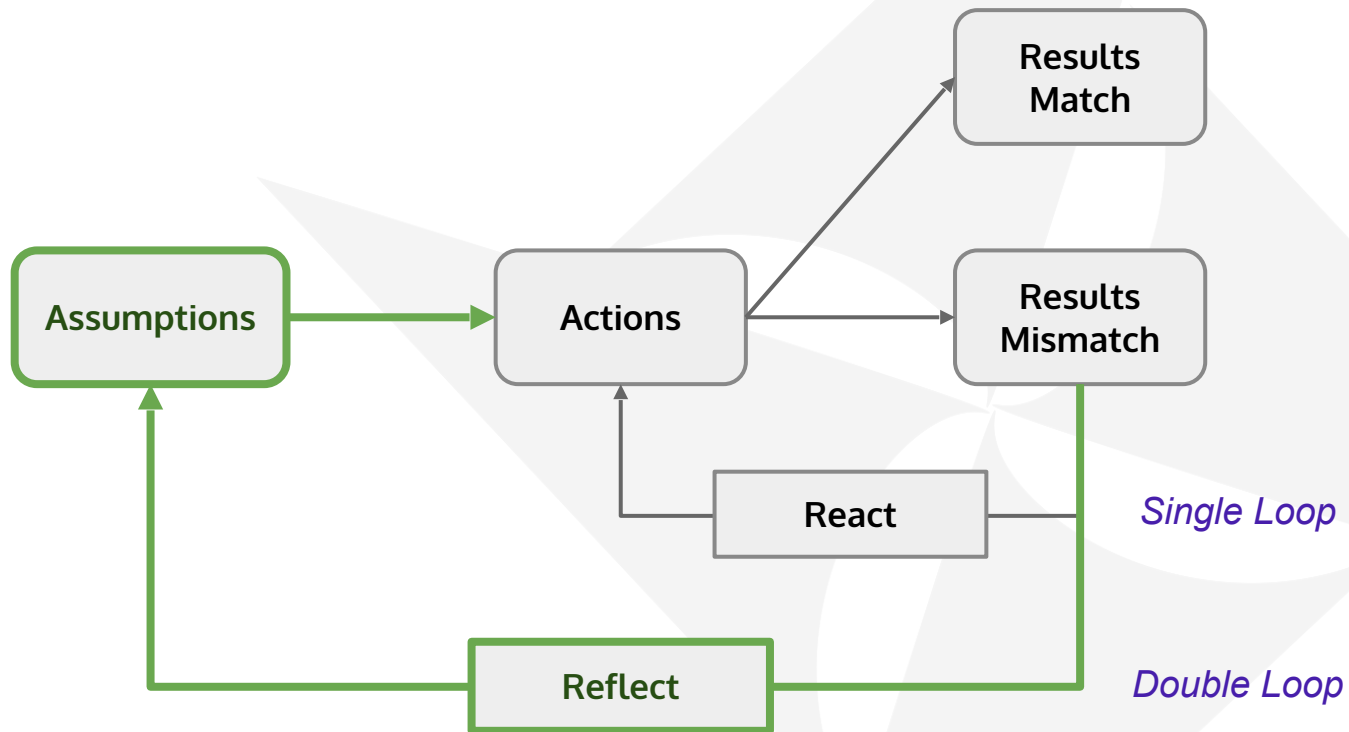
Single loop learning





Double loop learning





Take the **ego** out of the equation



Model 2 Theory of Action

1. Valid, testable information
 - Hypothesis-driven experiments
2. Free and informed choice
 - Joint tasks control
3. Internal commitment to the choice and constant monitoring of the implementation
 - Learning-oriented norms

Source: Chris Argyris. Action science and organizational learning.

Model 2 Values Summarized

Create a **testable hypothesis** and monitor the implementation to prove or disprove it

Hypothesis Driven Development

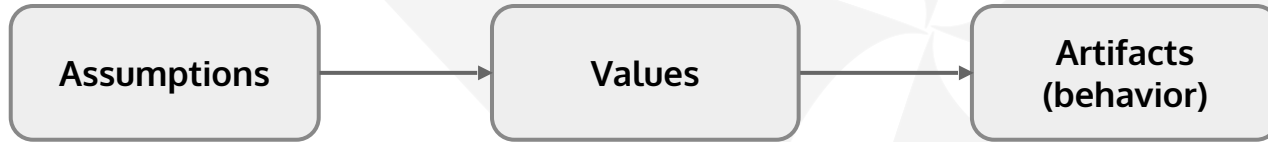
We believe that *<this capability>*

Will result in *<this outcome>*

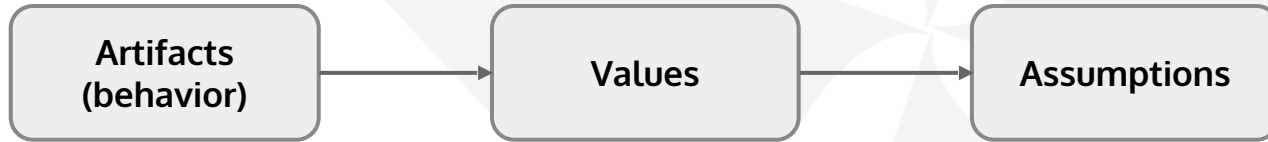
We will know we have succeeded when

<we see a measurable signal>

Popular Perception of Culture Change



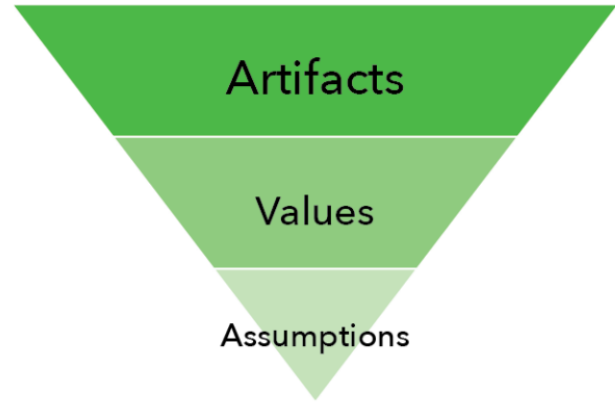
Culture Change (Schein)



“Anyone wanting to change a culture needs to define the actions and behaviors they desire, then design the work processes that are necessary to reinforce those behaviors.”

– John Shook, MIT Sloan

E.H. Schein's Model of Corporate Culture



Organizational Intelligence



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All systems are sociotechnical



FLOW

STATE OF TOTAL FOCUS AND JOY

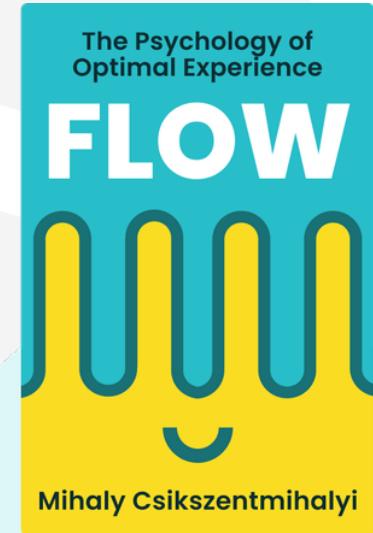
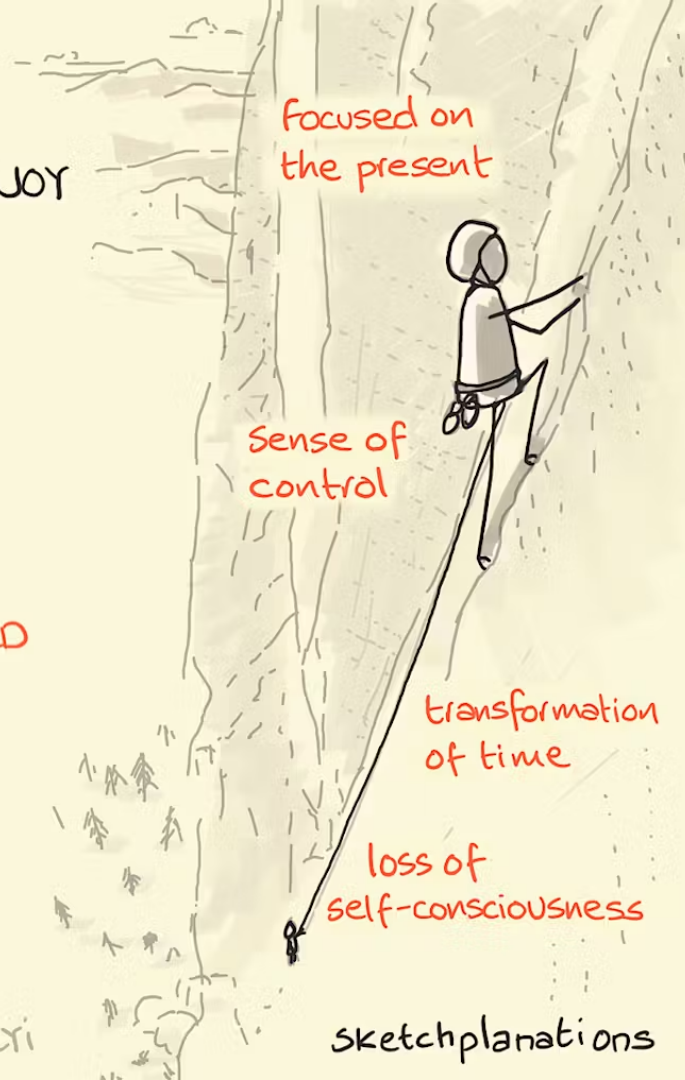
Conditions for Flow

1. **CLEAR GOALS**
AN AIM IN MIND
2. **FEEDBACK**
SEE YOUR PROGRESS
3. **CHALLENGE MATCHED TO SKILLS**
GROW AND LEARN

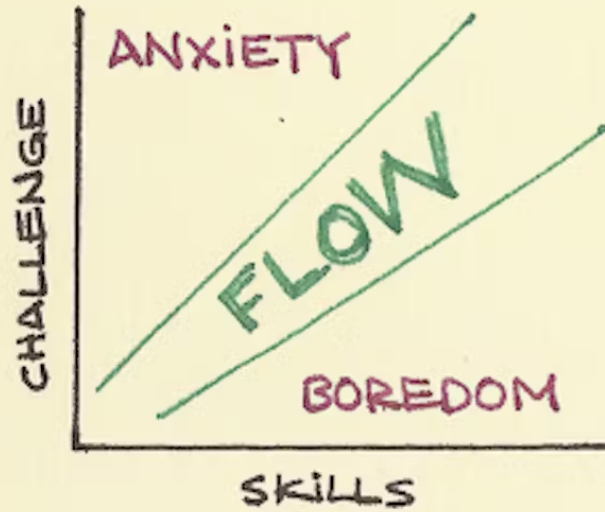
In flow

THE ACTIVITY BECOMES
AN END IN ITSELF

CONCEPT: CSIKSZENTMIHALYI

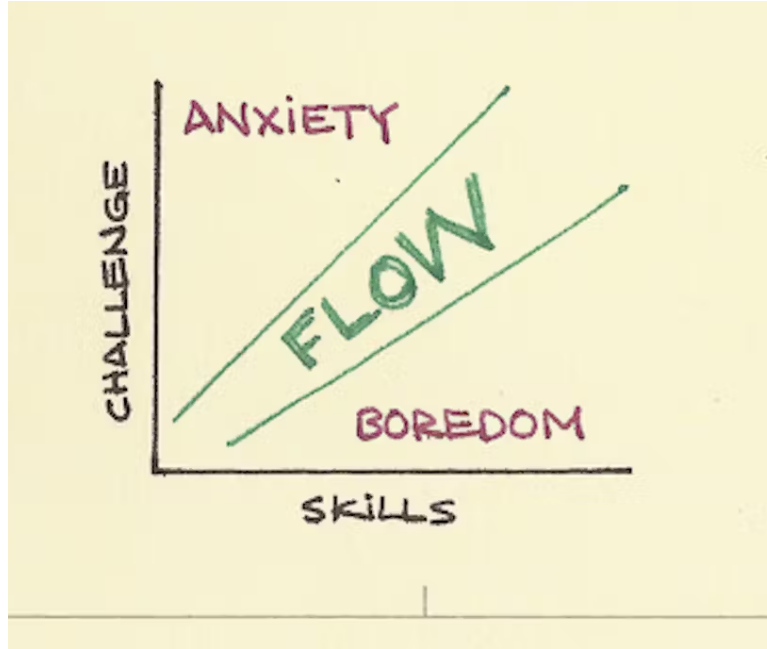


MATCH CHALLENGE WITH SKILLS FOR FLOW AT WORK



“Enjoyment appears at the boundary between boredom and anxiety, when the challenges are just balanced with the person's capacity to act.”

— Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi



Ironies of GenAI

Creator \Rightarrow Curator

Source: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2402.11364v1>





Fear is the enemy of learning





Threat to Self is the enemy of learning



Suffer while proving yourself
Or
Enjoy while improving yourself





Thank you!

**Sasha Czarkowski
(Rosenbaum)**

