

Athlete Leadership: Becoming A Driving Force Behind Your Play



Issue 3: Introduction to an athlete's mindset

An athlete's mindset is an important contributor in athletic performance. Consider the professional athletes who have won multiple championships, they've mastered their craft, but their mindset, also set them apart from their peers. Carol S. Dweck of Stanford University has identified TWO mindsets that athletes may have about their talents and abilities.

Fixed Mindset: Those with a fixed mindset believe that their talents and abilities are simply fixed. They are born with a certain amount and that's that. Athletes with this mindset may become so concerned with being and looking talented that they never fulfill their potential.

Growth Mindset: Those with a growth mindset, think of talents and abilities as areas that can be developed. These areas have the potential to come to fruition through effort, practice, and instruction. In the growth mindset, talent is something you build on and develop, not something you simply display to the world and try to coast to success on.

Here are a couple of ways to change your fixed mindset to a growth mindset:

1) Embrace Challenge As Learning Opportunities

If we avoid facing Challenges, we cannot maximize upon our current skills or develop new ones. Challenge always provides us an opportunity to learn. The more we learn, the more knowledge we develop, the more skills we acquire which will ultimately help us in the future.

2) Use Feedback and Criticism To Improve Performance

The more open we are to receiving feedback, the more we increase our chances at success. Feedback helps us determine where we need to improve and the areas that are currently a strength. There is nothing more helpful than understanding what is working for us and what isn't. The sole purpose of receiving feedback is to help us improve our performance. How can this not be positive?

"If you think you're perfect already, then you never will be." –
Cristiano Ronaldo

The infographic is titled "What Kind of Mindset Do You Have?" in a black speech bubble. It is divided into two columns. The left column is for "Growth Mindset" and features a blue and black soccer ball. The right column is for "Fixed Mindset" and features a red and black soccer ball. Below each ball is a list of beliefs associated with that mindset.

Growth Mindset	Fixed Mindset
I can learn what I have to learn with application	I am either good or I am not
If I get frustrated at my progress I persevere	When I get frustrated I pack it in
I want to challenge myself and grow	Don't challenge me I don't like it
Failing and making mistakes are part of learning	When I fail it means I am no good
Give me feedback on my effort and work rate	Give feedback I'm a "natural"
I take inspiration from others success	When others succeed I am jealous and threatened.
My effort and attitude make the difference in my success.	My abilities I am born with determine my success