

LEADING FROM A DISTANCE: LEVERAGING STRENGTHS

Leveraging the strengths of individual employees is critical to the success of a team. Delegating responsibility based on strengths and building accountability and enhanced communication - especially in an online environment - are key to maintaining productivity during times of reduced capacity.

The RACI Model

RACI (pronounced "ray-see") is a powerful tool that clarifies individual or group roles for each task in a project or business process, and it creates a simple language to discuss roles, responsibilities, and accountability within an organization. The RACI matrix is a responsibility assignment chart that maps out tasks, milestones, or key decisions involved in completing a project and assigns which roles are **Responsible** for each action item, which personnel are **Accountable**, and, where appropriate, who needs to be **Consulted** or **Informed**. The acronym RACI stands for the four roles that stakeholders might play in any project.

It is also a useful tool to increase communication, collaboration, and awareness of how we relate to others, as it creates a shared understanding of team roles and expectations. Using this tool allows managers to more easily delegate tasks and keeps projects moving forward.

How does RACI work?

RACI matrix charts outline team members and projects. Team members are assigned one of four roles for each given task or activity: Responsible (R), Accountable (A), Consult (C), and Inform (I). An example is below.

	Team Member 1	Team Member 2	Team Member 3	Team Member 4
Task 1	C	A/R		I
Task 2	C/I		R	A
Task 3	R	C	A	I
Task 4		R/A	C/I	
Task 5	R/A/C/I			

- R Responsible** The individual(s) who actually completes the task, the action/implementation. Responsibility can be shared between several team members.
- A Accountable** The individual who is who is the "owner" of the work and is ultimately responsible. This individual must sign off or approve when the task, objective, or decision is complete, and the role includes yes or no authority and veto power. Success requires that there is only one person identified as Accountable.
- C Consult** The individual(s) or groups to be consulted and give input prior to a final decision or action. Those consulted kept informed regularly and are active participants in the process.
- I Inform** The individual(s) kept informed of progress and with whom there is one-way communication. These are people that are affected by the outcome of the tasks, so need to be kept up-to-date, but are not consulted for input during the process.



GROWTH MINDSET

In *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, Carol Dweck identified two mindsets people tend to have about their basic qualities:

In a **fixed mindset**, your qualities are carved in stone. Whatever skills, talents, and capabilities you have are predetermined and finite. Whatever you lack, you will continue to lack. This applies not just to your own qualities, but to the qualities of others.

In a **growth mindset**, your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts...everyone can change and grow through application and experience. Intelligence is a starting point, but success comes as a result of effort, learning, & persistence.

As we look to the future, we are faced with uncertainty, constant change, and an increasing need for our teams to be more flexible, adaptable, and comfortable with unpredictability. Those who can adopt a growth mindset will be more responsive to those needs. Those with a fixed mindset will likely become increasingly stressed and overwhelmed by mounting pressures.

FIXED MINDSET	5 MINDSET CHARACTERISTICS	GROWTH MINDSET
Believe people are born with a certain, set amount	SKILLS & INTELLIGENCE	Believe people grow and develop skills & intelligence throughout life
Focused on performance and appearing competent	MAIN CONCERN	Focused on continual learning and appearing inquisitive
Avoid challenges; may give up easily when faced with obstacles	CHALLENGES	Embrace challenges; demonstrate flexibility and persistence
May ignore feedback or take it personally & get defensive	FEEDBACK	Prefer regular feedback and use it as a learning tool
Try to avoid making them; see them as failure	MISTAKES	Treat them as a learning opportunity & interesting challenge

Three key characteristics of a Growth Mindset culture:

Culture of learning:

Employees feel they have opportunities to cultivate new skills and capabilities at work.

Culture of innovation:

Employees feel comfortable taking risks to explore new ways to do things better.

Culture of feedback:

Employees feel they receive regular support and guidance from their managers on ways to improve and grow.

Three key Benefits of a Growth Mindset:

Positive behavior **change**

Increased employee **engagement**

Greater workplace **satisfaction**

Three Questions for Leaders to Consider

Ask yourself and your team

What **assumptions** about mindset do you make about the world—and how do these assumptions play out in your decisions?

What **techniques** have been useful to you for exposing your unexamined assumptions about mindset?

Have you had success in changing your mindset? If so, how?

