



Continuous Learning and Fostering a Growth Mindset: Unleashing Team Potential



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Introduction

In a world characterized by constant change and upheaval, skills that remain static quickly lose relevance. Successful teams are those that embrace a mindset of continuous learning, embodying qualities like curiosity, adaptability, and resilience. By incorporating principles of a growth mindset into everyday practices, organizations can cultivate teams that not only react to change but actively foster innovation.

The Significance of Continuous Learning

Traditional training methods, such as periodic workshops or annual development programs, are insufficient in the face of today's challenges. The current landscape necessitates learning on the go, where skill enhancement occurs in real-time alongside work tasks. This approach empowers teams to:

- Respond swiftly to market shifts with flexibility.
- Test new concepts without fear of failure.
- Replace outdated knowledge with practices that align with evolving business demands.
- Maintain competitiveness in industries where skills have a limited lifespan.



The Role of a Growth Mindset in Teams

At the core of continuous learning is the adoption of a growth mindset - the belief that skills and intelligence can be honed through effort, feedback, and perseverance. Teams that embrace a growth mindset:

- View challenges as opportunities for growth.
- Perceive feedback as constructive rather than critical.
- Regard setbacks as temporary obstacles that fuel resilience.
- Acknowledge learning and progress as significant as outcomes.

Strategies for Teams to Implement

Organizations can promote continuous learning and a growth mindset by:

- Introducing bite-sized and timely learning resources within daily workflows.
- Establishing regular team reflections, post-action evaluations, or learning sessions.
- Fostering an environment where experimentation is encouraged, and mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities.
- Leaders demonstrating their own learning journeys to set a positive example for the team.

Potential Areas for Further Research

In 2024, a group of researchers at the Veterans Health Administration's National Center for Organization Development, including Steven White, Tyler Barnes, Susan Drevo, Cheyna Brower, Kathleen M. McVey, and Mira Brancu, developed the Executive Team Assessment (ETA) to assess executive leadership team behaviors aligned with learning organization principles. Their findings highlighted strong correlations between all three ETA factors (Relationships, Foundations, and Functions) and organizational learning principles, employee engagement, favorable perceptions of senior leaders, job satisfaction among senior leaders' direct reports, perceptions of psychological safety and learning, and leader support.

In 2023, researchers Kevin Chi, Nilam Ram, and Laura L. Carstensen explored age-related differences in workplace learning activities and the emotional aspects associated with them. They discovered that older employees engaged more in helping behaviors and reported positive emotions from assisting others. Interestingly, both younger and older workers participated equally in learning activities, reporting positive emotions in both age groups.

Executive leaders who align their behaviors with teaming principles in learning organizations play a crucial role in enhancing psychological safety, ultimately fostering high-performing teams.



Call to Action

The question facing leaders and organizations is clear: Are teams merely completing tasks, or are they continuously evolving while doing so? Initiatives like micro-learning, fostering reflective practices, and promoting curiosity at all levels can pave the way for a future where a team's ability to learn, adapt, and evolve together becomes its greatest asset.

Conclusion

Continuous learning is not a one-time effort but a cultural transformation, with the teaming behaviors of executive and team leaders playing a pivotal role. Teams that master adaptability and resilience will surpass those reliant on past achievements. By ingraining growth mindset principles, learning seamlessly integrates into work processes, driving success and innovation.

References

- White, Steven, et al. "Measuring Executive Leadership Teaming Dynamics for Leading Learning Organizations." *Consulting Psychology Journal*, vol. 76, no. 1, Mar. 2024.
- Chi, Kevin, et al. "Age Differences in Emotional Experiences Associated with Helping and Learning at Work." *American Psychological Association*, vol. 38, no. 5, 2023, pp. 389–400.