



News 6 August 2024

## Can bias be positive and negative?

Are you holding yourself back? The answer is probably 'yes'. Well, more accurately, your past experiences create biases that are. But they can also help you, too.

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As a business leader, it's up to you to drive your business forward. While employees play their part, the momentum and drive – and decisions around which ideas to pursue and which ones to leave by the wayside – comes down to you.

But how much do our past experiences influence what we do today, and what we'll do in the future? And, can bias be positive and negative?

We find out.

### Can our biases and past experiences hold us back?

"Our past experiences can hold us back if we let them shape a fixed or limiting mindset," says Lisa Rehurek, Founder & CEO at [The RFP Success Company](#).

"Failures and setbacks can create mental barriers, and they can also create self-imposed limitations, while past successes can also create a fixed mindset. This happens if we get complacent or resist change."

So, the bias we have – formed from both positive and negative past experiences – can seriously affect how we approach things today. The mindset we *decide* to have, however, can override those innate beliefs.

"Research suggests that mindset plays a significant role in determining business success or failure," says [Anjani Amrit](#), entrepreneur and leadership coach.

"According to a study by [Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck](#), individuals with a growth mindset, who believe that their abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work, are more likely to achieve success compared to those with a fixed mindset, who believe their abilities are innate and unchangeable."

The proportion of how much of our success – or failure – can be attributed to mindset, however, is difficult to quantify, says Kara Lambert, Business Psychology Consultant at her [eponymous business](#).

"It's difficult to pinpoint a percentage, because to some, the mindset is now second nature and to others it's a minute-by-minute battle. To most of us, we swing between the two."

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Anjani says: "Our past experiences undoubtedly shape our beliefs and behaviours and influence our actions in the present. Whether these experiences propel us forward or hold us back can markedly depend on our mindset."



## Understanding our biases – and fine-tuning them

So, we know our mindset plays a fundamental role in success or failure, but how do we begin to dissect that and fine-tune it to be a force for good?

"Every person sees the world differently, through their own filters," says Jacob Aldridge, [Performance and Business Coach](#).

**"Our brains are pattern-seeking machines, which once made it easier to hunt kangaroos but now means on a daily basis we distort, delete, nominalise, and generalise what we see in the world."**

"We don't actually have the capacity to take in and process everything we observe, so our brain works to filter some things in and out."

"The most conscious filters we have are our experiences and beliefs, and this is where business winners often separate themselves from those who struggle to get ahead."

"As a simple example, if you believe you are lucky and worthy, then you move through the world filtering in all the evidence to prove yourself right. If you have the belief that business is hard, then this is what you will experience, and you will also prove yourself right."

## The winning mindset for electrical contractors

We're all after that secret recipe for success – that one simple change or brilliant idea that sparks outrageous triumph and makes us multimillionaires overnight. Unfortunately, we don't have any of those to share (if you do, please share them!) *but* getting your mindset right is the closest thing.

In fact, Executive Business Coach [Nicky Mackie](#) says getting your mindset right is the secret sauce that will make your business stand out from the crowd.

**"In our modern society, research clearly supports the fact that a true point of difference is the mindset to deliver performance. It is a proven psychological fact that the power of the mind is the stronger determinant of output."**



"The mindset of business winners is the ability to not plan but design the outcome they want, to take the insights of connection to the end buyer and the business offer, all while holding steadfast on their desire to achieve."

## The drive to succeed – the mindset of a winner!

That resilience and steadfast desire to succeed is what makes all the difference, says Anjani.

**"Winners in business often have a mindset of resilience, adaptability, and a willingness to take calculated risks. They see setbacks as opportunities for growth and learning, rather than insurmountable obstacles."**

"As a result, they possess a greater capacity to navigate challenges with confidence and creativity, often leading to innovative solutions and ultimately, success."

"Contrast this with those struggling with limiting beliefs or a fear of failure. This type of fear mindset often creates self-imposed unconscious barriers that prevent the person from taking the risks necessary for growth and success."

Easier said than done, of course, and as with anything psychological, there's no straightforward path to change.

However, by consciously understanding what's stopping you from taking action, what's informing your decision to take specific actions, letting go of limiting beliefs and continuously learning and educating ourselves, we can create and take advantage of significant new opportunities.

After all, if the likes of Bill Gates and Richard Branson attribute a lot of their success to having the right mindset, who are we to argue?

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