

GROWTH MINDSET – BETTER LEARNING AWARENESS

What is the Learning Pit?

In this cheat sheet, we are going to think about the different stages that people go through when they are learning, and how it's okay to jump into the 'Learning Pit'.

There are several stages to the Learning Pit model. Firstly, we face a challenge, before deciding to 'have a go'. Then we may have to problem solve and deepen our understanding of what is required, to successfully complete the task. As a leader, you can encourage others to embrace the Learning Pit, and then support them to successfully navigate it.



How can the Learning Pit help me lead my team?

Did you know that all human beings are hard-wired to be feelings-led? This means that we all have wonky, irrational thoughts, from time to time. For example, has your security pass ever refused to work and you've muttered that there's a conspiracy against you? Or, have two things gone wrong early in the day, and you've been convinced that a third 'disaster' is just around the corner?

Another thing that we all tend to do, if we have a problem, is go to people who think like us and who will reinforce our wonky thinking. In these situations, it is often more helpful to ask someone with a different view.

WHY AND HOW SHOULD WE EMBRACE THE LEARNING PIT?

People are said to be in the Learning Pit when they are faced with a challenge, which requires them to learn to do things in a different way to be successful. The 'mental conflict', linked to challenging learning, generates a number of emotions. It's really helpful to look at the emotions for each stage of the Learning Pit, so that we can recognise them in ourselves and others. By appreciating that they're a natural part of learning, we will be able to successfully help others through each stage.

Initially, people may need support and encouragement, in the form of a gentle nudge, to 'jump into' the pit. Similarly, to begin with, people may need a helping hand to climb out of the pit.

However, with good role modelling and support from leaders, the right questions and plenty of opportunities for self-reflection, people will become more adept at creative problem solving and thinking.

Making, celebrating and learning from mistakes

As the saying goes: 'To err is human'. We all make mistakes and this is how we learn.

As leaders, it is our job to create an environment in which people are confident to take a risk and have a go. We can do this by bringing mistakes out into the open, and using a growth mindset with future focused language to talk about them.

Celebrate and share mistakes that people have made, with their permission. This way everyone can reflect on their own practice and lessons can be learned, going forward.

Give it a go...

Ask yourself, are my questions and comments encouraging a growth mindset, at each stage of the Learning Pit?

For example, if people are at the point where they are considering trying something new, ask: "How will you feel, if you have a go?" "What are the benefits to the team, if you try?"

When people are at the problem-solving stage, remember that our brains respond very quickly, in auto-responsive mode, to questions such as 'How?' and 'Why?' If we ask the same question 5 times, our brains have to work harder. How? How? How? How? How?

When people have been through the stages of the Learning Pit, encourage them to self-reflect by asking: "If you were teaching others, what would you say about what you've learnt?" Or, "If you did it again, what would you do differently next time?"

Try saying things like, "Thank you for sharing that example, when things didn't go as well as we'd have liked. What can we learn from it?"

THE LEARNING PIT

FACING A CHALLENGE

You may feel anxious, nervous, scared, excited or uncomfortable.

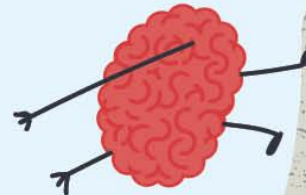


DEEP LEARNING

You may learn a sense of collaboration and concentration.

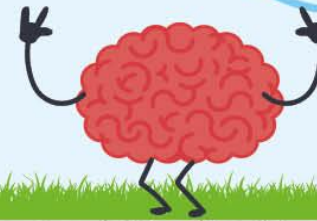
PROBLEM SOLVING

You may feel anger, distraction, frustration, challenge, confusion or uncomfortable.



SUCCESSFUL LEARNING

You should feel achievement and pride.



HAVING A GO

You may feel interested, hooked and use prior knowledge.

