

Right Kind of Wrong

Why learning to fail can teach us to thrive

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The idea that people and organizations must learn from failure is popular and obvious.

But most fail to do so because putting that level of work to reflect on failure does not happen.

Not all failures are created equal.

Simulators in the airline industry are a safe context for learning, the same is needed in organizations.

Better teams have higher failures, but because the atmosphere is open and trusting, they pick these failure points and hence avoid costly mistakes.

Mistakes happen, the only real question is do we catch, admit and correct them.

Psychological safety is needed to make mistakes and learn from them.

When a group is high on psychological safety, it tends to be innovative.

I define Failure as an outcome that deviates from desired results.

First failure is not always bad

Second learning from failure is not as easy as it sounds

Failing well is hard for three reasons –
aversion, confusion and fear.

Fear comes from the social stigma of failure.

Rationally we know that failure is an inevitable part of life, certainly a source of learning and even a requirement for progress.

When we don't admit small failures we allow them to turn into larger ones.

Athletes in general possess a higher enlightened understanding of failure and its relationship to success.

For athletes, failure means you are in the game.

Some people are more resilient than others. They don't hold themselves to unrealistic standards and they have more positive attributions about events.

The most experienced teachers do not know before a new batch what the new batch will look like and think like, they always teach basis the new batch and not basis their old notes.

Fear inhibits learning and impedes talking about it.

Mistakes are deviations from known practices.

An intelligent failure is one when it takes place in a new territory, the context is driven by hypothesis and when the failure is small and valuable insights can come from it.

Failures consume time and resources and hence you should be smart to use both judiciously.

Much of what we know about errors comes from decades of research and training from the airlines industry.

Checklists are not a guarantee against basic failures, they offer an enabling structure.

Errors in many cases are unintended and should not be punished.

Never making a mistake is not realistic or a desirable goal for any of us.

Assumptions by definition take place in our mind without explicit thought.

Assumptions are taken for granted beliefs that feel like facts.

Mastery in any field requires you to learn from the many mistakes you commit.

Chess is a game of practice as well as skill and intelligence.

Here, if you do not learn from the mistakes made that led to a loss, you will never master chess.

We need to encourage blameless reporting in organizations. This means reporting something will not be penalized but will be looked into.

Transparency in organizations increases performance pressure and hence you get better accountability.

In the 1970s, airlines were fitted with black boxes so that investigators could know what exactly transpired.

In familiar situations you feel more in control than you actually are, lulling you into into a false zone of self confidence.

**Complex failures have more than one cause,
none of which created the failure on its own.**

Catching and correcting mistakes to make a truly safe workplace requires a culture of diligence.

I am right we think, we need to ask, how do I know I am right?

Social media , a relatively new communication phenomenon capitalizes on our age old reluctance to share our failures.

Social media usage is harmful to young girls who have feelings of low self esteem because of body image issues

Reducing your use of social media actually makes you feel less lonely.

Are you playing to win or are you playing not to lose?

Choose learning over knowing in order to fail better.

Routines are characteristic of a consistent context.

Variable contexts bring uncertainty compared to consistent contexts.

**Recording risk levels of the activities we do, is
a life enhancing capability**

Most people's education doesn't prepare them to see systems.

**Toyota designs systems to reduce basic failures
and promote continuous improvement**

Even when a project goes well in Toyota, the boss always asks, what could we have done better?

If you want to fail less

Aim for excellence, not perfection, set realistic goals and not idealistic goals.

Taking accountability for failures requires a small act of bravery.

Your culture, how much of what you hear is..

THIS	Vs This?
Good news	Bad news
Progress	Problems
Agreement	Dissent
All's well	I need help