

Still Waiting to Be Nominated? That Mindset Is Holding You Back from Learning.

Why Isn't Learning a Priority?

A recent session was scheduled with the intent of fostering two hours of engaging discussions, shared insights, and collective learning. Only **two people showed up**. Sixteen did not. We had to reschedule, but it raises a serious question: **Why isn't learning a priority for us as individuals?**

We incessantly talk about rapid changers, technology disruptions, the turmoil, and “understand” the need to adapt and adopt, yet we find no intrinsic motivation to learn. We still depend on our ‘managers’ to nominate us, remind us, and push us to attend classes.

In the context of the **3-Horizon model**, developed by McKinsey, which provides a structure for companies to assess potential opportunities for growth without neglecting performance in the present, I would like to apply this framework to individuals. Given this 3-Horizon model thinking, we are stuck in **Horizon 1**—focused on immediate deliverables and day-to-day execution. We acknowledge **Horizon 2**—which is characterized by the rapid pace of change driven by technological disruption, evolving business models, and market volatility. However, we leave little room to invest in **Horizon 3**—the domain of **forward thinking, innovation, upskilling, and mindset shifts that are required to stay relevant in the future**. And despite its importance and relevance, we rarely prepare for it.

In the **VUCA** (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) era, and in a world increasingly described as **BANI** (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, Incomprehensible), learning and growing seem to be the only assured path forward.

The immediacy of our concerns must centre around this question: ***How soon can I learn new skills, adopt a leadership mindset, and develop the growth mindset?*** Otherwise, the disruptive changes around and the rapid evolution of technology may soon become overwhelming and may even jeopardize our relevance and future in the workplace.

Let us be honest: we should not need to be nominated, reminded, or pushed by our managers to learn. **That mindset belongs to a different era.** Today, learning is not optional; it is a strategic necessity. If we continue waiting for someone else to take ownership of our development, we will inevitably be left behind.

In their featured article in *McKinsey Quarterly*, *Lisa Christensen, Jake Gittleson, and Matt Smith* write about learning as a strategic necessity and emphasize that:

“Learning itself is a skill. Unlocking the mindsets and skills to develop it can boost personal and professional lives and deliver a competitive edge.”

There are more than enough real-time examples of individuals who have advanced in their careers and lives precisely because they chose to adopt a growth mindset.

Leena (name changed) reads books, makes notes, applies what she learns in practice, and observes its impact on her decisions and life choices. She is internally motivated and recognizes the value of continuous learning in shaping her personal and professional journey.

Developing a learning mindset is not rocket science; it simply requires determination and focus, and it always begins with setting a SMART goal.

So, let us **shift our focus** from passive participation to proactive ownership. If you are serious about staying relevant, learning must move from your manager's calendar to the top of your priority list.

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