



Growth Mindset Index™ (GMI) ...a Gauge With Five Distinguishing Qualities

By: F. Scott Addis, CPCU, CRA, CBWA, TRA

The research and first-hand experience of Beyond Insurance evidences that there are both internal and external forces that prevent you from realizing your ultimate potential. External forces — industry perception, commoditization, and the addiction to the insurance bid — are equally as powerful as internal forces, which include your skill set, attitudes, and overall mindset.

So, what is a mindset? It is a set of assumptions, methods, beliefs and attitudes you hold that inform your approach to life. Mindset is so powerful that it orients the way you think, act, feel, and handle situations.

Developed by Beyond Insurance, the Growth Mindset Index™ (GMI) serves as a personal gauge of your assumptions, methods, beliefs, and attitudes as they relate to five distinguishing qualities:

1. Passion
2. Emotional Intelligence
3. Drive
4. Gratitude
5. Resilience

Please take the 10 Statement Growth Mindset Survey™ below:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I often receive comments about my emotional energy.					
2. My passion level gives me an advantage over my competition.					
3. I possess the ability to comprehend emotions in myself and others.					
4. I am self-aware, empathetic and possess strong social skills.					
5. I believe there is a solution for every problem.					
6. I have an insatiable appetite for success and relish the thrill of winning.					
7. I consistently exhibit compassion and forgiveness at work and in my personal life.					
8. My glass is always half-full, rather than half-empty.					
9. I am able to recover quickly from difficulties and setbacks.					
10. I embrace every failure, as there are always lessons to be learned.					
Total checks for this column	X5	X4	X3	X2	X1
X Total number of points		+	+	+	+
= Total points scored				Total Score	

Scoring:

- 45 to 50:** **Outstanding!** You possess a growth-oriented mindset that enables you to actualize your goals, dreams, ambitions, and gains.
- 40 to 44:** **Very Good.** Your mindset is open to exploring new concepts to help you maximize your potential.
- 35 to 39:** **Good.** You are beginning to realize the benefits of a growth mindset and its impact on your performance.
- 34 or less:** **Your mindset is fixed.** Shifting to a growth mindset will give you enhanced control over the outcomes of your efforts.

Passion

Passion in business means loving what you do; it stimulates your mind, motivates your efforts, and incites energy and excitement about your work. Think of passion as the thermostat that measures the intensity of your emotions. The fuel for passion is your purpose, cause, and belief in your unique abilities.

Were you aware that more than 50% of all CEOs of Fortune 500 companies had a "C" or "C-" average in college? Nearly 75% of all U.S. Presidents were at the bottom half of their school classes. What makes it possible for people who might seem otherwise ordinary to achieve great things? The answer is *passion*.

To gain a better understanding of your level of passion for your work at this point in time, ask yourself:

1. How long has it been since I was so excited about a work-related system, strategy, or tool that I could not sleep?
2. Do I find myself getting excited when I share my value proposition and unique business model?
3. Is my energy contagious?

Emotional Intelligence

The second distinguishing quality of a growth-minded risk consultant is emotional intelligence (EI); that is, your ability to comprehend the emotions of yourself and others. Your capacity to recognize certain feelings — and use this knowledge to motivate, inspire, and manage — has a direct correlation with success in the business of insurance and risk management. Emotional intelligence has two primary components:

1. Understanding and managing your emotions
2. Understanding and promoting positive relationships with others

Success in business requires more than intelligence. You must be able to develop long-term relationships founded on mutual trust *in addition to* your technical knowledge.

You will reap the benefits of Emotional Intelligence when you focus on developing the following five competencies that comprise EI:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. Self-awareness | Knowing your emotions |
| 2. Self-regulation | Managing your emotions |
| 3. Motivation | Motivating yourself |
| 4. Empathy | Recognizing and honoring the emotions of others |
| 5. Social Skills | Managing relationships and building trust |

Drive

Drive is a common denominator of high-performing people, and this is especially true for successful risk consultants. When all else fails, it is their inherent drive — to succeed, to accomplish a goal, to make a difference, to win — that keeps people going in the face of adversity. Drive is so important and powerful that it often pushes less-talented individuals to achieve more than those who were born with higher skill sets, but lack a burning desire to succeed.

Risk consultants who exhibit high-drive tendencies are motivated by the need to achieve outstanding results, and are willing to do virtually anything to get there. They are ambitious, disciplined, and hyper-focused on advancement, with an inherent motivation that enables them to relentlessly pursue excellence and success in everything they do.

Finally, a truly optimistic individual knows that focusing on the light at the end of the tunnel is the key to overcoming any challenge. Risk consultants with high levels of optimism have three key advantages over their pessimistic peers:

1. They expect to win
2. They believe that all problems can be solved
3. They frame rejection with appropriate perspective

Gratitude

Gratitude is simply taking the time to reflect on all the positive things in your life, and cultivate an appreciation for what you have. Research confirms that gratitude is the single most powerful way to increase overall happiness, as it is applicable to so many aspects of your life: career, relationships, mental and physical health. High-performing risk consultants recognize that practicing gratitude creates positive engagement and improved outcomes with prospects, clients, colleagues, carriers and community. An attitude of gratitude is a skill that can be learned and developed to the point that it becomes a habit. Here are a few simple ways to practice gratitude:

Three Good Things: Each and every day, identify three things that went well and replay them in your mind or write them down in a Gratitude Journal.

Positive People: Make an effort to surround yourself with others who demonstrate gratitude and a positive outlook.

Remove Obstacles: Remove the specific obstacle(s) from your mind so you may visualize all the good things in your life.

Thank You Notes: This ritual will positively impact your own life, and spread the attitude of gratitude to others as well.

Resilience

In today's hyper-competitive world, you must be willing to put yourself out there — even in the face of rejection. Resilience is measured by how quickly you recover after rejection or defeat. How well do you handle rejection? Learning how to process and move past the aftermath of rejection — to get back in the saddle after falling off the horse — is an essential survival skill in the business of insurance and risk management.

Research shows that, "Rejection Sensitivity", a condition in which rejected individuals experience severe psychological distress, is on the rise. It is Rejection Sensitivity that makes you cautious, and, in some cases, unwilling to take risks. If you are on the high end of the rejection sensitivity scale, you may feel anxious or fearful about putting yourself out there. As a result, you will rarely move beyond your comfort zone — and your career may pay a steep price. Tell-tale signs include ineffective referral networks, call reluctance, and random prospect research and qualification strategies. By cultivating personal resilience, you can learn how to avoid rejection sensitivity and achieve the career of your dreams.

Master the art of resilience using these five steps:

Step 1 - Don't take it personally. Often, the other person is not rejecting you. Rather, they are rejecting the product, service, solution or offering to which you are attached.

Step 2 - Know when to cut your losses. When you face rejection, you will be wise to decide how much time, energy and effort you will put into the project.

Step 3 - Rely on your support system. When your ego is bruised, it is important to receive encouragement, guidance and counsel from those who care most about you.

Step 4 - Maintain your focus of control. Focus on what you can control. Do not dwell on uncontrollable forces.

Step 5 - Keep a positive attitude: With every "no" you receive, you are that much closer to the next "yes."

What will you achieve from a growth mindset supported by these five distinguishing qualities?
Your ultimate potential!

About the Author

Scott Addis, CPCU, CRA, CBWA, TRA is the CEO of Beyond Insurance and is recognized as an industry leader having been named a Philadelphia finalist for *Inc. Magazine's* "Entrepreneur of the Year" award as well as one of the "25 Most Innovative Agents in America." Beyond Insurance is a consulting firm that offers leadership training, cultural transformation, and talent and tactical development for enlightened professionals who are looking to take their practice to the next level. Since 2007, the proven and repeatable processes of Beyond Insurance have transformed individuals and organizations as measured by enhanced organic growth, productivity, profitability, and value in the marketplace.