

## A sample of direct quotes from 'learning from work, and self-development' articles

Summarised by Andrew Gibbons

From: "Learn from failure: Fail forward so that you take lessons from unsuccessful pursuits"  
Laurie Burruss *Talent Development* April 2018 Pages 45-48

P 46 "Education discourages using failure as a teaching tool, instead measuring mastery of a subject. This practice of grading on performance quality is inextricably wed to how a person views failure and senses emotional wellbeing. And so, the learner becomes failure-averse, demoralised, and focused on a grade, score or task – initiating a cycle of shame, disappointment, and fear of tests, competitions and challenges".

"If learners do not believe in their ability to succeed – or if repeated failures diminish this belief, consciously or not – they engage in practices or make excuses to preserve self-worth in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. The more intense the failure, the more important the defence mechanism".

"The real problem then, is that people ignore most failures, whether by defence mechanism or on purpose".

"Understanding the practical strategies for learning to fail enables individuals to fail forward, which means to continuously improve until they reach the next level, to seek an expectation of great work combined with effort, and ultimately to reach the goal of exceeding expectations".

"Some of us feel the need to get it right first time. Others are unable to admit what they don't know because people will perceive their failures as socially unacceptable".

"The organisations that reinforce that failure is OK, and encourage their teams to continue to strive for progress are few and far between".

"Failure causes a setback that triggers learners to carefully edit their reality and search for evidence that confirms what they already believe".

"Individuals employ all this behaviour just to maintain their self-esteem".

"All of us have a failure persona that is sparked when we are confronted with flops, bombs, and botches. Over time these behaviour patterns become set in stone".

P 47 "Four types of failure profiles that range from high to low have been identified:

1. Success oriented learner: One who loves learning for the sake of learning, and sees failure as a way to improve rather than as a slight.
2. Overstriver: A closet achiever who avoids failure by succeeding. These learners are motivated solely by the fear that failure will confirm their greatest fear – that they're not perfect.
3. Failure avoiding: These learners do not expect to succeed. 'I just want to avoid failing' they say. To avoid future, they make excuses, procrastinate, and do not participate".

4. Failure – accepting: This person has internalised failure, making it hard to get motivated. These learners believe their repeated failures are due to a lack of ability, and they have given up trying to succeed”.

“Often, learners motivated by fear of failure is incontrovertible, but seldom do organisations do it well”.

“Many business leaders agree that giving employees the freedom to make mistakes is scary, employees allowed to get out of their comfort zone (yes mistakes will happen) move into the growing zone, thus the organisation forward”.

“Good employees are those who when mistakes are made:

1. Learn from them
2. Own them
3. Fix them
4. Put safeguards in place to ensure the same mistake will never be repeated again”.

“Strategies for learning from failure do exist. To catch, correct and learn from failure is a path to success. Treating failure includes a few lessons:

1. Accept that failure is part of the process (there’s confusion here with positive thinking).
2. Let out your frustration. (Get through the onslaught of the emotional rush and back to focus.
3. Be brutal honest. According to ‘Four steps to overcoming failure and using it to your advantage 90% of us don’t learn from mistakes or continue to repeat errors.
4. Fail forward. (Learn from the setback and make necessary adjustments).

P 48 “We learn a lot from our failures if given permission to analyse what happened”.

“If afforded a period of reflection post failure, our ability to improve becomes evident and what we don’t know becomes apparent.

1. We can identify the obstacle that keeps us from achieving.
2. We have a renewed sense of humility and respect for the process of learning, and what mastery requires.
3. We recognise the need for sharing the process of learning, not just the accomplishments”.

“In sum, failing forward, or learning from our mistakes, enables us to develop context-specific processes to create a workforce culture that communicates to employees that learning from failure must be safe and allows for mistakes and errors to surface”.

“Learners need the opportunity to brainstorm and then edit and order those ideas to understand what works and doesn’t work”.

“Learning from organisational failure is anything but straightforward”.

“Failing forward is about building a learning culture that enables the learner to:

1. Feel comfortable and responsible for surfacing and learning from failures
2. Understand what happened rather than who did it
3. Recognise and notice failures small and large
4. Analyse the failures
5. Proactively search for opportunities to experiment

“We all want to be in the discovery business not the failure business – and the fastest route is to fail more often to succeed sooner”

**An additional 18 sources within the full, 24 page, over 10,000 word set – see website below**

“Obey the learning laws”

Thomas Frazier

*Talent Development*

September 2018 Pages 27-31

“The five dimensions of curiosity”

Todd Kashdan et al

*Harvard Business Review*

September/October 2018 Pages 58-60

“Unleashing the unstoppable learner”

Pat McLagan

*Talent Development*

July 2017 Pages 44-47

“Self-sufficient learners make successful workers”

Patti Shank

*Talent Development*

April 2017 Pages 43-46

“Managing yourself: Learning to learn”

Erika Andersen

*Harvard Business Review*

March 2016 Pages 98-100

“It’s time we learned to learn”

Andrew Gibbons

*Training Journal*

March 2012 Pages 40-44

“Spotlight on critical reflection”

Mary Holmes

*Training Journal*

July 2012 Pages 65-69

“Informal learning and the future”

Nick Shackleton-Jones

*Training Journal*

October 2008 Pages 38-41

“Lessons learned about lessons learned”

Jerry Wellman

*Organisation Development Journal*

Vol 25 No 3 Fall 2007 Pages 65-72

“Developing the reflective practitioner – designing an undergraduate class”

Valerie Belton and John Scott

*Interfaces*

Vol 36 No 2 March/April 2006 Pages 150-164

“Self-directed learning – past and present”

Donald Roberson

*Published paper*

July 2005 Pages 1-25

‘Managing oneself’

Peter Drucker

*Harvard Business Review*

March/April 1999 Pages 66-74

“Eight key learning skills”

Andrew Gibbons

*Training Officer*

April 1998 Vol 34 No 3 Pages 88-90

“The learning organisation: Fashionable fad or path to progress?”

Treasa Hayes

*International Journal of Applied Management*

Vol 1 Issue 3 1997 Pages 1-11

“Self-directed learning: Toward a comprehensive model”

D Garrison

*Adult Education*

*Quarterly* Vol 48 No 1 Fall 1997 Pages 18-33

“Assessing the benefits of learning logs”

Jean Barclay

*Education and Training*

Vol 38 No 2 1996 Pages 30-38

“Learning from experience with learning logs”

Jean Barclay

*Journal of Management Development*

Vol 15 No 6 1996 Pages 28-43

“Learning logs for self-development”

Melanie Greene and Andrew Gibbons

*Training and Development*

February 1991

Andrew Gibbons