

Growth mindset intervention boosts confidence, persistence in entrepreneurship students

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A low-cost intervention aimed at fostering a growth mindset in students gave the students more confidence in their entrepreneurship abilities and helped them persist when challenges arose.

"The finding is valuable because efficacy, or confidence in one's abilities, and perseverance are powerful motivators and are critical for [career development](#) in entrepreneurship," says Jeff Pollack, second author of a paper on the work and an associate professor of entrepreneurship at North Carolina State University.

"Growth mindsets—the belief that human attributes are malleable—help students to flourish," says Jeni Burnette, lead author of the paper and an associate professor of psychology at NC State. "For this study, we focused on fostering a [growth mindset](#) of entrepreneurship—the idea that everyone can improve their entrepreneurship ability."

For the study, researchers worked with 238 [undergraduate students](#). One group of 120 students received three growth mindset video modules focused on the idea that, with time, effort and energy, individuals can improve their entrepreneurship ability. A [control group](#) of 118 students watched three video modules that focused on misconceptions about entrepreneurship.

The study found that the growth mindset intervention did not directly or

indirectly affect the classroom performance of students.

However, in post-intervention surveys, the researchers found that students who received the growth mindset intervention, relative to the control, reported greater entrepreneurial self-efficacy, such as confidence in their ability to identify new business opportunities and create new products. The growth mindset intervention also fostered greater persistence. Specifically, students reported continuing to pursue an entrepreneurial idea as part of a class project, even after encountering a challenge.

Additionally, self-efficacy correlated with an increased likelihood that students would consider entrepreneurship as a field of study and as a possible career.

Effects of the intervention did not depend on the student's gender or [previous experience](#) in the entrepreneurship field.

"This low-cost approach can be easily integrated into the classroom and is a promising tool for increasing [students'](#) motivation in entrepreneurship above and beyond simply learning about the field," Burnette says.

More information: Jeni L. Burnette et al, A Growth Mindset Intervention: Enhancing Students' Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and Career Development, *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* (2019). [DOI: 10.1177/1042258719864293](https://doi.org/10.1177/1042258719864293)

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