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Learning: *Be Vulnerable to Be Invincible*

At the pace of change today in business – and in life – being comfortable with the status quo is a fast-track to becoming irrelevant. Here's a hack to re-ignite your hunger learn -- to grow your will and your skill to be ready for what's next.

My good friend Missy recently returned from a group tour in Greece. Each day, they ventured out to sea on a boat, swam three miles over eight hours, and returned to shore for dinner and a well-deserved good night's sleep. Missy, like many of my friends, works full-time and manages her family. She isn't an athlete. When her sister challenged her to go on this trip, she committed to learn all she needed to know and stick to a training plan to make it happen. Impressive.

Such an adventure may not be your thing, but it's up to us to always stretch outside our comfort zone. Change – at work, at school, in life – is non-stop and exponential. Being a hungry learner matters to our well-being and our livelihoods.

According to the World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Report 2020, 94 percent of business leaders report that they expect employees to pick up new

skills on the job. That's a sharp uptick from 65 percent in 2018. Some top skills rising in prominence today include: critical thinking; problem-solving; active learning; resilience; stress tolerance; and flexibility. That all takes a lot of mental muscle building. So where do you start?

First, adopt a growth mindset.

I'm a fan of Carol Dweck – the plainspoken psychologist and Stanford University professor best known for her work on mindset. Dweck's theory is that people generally land in two camps: Fixed mindset or growth mindset. In short, those who have a fixed mindset believe that intelligence is fixed. If you're not good at something, you believe you'll likely never be. No point in trying. In contrast, those who have a growth mindset believe that intelligence and talents can be developed over time. Commit to grow. Ask. Learn. Try. Reflect. Repeat.

Next, start small.

- **Be curious:** Be like the three-year-old. Ask: Why? What else?
- **Be hungry:** Read. Research. Ask for advice from others who know.
- **Be bold:** Face up to new situations. Like Missy, stretch beyond your comfort zone. Start small, set a plan, and stick with it.
- **Be resilient:** Think of a setback as the beginning of a comeback. Our greatest learning often comes from failures.

Sure, learning at any age is challenging and can make us feel vulnerable. Be okay with that. As Dweck reminds us: *"This is a time of tremendous change where you're going to have periods of confusion. You're going to turn into a novice over and over again. And we need to be comfortable with, not just effort, but struggle and confusion."*

Finally, take one minute each day to reflect. What's one new thing I learned? What will I do with that? It'll build your mental muscle and help make you invincible.