

Psychological research substantiates how academic mindsets impact performance. In their educational research review entitled “Social-Psychological Interventions in Education: They are Not Magic,” David Yeager and Gregory Walton explain: “Social-psychological interventions are not magic. They are not inputs that go into a black box and automatically yield positive results. Instead, they are tools to target important psychological processes in schools that can unleash the potential of students and of the educational environments in which they learn.” Let’s take a look in more detail, clarified by Eduardo Briceño of Mindset Works and research from the University of Chicago Consortium on the Chicago Schools.

<b>Mindsets</b>	<b>Explanation</b> <i>From Eduardo Briceño</i>	<b>What the Research Says</b> <i>From “Noncognitive Factors”</i>
<p><b>Relevance</b> “This work has value for me.”</p>	<p>Students engage in learning much more energetically and deeply when they value the knowledge and skills that they’re working to acquire, or find them relevant or interesting. That leads them to think deeply, question, pursue, and put their full selves into their work.</p>	<p>The degree to which students value an academic task strongly influences their choice, persistence, and performance at the task.</p>
<p><b>Growth Mindset</b> “My ability and confidence grow with my effort.”</p>	<p>Students with a growth mindset realize that their abilities to think and do are a result of their past behaviors. They see effort as what makes people smart, they are motivated to focus on continued growth, and they persist in the face of setbacks.</p>	<p>Beliefs about intelligence and attributions for academic success or failure are more strongly associated with school performance than is one’s actual measured ability.</p>
<p><b>Self-Efficacy</b> “I can succeed at this.”</p>	<p>Students must believe that they can achieve their goals, however they define those goals. If students think they need help or resources, they must see a path they can take in order to obtain the required help or resources. The stronger their growth mindset, the more students will seek ways to overcome adversities and search for alternate strategies to achieve their goals.</p>	<p>Individuals tend to engage in activities that they feel confident in their ability to complete and to avoid those in which they lack such confidence.</p>
<p><b>Sense of Belonging</b> “I belong in this academic community.”</p>	<p>When students feel they belong to a community of peers that values going beyond one’s comfort zone and learning about the world, students connect learning activities and objectives with social rewards they value.</p>	<p>Learning is a social activity and understanding is constructed through interaction with others; students need to feel as though they belong to a community of learners and that their academic self is a “true” self.</p>

While we may not be able to “teach” these mindsets the same way that we teach content, we can construct the experience intentionally to reinforce the need for these attributes and their development over time.