



In our line of work, we are faced with having insufficient information, limited resources, constant change and not enough time.

We are also required to produce very public and highly successful results...





IMPROV



IMPROV

Improv Rules



1. Have fun
2. Dare to fail
3. Be a good sport

Video Failure Bow!

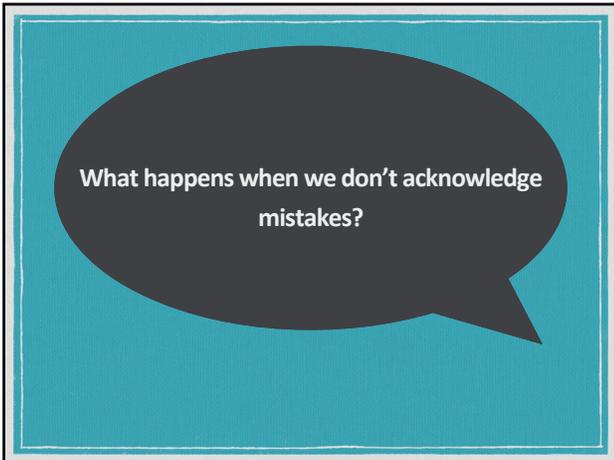


Take a Bow!



- Find a partner near you
- Share a failure or mistake
- Take a bow
- Let them applaud you
- Return the favor





**Activity:
Horseshoe**

- Count off
- If you're number is called, you call out a number that is not:
 - Your own number
 - The number that called you
 - A number that no one has

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Activity: Zip Zap Zip!



- Clap and say "Zip"
- Clap and say "Zap"
- Clap and say "Zop"
- If you mess up, celebrate!



E P I C



E
P
I
C









PRESENCE
Let's Get Acquainted!

We need two volunteers!

Activity:
Two Things in Common



- We need 2 video volunteers
- Introduce yourself
- Ask and answer questions to discover two things you have in common
- When you find something in common, give a virtual high five

Improv Tip: Start with Agreement

When you're on the same page with people great things can happen



FAILURE

Let's Make Friends!



Does slow and steady win the race?

Depends on the race.



If you want to go fast,
you have to be okay with making mistakes

Think about the last time you messed up...

How did you feel?
What did you think?
What did you do?

Twiddle Your Thumbs



- Have both thumbs spin towards your fingers
- Then both away from your fingers
- Then each in opposite directions. One towards your fingers and one away.



Now think about the last time you messed up...

How did you feel?
What did you think?
What did you do?

Think about the last time you messed up...

Did you quit?
Think you should have been faster?
Figure you are worse at this than most?
Wonder why these things are always so hard for you?
Get angry at having to do something dumb?



Growth Mindset
the key to long term success

Think about how we all started
We were determined to learn



A Growth Mindset Drives Motivation and Achievement



```
graph LR; A((I can get smarter)) --> B((Learning is my goal)); A --> C((Effort makes me stronger)); B --> D((I'd spend more time and work harder)); C --> D; D --> E((Higher Achievement))
```

Blackwell, Trzesniewski & Dweck (2007) Child Development

Fixed Mindset



- See Feedback as:
 - Personal
 - Pervasive
 - Permanent

Fixed Mindset



- Personal: "Jeez. Why are they trying to mess with me?"
- Pervasive: "This road is full of idiots. How typical!"
- Permanent: "I need to get off the road. This is insane."

After Failure, Ask Yourself

- Is this external?
- Is this limited?
- Is this temporary?

Growth Mindset: Try To See Feedback As



- External
- Limited
- Temporary

Growth Mindset

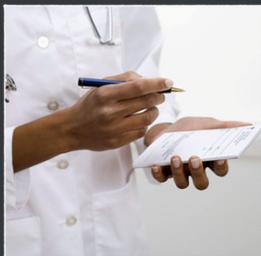


External: "Someone honked...What's going on?"

Limited: "Oh no! My lights are off! I better fix that. Phew. I'm still safe."

Temporary: "I turned the lights off in the garage, next time I'll remember to put them back on."

Activity: Change Your Story



- Think of a moment of adversity
- Write down how it could be Personal, Pervasive, and Permanent
- Write down how it could be External, Limited, and Temporary

Activity: Change Your Story

Think of a moment of adversity,
how could it be interpreted with a:

- Fixed Mindset
- Growth Mindset
- Personal:
- External:
- Pervasive:
- Limited:
- Permanent:
- Temporary:

How NOT to Take Feedback

- Defend
- Excuse
- Minimize
- Blame



How to Receive Feedback

- Write it down and process it later
- Listen and repeat
- Clarify: "Help me understand..." "What would that look like?"
- Thank them for their feedback
- Take what you need and leave the rest



What if failure
looked like this?



"Fear freezes you."

- Viola Spolin



Why The Bow?
Because this is what defeat looks like

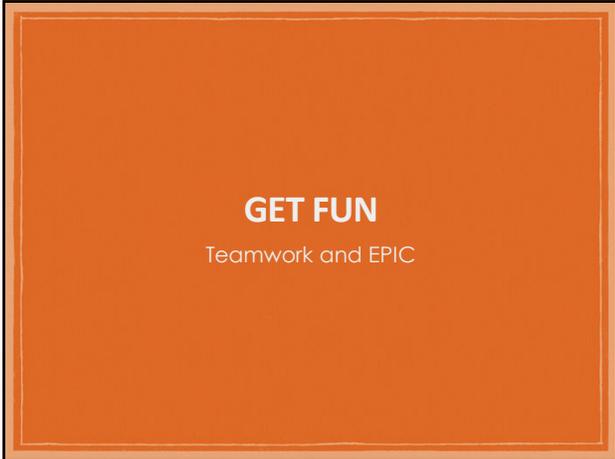
Video: Wrong Name





How can you apply this to your work and life?

Let's chat!







Activity: Group Order By First Name



In alphabetical order by first name, everyone list their name with a positive, alliterative adjective.

For example: "Sharp Shana"

Game: Pass the Name



- Start the game by saying someone's adjective + name (Sharp Shana!)
- When you hear your name + adjective, it's your turn!
- Say your own name and then type someone else's...
 - Sharp Shana/Affable Aden
 - Affable Aden/Mysterious Mike

Improv Tip: Take Risks

If you aren't messing up, you aren't doing it right



We need four (or more) volunteers!

Movement Evolution



- One person makes a sound and a gesture
- The next person repeats both as precisely as they can
- Person three copies and delivers what person two does
- Only copy and deliver what the previous person does. No need to worry about how it began.
- Keep going! See what happens!

Improv Tip: Accept

Let go of assumptions and judgements to see things as they are.





Activity:
Jump and Justify Interview



- Let's get a topic we want to learn about
- I am the host: Ask regular opening question
- Player A, B, and C you are the expert: Answer the question
- I will ask random, open-ended questions
- Player A, B, and C Connect it back to the topic

Word at Time



We're about to have a talk show!

In the chat window, ask any questions you would like advice on.

Word at Time



ONE
word
AT
a
TIME

In video the two players will give the group some advice, taking turns adding words

Improv Tip: Make Your Partner Look Good

When you focus on yourself and your failures, it takes you out of the moment. When you focus on others it keeps you present.



EPIC



Energy
Pacing
In the moment
Commitment



Er
Pa
Ir
Cc

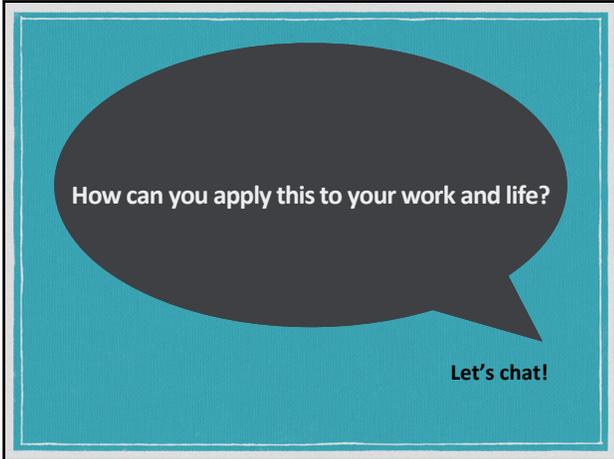


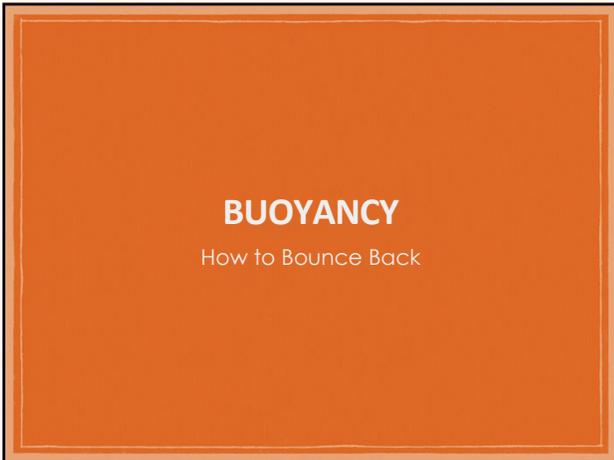
Word at Time

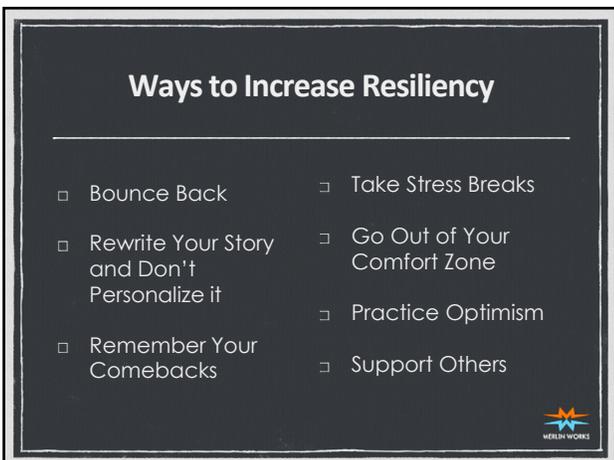


ONE
 word
 AT
 a
 TIME

In video the two players will give the group some advice, taking turns adding words







The best predictor of success is how you explain failure to yourself

Fixed Mindset

- See Failure as:
 - Personal
 - Pervasive
 - Permanent

Remember Your Comebacks





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Activity: My Photo



Story Spine

- Once upon a time...
- And every day...
- Until one day...
- And because of that...
- And because of that...
- Until, finally...
- And, ever since then...
- The moral of the story is...

After Failure, Ask Yourself

- Is this external?
- Is this limited?
- Is this temporary?

Growth Mindset: Try To See Failure As



- External
- Limited
- Temporary

Activity: Sherriff Bandit Victim



- In groups of 3
- Pick in your head what you will be: Sherriff, Bandit or Victim
- Count in and Show at the SAME TIME
- See what's missing and adjust until you have ONE of each

Improv Tip: Flexibility

See what's needed and become what's needed



Mirroring



- Take turns leading and following until there is no leader... only following the follower

When we have personal come back stories we can tell ourselves, it helps us face new challenges

Take Stress Breaks

“Stress is the stimulus for growth, and recovery is when the growth occurs,” “That’s how we build the resilience muscle.”

—Dr. Jack Groppel, co-founder of the Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute

Activity: Seventh Inning Stretch



- Stand up
- Reach up, down, around
- Shake it out
- Sit down
- 10 - 30 seconds max



Resiliency is a muscle

Let's get stronger

GO OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE



“There is a biology to this,” said Dr. Charney.
“Your stress hormone systems will become less responsive to stress so you can handle stress better. Live your life in a way that you get the skills that enable you to handle stress.”

–Dr. Dennis Charney, author Resilience: The Science of Mastering Life’s Greatest Challenges

PRACTICE OPTIMISM
Celebrate the Wins



Try using "could" instead of "should"

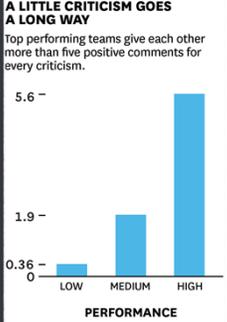
You could try it this week and see how it feels



Celebrate the Wins

Build a Positive Foundation

A LITTLE CRITICISM GOES A LONG WAY
 Top performing teams give each other more than five positive comments for every criticism.



PERFORMANCE	Ratio (Positive Comments per Criticism)
LOW	0.36
MEDIUM	1.9
HIGH	5.6

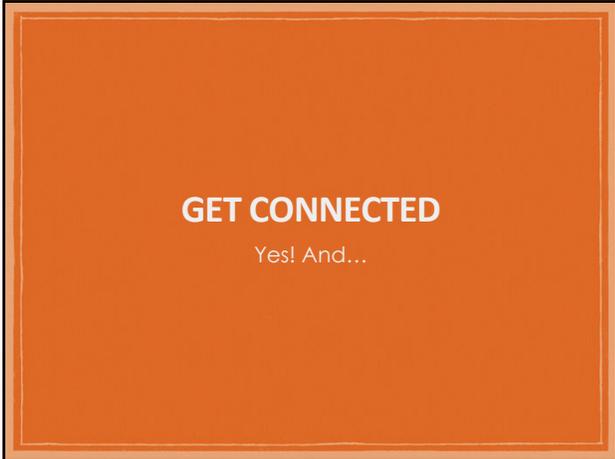
SOURCE: LOSADA & HEAPHY: THE ROLE OF POSITIVITY AND CONNECTIVITY IN THE PERFORMANCE OF BUSINESS TEAMS, 2004
 HBR.ORG

Activity: Danish Clap Game



- Celebrate the wins
- Recover quickly from the misses





Benefits of Connection



Persuasion: Reduce conflict and increase sales with efficient and effortless techniques

Relationship: Turn networking into relationship building

Creativity: Collaborating with others leads to ideas you couldn't discover alone

Community: Find a group that can support you in good times and bad



Activity: Word Association Contest



Player A: Say any word
Player B: Listen and respond to that word
Player A: Listen and respond to that word
Continue for 1 minute
Everyone else: count the words!

Activity: Word DIS-Association Contest

Player A: Say any word
Player B: Listen and respond with a random, unconnected word
Player A: Listen and respond with a word unconnected to anything that's come before
See how many you can do in a minute. If you type two connected words, you're done!

Which was easier, association or disassociation? Why?

Let's chat!

Activity:
First Letter, Last Letter



The **last letter** of your partners line is the **first letter** of your line
"How are youu?"
"**U**nbelievably well."
"**L**ovely to hear it!"
"**T**ell me about your..."

Improv Tip: Listen First

You can talk without paying attention. You can't listen without paying attention.



We need a volunteer and a

What's something **suggestion!** like a party?

Yes! Or...

Yes! But...

Yes! And...

Yes!



Improv Tip:
Be A Yes Man

People will bring you their best ideas if they know they will be heard and accepted (if only for a moment)



Activity:
Yes And Dialogue

- Let's plan a team building event together
- One person will add an idea
- The next person will start with "Yes! And..." and continue from there



**Activity:
Yes And Brainstorm**



- We will create a team building event
- One person offer an idea
- Person next in alphabetical order says, "Yes! And..."
- Continue for three minutes



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More Productive Meetings

Less boring... more better!



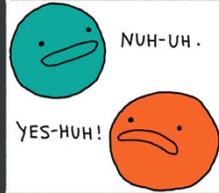
**Activity:
Yes And Brainstorm**

Some things to include in your event plan:

- Location
- Event Name
- Activities
- Speakers
- Promotions
- Incentives
- Entertainment
- Food and Drink
- Anything else

When to Yes! And...

- Encourage people to share their ideas
- Explore an idea
- Generate multiple ideas quickly
- Remove conversation blocks and find solutions
- Shift your default from fear of the unknown to curiosity



Fall, then figure out what to do on the way down.

Del Close, Improv Guru



ITERATIVE PROCESSES

Try something. Collect feedback.
Try something else.

Bicycles are great teachers...

Keith Johnstone



Improvisers are able to start things, not knowing how they will end.

Activity:
First Letter, Last Letter



The **last letter** of your partners line is the **first letter** of your line

"How are you?"

"**U**nbelievably well."

"**L**ovely to hear it!"

"**T**ell me about your..."

Improv Tip: Try Something

Many problems can't be thought through. You need feedback to solve them. And you can't get feedback if you don't do something.



The Iteration Game



- Goal: Make a paper airplane that flies the farthest
- Method: Test out 3 different designs in the next 3 minutes
- At the end of 3 minutes, submit your final design



Improv Tip: Hold on Tightly, Let Go Lightly

Don't get attached. You are constantly creating ideas and discarding them as they quickly become obsolete.



“Fear keeps us focused on the past or worried about the future. If we can acknowledge our fear, we can realize that right now we are okay.”

- Thich Nhat Hanh

Improv Tip: The OTHER person is in the moment

When you focus on yourself and your failures, it puts you in the past or the present.



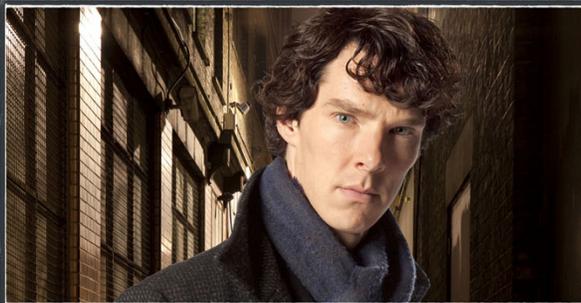
Six Word Stories

- “Wrong number,” says a familiar voice.
- Born a twin; Graduated only child.
- “Male?” “It’s an older driver’s license.”
- Paramedics finished her text. “...love you.”
- Brought roses home. Keys didn’t fit.
- I’m beside myself; cloning machine works.

The Iteration Game



- Goal: Write a Six Word Story
- Method: In 2 minutes write out 3 boring stories under 20 words
- Take 1 minute to pick one, revise down to six words.
- At the end of 3 minutes, submit your final story



Sherlock's Questions



Sherlock's Questions

- What's something I'm already doing, that I should be doing more of?
- What's something I'm not doing that I definitely should be doing?
- What's something I am doing that I can drop?



Sherlock's Questions

- Stop...
- Start...
- Do More...



Activity: Collaborative Drawing



- We are going to create a portrait, taking turns, with each person adding one line or idea



“Those who say 'yes' are rewarded by the adventures they have. Those who say 'no' are rewarded by the safety they attain.”

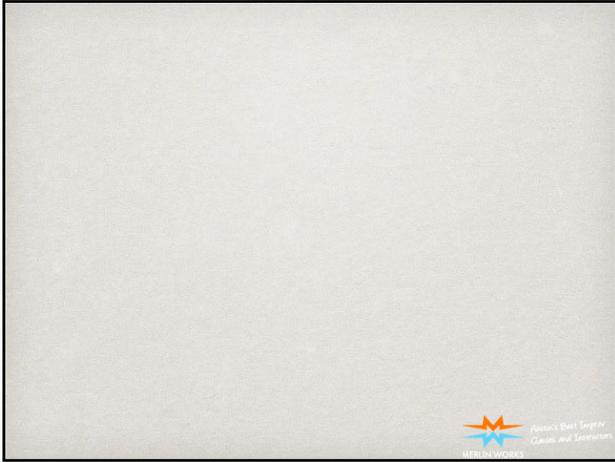
-Keith Johnstone, Impro

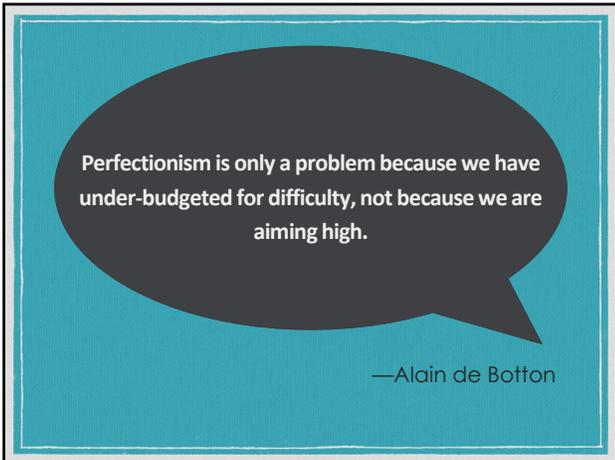
Activity:
Yes And Drawing

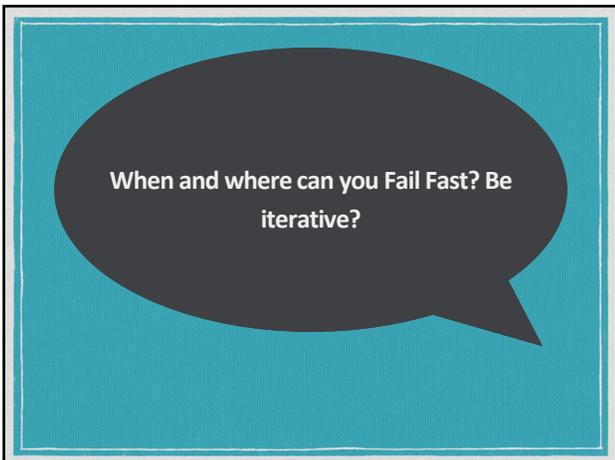


Activity:
Yes And Drawing

- Draw collaborative portraits
- One person will add an idea
- The another person will build on that idea—no undoing!
- It's a portrait of someone or something—not abstract!
- When it feels complete, add a title: one word at a time







Today's Agenda

- Failure: Let's Make Friends
- Buoyancy: How to Bounce Back
- Iterative Processes: Try Something

How can you apply this to your work and life?

Let's chat!

Bonus Tip: Ending With Gratitude

Lift others to lift yourself



GET SMART

Faking the Expert

Activity: Gibberish Definition

Player A: give a word in gibberish

Player B: Repeat that word and give it's definition



Activity: Hesitation Debate



- Choose a silly topic
- At any point, the debaters can extend a hand forward.
- The audience shouts random words
- The debaters must repeat the word and seamlessly weave it in to their argument

Demo: Authentic Presentations

- Speak for one minute on a work topic
- Speak for one minute on a passion topic
- Combine them!
 - Content of #1
 - Style of #2



Activity: Word-at-a-time Expert Interview



- You are all one person, an expert at everything
- You communicate one-word-at-a-time
- Answer questions while having fun and making sense

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Any Questions?