

# Perfectionism

Most of us have been trained to succeed in competitive environments. No wonder we set high standards for ourselves and can become self-critical when we make mistakes.

*But is perfectionism a trait to cultivate or eliminate?*

And how can we manage our striving for achievement while avoiding stress, burnout and depression?

## Research shows that:

**53-58%** of people report being perfectionistic at work. [1]

There is a **good** (adaptive) and a **bad** (maladaptive) version of perfectionism. [2]



The adaptive perfectionist **strives for achievement** and is **motivated for success.**



The maladaptive perfectionist **frets over making mistakes** and **worries about what others think.**

## HOW TO BE KIND TO YOURSELF WHEN YOU ERR

Take a moment to reflect: **How do you treat yourself when you make a mistake or experience a set-back?**

Do you frame it positively as a learning and move on, or are you tough on yourself?

Next time your inner critic pops up, try the following steps:

1. **Acknowledge** that your inner critic has made an appearance.
2. **Pause and breathe.**
3. **Remind yourself** that you are doing your best.
4. **Pause and breathe.**
5. **When you are ready,** let go of the inner critic and move on.

We all make mistakes. None of us are perfect. Being kind to yourself will help you bounce back more resiliently when life's inevitable missteps happen.

### References:

Research studies: [study 1](#), [study 2](#)

Book: Hougard, R., Carter, J. (2018) The Mind of the Leader. How to Lead Yourself, Your People and Your Organization for Extraordinary Results. Harvard Business Review