

Project Summary for IAL Website

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Project Title:	Changing Mindsets to Enable Workers to Thrive in an Uncertain Job Market
Project Number:	GA20-05
Year of Approval:	2020
Funding Source:	WDARF
Objectives and intended outcomes of the project:	We will investigate two theoretically novel mindsets as potential solutions to reduce these psychological barriers to upskilling and reskilling. We will design protocols and materials for scalable interventions that can be delivered to working adults. The knowledge and interventions developed in this research will contribute to the WDARF's goal of identifying strategies to encourage lifelong learning, by creating effective ways to nudge people towards lifelong learning in a cost-effective, scalable manner.
Project Team	
Principal Investigator:	Dr Patricia CHEN
Co-Principal Investigators:	Dr Bernard Cheng-Yian TAN, Dr SUN Li-Ning
Summary of Project (up to 300 words)	
<p>Modern technological advancements and the Covid-19 pandemic have created significant job uncertainty for workers worldwide. To stay relevant and competitive, workers need to continually upskill and reskill. Yet, psychological barriers could hinder their motivation to engage in lifelong learning. One reason why people are reluctant to engage in lifelong learning could be because they do not believe they can learn new, different kinds of skills. Another reason could be because many Singaporeans have a fear of failure. In this research, we introduce two theoretically novel mindsets as potential solutions to reduce these psychological barriers: an "expansive growth mindset" (the belief that one can take up and master new, different kinds of skills) and an "experimental mindset" (an orientation towards approaching any challenging and unfamiliar situation through iterative experimenting like a researcher). Having an expansive growth mindset enables people to see the possibility of succeeding at mastering unfamiliar skills; whereas an experimental mindset psychologically distances people from failures, allowing them to keep learning and growing. By instilling these adaptive mindsets in adults, our research will provide possible ways to motivate greater lifelong learning. We will conduct psychological research on working adults to measure and test the global efficacy of these mindsets. In Aim 1, we will design and validate measures of these theoretically novel mindsets, and examine their relation with people's learning attitudes and motivations. In Aim 2, we will design and test scalable mindset interventions to motivate greater engagement in upskilling and reskilling. The knowledge and interventions developed in this research will contribute to the WDARF's goal of identifying strategies to encourage lifelong learning, by creating effective ways to nudge people towards lifelong learning in a cost-effective, scalable manner.</p>	

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