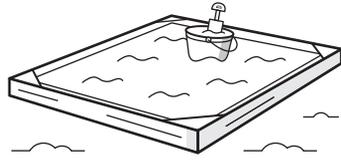


# MAKE SPACE FOR MISTAKES



Define a space where people can experiment, take risks and recover.

Create a safe environment where people can take risks. Clarify the area where a) your team members have room to experiment and b) where the stakes are too high to allow failure.

## MULTIPLIER DISCIPLINE

### Liberator

Remedy for **Rescuer**, **Optimist**, **Protector** and **Perfectionist**

Accidental Diminisher

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## MULTIPLIER MINDSET

People learn best from the natural consequences of their actions.

## MULTIPLIER PRACTICES

Create a clear “water line” above which people can experiment and take risks and still recover, but below which any mistakes “or cannon balls” might cause catastrophic failure and “sink the ship.” Work with your team to understand this waterline.

1. On a white board or flipchart, make two headings.
2. Using post-it notes, ask each individual to list a number of scenarios where it is OKAY TO FAIL and some where it is NOT OK TO FAIL.
3. Allow individuals to move the post-it notes between categories and debate which category each belongs in. Physically move the post-it notes until the group reaches a shared understanding.
4. Push the thinking encouraging as many scenarios as possible to go into the “Okay to fail” category. Draw “the water line” between the categories.
5. Group like scenarios together.
6. Define the themes in each of the categories. For example:

- a. It's OK to fail when a) the learning is greater than the cost, b) we have time or resources to recover or c) when customers or students are not harmed, etc.
  - b. It's not OK to fail when a) it violates our ethics or values, b) it does damage to our brand/reputation in the market, c) it is career ending for someone (including the leader), etc.
7. Record the key principles above and below the water line. Share this with the team.

**Lab Results**

When the executive leadership team for apparel company, Banana Republic, signed up for a Multipliers workshop, they were seeking ways to enable their employees to take smart risks and innovate. They decided to create space for mistakes by identifying the parts of the business where it was OK to experiment and fail versus the parts of the business where success was critical. Members of the executive team captured their views on sticky notes and then placed them on a large white board, with one side labeled "OK TO FAIL" and the other labeled "NOT OK TO FAIL." The team discussed and negotiated each idea, moving sticky notes from one side of the board to the other until consensus was reached. The group of executives then stepped back and looked for a theme in each category. Within a minute or two it became abundantly clear where it was NOT OK TO FAIL. It could be expressed in a single word -- December. The president's observation sounded like this, "11 months out of the year it is OK to experiment with product, price, promotion, etc. but we can't jeopardize December", the all-important holiday shopping season. Imagine how clarifying and liberating this was when they shared this distinction with their broader management team.

**Your Turn: Prepare for success with Multiplier practices. Use this grid to plan and reflect on your experiments.**

<p><b>Look for Opportunity</b> Where and how might you use this experiment?</p>	<p><b>Increase Your Impact</b> Where and how might you use this experiment?</p>
<p><b>Maximize Your Learning</b> What happened and what is your evidence?</p>	<p><b>Develop Your Skill</b> Where can you use this again?</p>