

## Tip #4 – Make your own resources and put them on display

### HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR GROWTH MINDSET

The view you adopt for yourself can profoundly affect how you approach language learning. In order to keep developing your growth mindset:

- **Stop saying to yourself: “I can’t do this” or “I’m so bad at doing this”.** Notice your weaknesses in order to develop an improvement plan, NOT in order to let them drive the narrative. Shift your focus from success/failure frame of mind to “I am making progress” frame of mind.
- **Stop comparing yourself to others.** Comparing is never healthy but thanks to social media it is on the rise. Don’t let it control you. Catch yourself in the act and change your internal dialogue. Do not let proficient language speakers intimidate you. Remember, they were once at your exact level and might have a good advice for you. Use them!
- **Use the magical, powerful, “YET statements” in your speech.** You will be surprised how a small word like this can change the entire narrative and consequently, your mindset.

### LOW EFFORT SYNDROM

A lot of learners believe that if you are smart you don’t need to work very hard to accomplish success, or to impress others. They believe that if you are smart, you should not have to put an effort. Success just comes. This is called a “low effort syndrome”. This is a way for people with fixed mindsets to protect themselves, to maintain the aura that they are smart and intelligent. If you believe intelligence is something you are born with, putting an effort is embarrassing. A fixed mindset leads to inferior learning strategies.

Don’t ask: “Can I do it? but “HOW can I do it?” Working and making mistakes in front of others does not make you vulnerable, it sets you on a path to become smarter.

### TIP 4 - Make your own resources and put them on display.

#### WHY

What purpose do the resources serve for you? Are they decorations or reference materials? Making your own resources helps revise the material. You will be familiar with them, so they will be easy to use as a reference. Looking at them often will help memorize the content.

#### WHAT

- **Vocabulary list from a reading.** Consider including the word in a sentence as well.
- **Verb conjugations.** Instead of writing the entire conjugation, write the verb forms you use the most in the tenses you are working on.
- **Words-on-a-topic posters.** Select a topic and think of words that would help you talk about this topic. Find them in a dictionary and put them on a poster.

- **Vocabulary cards on a key chain.** Use thicker 3 x 5. Put the word in the target language and a sentence with it on one side and your native language equivalent on the other side.
- **Boring words.** Choose five words that you use most frequently (go, say, meet, good, nice). Use a thesaurus to find more exciting synonyms. For one week try not to say or write these words but use the more exciting synonyms instead.
- **Word association charts.** Write a word you already know but want to “dig into” deeper, for example “garden”. Use a web graphic organizer to brainstorm words for each area of gardening (tools, types of gardens, verbs to describe gardening, etc.)
- **Mentor sentences.** If you are reading something and you really like a particular sentence structure, copy that sentence on a piece of paper. Then think of other sentences you can make using the same structure.

Example:

*I **stood** there, trying to think of something to say, when suddenly I **heard** a loud noise.  
(change 2 verbs)*

*I **stared at** him, trying to think of something to say, when suddenly a cat **jumped out of** the closet.*

- **Lists of words you often confuse because of similar pronunciation.**  
Corps /kor/ body  
Coeur /ker/ heart  
Cours /kur/ course  
Cour /kur/ courtyard  
Court /kur/ short  
Read through the list frequently!
- **Presentations.** If you are trying to learn about a certain topic, create a PP presentation on that topic. Write only key points on the slides.

## HOW

- **Put reference materials on your wall.** Do not overload your walls and decide on how often you will change the resources. I recommend you use 8 ½ x 11 paper and that you get a presentation binder, so once you take them down and exchange for new ones, you have a nice one place to keep them all together.
- **Take a snapshot with your phone.** Take photos of your self-made resources with your phone and refer to them not just in the house but anywhere.
- **Record an audio of yourself.** Use the PP presentation you made to record yourself in a target language. Record yourself regularly, so you can hear the progress. Switching the hat from speaker to listener will allow you to catch pronunciation mistakes and find other areas for improvement.