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Start in the Right Way

Use this tool to identify inward mindset behaviors before they start impacting a project or initiative

Whether you're kicking off a challenging project, addressing a difficult coworker, or facing a contentious situation, it can be tempting to turn inward and operate from a place of blame, resistance, or disregard. That's why it can be helpful to have a tool on hand to identify and stop any negative patterns before they start.

This tool allows managers to evaluate how they'd approach a situation from an inward mindset, and how things would change if they were outward. By clearly comparing the two, managers can catch themselves if they turn inward, and instead strive for accountable, collaborative, and engaged behaviors.

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When and With Whom Might You Use This Tool?

This tool is very helpful whenever you, individually or as part of a team, are faced with a situation where it would be easy to become inward—when you are about to write an email about a thorny situation, for example, or when you are about to start a potentially contentious meeting, or when you are about to begin a challenging project. Or maybe you are about to place a phone call to someone you find difficult.

If you remember to do the following before you begin doing any of these or other potentially challenging things, you will find that they will go better.

How to Use It

Identify a situation (a meeting, phone call, email, project) that could invite an inward mindset. Before you begin, do the following (either individually or, if circumstances allow, with the group that will be involved):

1. **Ask:** How would I/we act in or approach this meeting (or this project, call, or email) if our mindsets were inward? What kinds of things would be likely to happen?

    (If doing this with a group, write the responses on a whiteboard or flip chart where they can be seen and referenced.)

2. **Ask:** How would I/we act in or approach this meeting (or this project, call, or email) if our mindsets were outward? What kinds of things would be likely to happen?

    (Once again, if doing this with a group, write the responses on a whiteboard or flip chart where they can be seen and referenced.)

Further instruction: If doing this with a group, invite everyone to stay committed to engaging in the challenging project or task with an outward mindset. The items on the inward-mindset list can help everyone stop themselves early when they are starting to veer off course.

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How would I/we do this with an
Inward Mindset?

How would I/we do this with an
Outward Mindset?

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This tool is just one of 50+ situational frameworks and tools available through the Arbinger Institute's robust training programs.

From selecting a new hire to making a key business decision, Arbinger has a tool for any business challenge you face. Get in touch today to learn more about Arbinger's *Outward Leadership*, our leadership development program that changes mindsets and improves organizational performance.

Chat with an Expert

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Meet to Learn

A meeting template to uncover the objectives, needs, and challenges of others

Taking the time to meet with and learn about your coworkers can help you establish stronger working relationships, build trust, and improve communication within your team—all things that are especially valuable as a leader. This can result in a more positive and productive work environment, and ultimately lead to better outcomes for your team and organization.

Arbinger's Meet to Learn tool is designed to help uncover the objectives, needs, and challenges of others. It's a tool for increasing your curiosity that then positions you to be more helpful to those around you. You can use it individually to get to know collaborators, customers, your direct reports, or with groups that your team interacts with regularly.