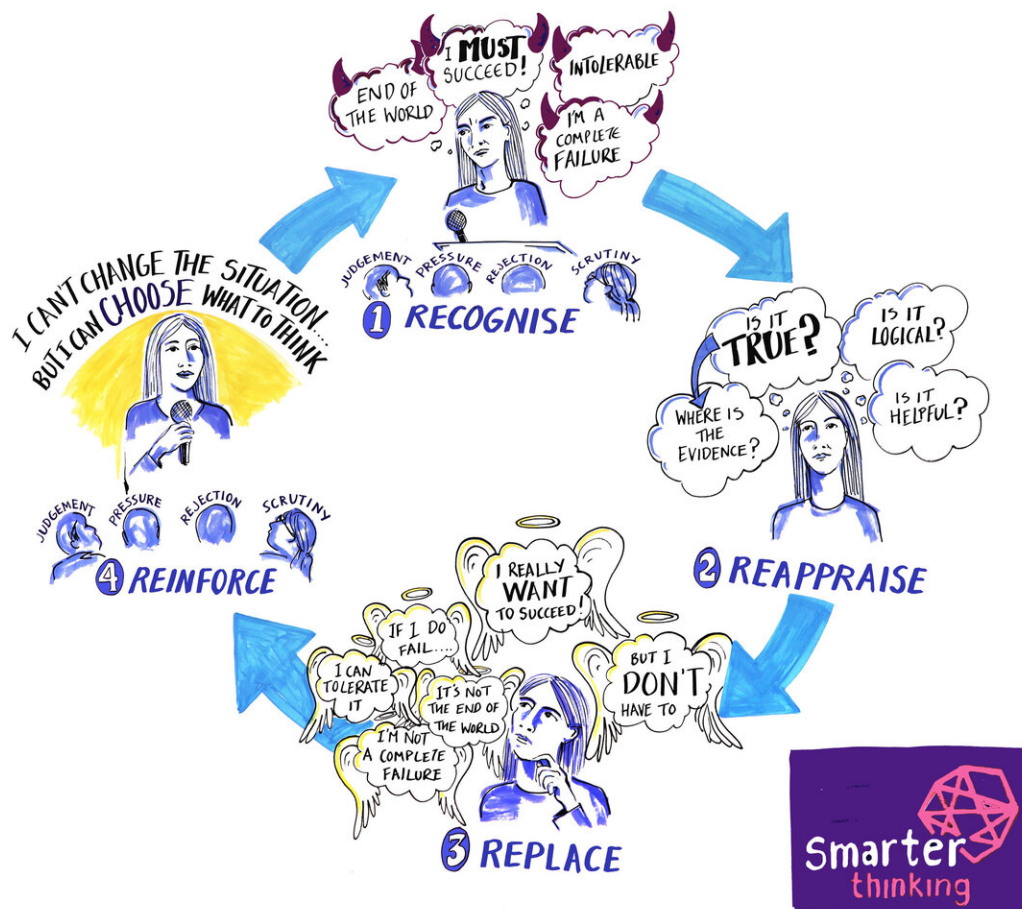


# Are irrational beliefs holding back your career?

September 18 2019



'Smarter Thinking' helps to uncover and challenge patterns of rigid and extreme thinking. Credit: Smarter Thinking project

Psychologists have developed a free test which reveals how the way you think affects your performance.

The [Smarter Thinking Profile](#) provides users with a detailed report identifying illogical beliefs that could be limiting their performance—be it in the boardroom or on the football pitch.

Based on [scientific research](#) and evidence, [Smarter Thinking](#) was developed by Staffordshire University Associate Professor of Psychology Dr. Martin Turner to help uncover and then challenge patterns of rigid and extreme thinking to maximise your potential.

The Smarter Thinking Profile has been developed by Dr. Turner in collaboration with Dr. Andrew Wood, also of Staffordshire University.

Dr. Turner explained: "In sport and at work we all face crunch events. A cup final that comes with extra pressure; work equivalents like a big presentation. But is it the event that creates the stress? Or is it the way we think about the events? There's no doubt that the self-imposed pressure can lead to a poorer performance.

"[Staffordshire University research](#) has demonstrated that if we view events in a rigid, extreme, and illogical way, we may suffer unhelpful emotions that can hinder performance."

Dr. Wood expanded: "By accurately measuring these beliefs, we can recognise and address these often deeply held attitudes to performance. This allows us to take responsibility for how we think about, and react to, a range of performance situations."

The team have worked with a range of clients including businesses, elite athletes, teachers, health workers, and the military. Their services include providing performance coaching, stress and emotion

management training, and workplace wellbeing programmes.

This new online profiling tool can help organisations assess the wellbeing of employees and offer relevant support to boost their performance. It will also provide insight into how people's beliefs differ across age, location and occupation—which will help to further the team's Smarter Thinking research.

After completing a 10-minute questionnaire, the Smarter Thinking Profile provides users with a 17-page downloadable report. The questions measure four types of beliefs—Demands, Frustration Intolerance, Awfulizing and Depreciation—across ten different areas of performance. These beliefs are known to undercut our efforts for success and wellbeing, and form part of a psychological theory called Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy, or "REBT".

Once participants have their results, they are encouraged to challenge their thinking and consider reflecting on the beliefs in which they scored highly. This could include using the [Smarter Thinking App](#), enlisting the Smarter Thinking team's services, or seeking medical advice if the user wants some mental health support.

Dr. Turner said: "The profile is for anybody who wants to understand their own performance beliefs but we can also tailor reports for businesses who have a number of employees who take the test.

"It's not the event alone that causes emotional upset. Your view of the event has a large contribution to how you feel and behave. That's the insight that underpins Smarter Thinking and it has [enormous potential](#) to transform performance in sport or at work.

Dr. Turner added: "The Smarter Thinking profile identifies the illogical beliefs which might be holding you back. Recognising the beliefs you

hold about performance is the first step in challenging and changing these beliefs. We know that holding flexible, non-extreme, and logical beliefs is healthier and more conducive to long-term success."

Provided by Staffordshire University

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