

Believe it or not, there is a science behind making mistakes. It's said that it takes 10,000 hours to become an expert in almost any field, also known as the "10,000-hour rule".<sup>1</sup> While it can be beneficial to know the kind of work ethic needed to lead to expertise, it's also important to understand that mistakes and failures are integral to that process. That's where deliberate practice comes into play; it involves isolating what's not working and mastering the difficult area before moving on.<sup>1</sup> The same principle can apply to your online education (/online-degree-programs) and schoolwork—mistakes and failures are a part of the learning process. But, you can make the best of them. Here are a few ways to help you move forward.



**1. Be specific about your errors.**

Take responsibility for your actions, and be specific about your errors. What kind of mistake did you make? Knowing that you got an answer wrong doesn't mean much, but acknowledging that you don't understand a specific concept within a certain subject is huge and can provide a baseline for improvement. Allow your mistakes to shed light on the subjects, concepts, or theories that may require more of your attention. Oftentimes, the mistakes that seem so dire are usually careless errors, or a single concept applied incorrectly. Whether it's reaching out to your online class instructor for help on a certain subject, or spending additional time with a career development coach, sometimes the "fix" is more straightforward or smaller than how big the problem feels.<sup>2</sup>



**2. Do not let your mistakes define you..**

Most successful people find value in error; they admit and discuss their mistakes and failures openly, and acknowledge that without them, they would've never learned what they know now, or ended up where they are currently. They know that it's possible to laugh off mistakes, and then work hard to correct them. Avoid putting yourself down when you mess up – it's a self-defeating habit that must be broken in order to fully appreciate who you are, mistakes and all. You are more than your mistakes.

**3. Let go of the fear of failure..**

One common thing that tends to hold students back is the fear of failure. They are afraid to act because they're so concerned about making a mistake. Ask yourself if you're procrastinating, making excuses, or waiting to act on your studies or career goals. Mistakes are proof that you're trying, and without them, you're not growing or learning. Push past doubts, embrace imperfections, and allow yourself to make mistakes, so you can continue moving forward in your education and career.<sup>3</sup>



#### 4. Reshape your goals..

Throughout your educational journey (/admissions) and life in general, it's important to reframe your view of mistakes.<sup>3</sup> Learning how to make the most of them can help you rework and reshape your goals, redefine expectations and needs, refocus your school and work, and feel more positive overall, regardless of the situation. Making mistakes allows you to learn what you value, what you like, what you don't want, and what you don't need.<sup>3</sup>

#### 5. View Mistakes as Opportunities..

When you shift your mindset, it allows you to understand that there are actually no mistakes, only lessons and learning opportunities. Viewing your mistakes as huge failures, and focusing on the negatives at-hand will only prevent you from reaching your goals. Don't hold yourself back! Whether you're switching your major, returning to school later in life or after a prolonged break, or making a new career move—know that some of the most frustrating mistakes can lead to the most significant breakthroughs.<sup>3</sup>



Be a student first, and keep learning. Examine your mistakes, take time to work through the problem areas, and use them as a way to reshape and refocus your educational goals. There is always a silver lining. Forgive yourself for past errors and embrace the growth that you can experience.

1. Maats, H. and Obrien, K. "Teaching Students to Embrace Mistakes." George Lucas Educational Foundation - Edutopia. Published March 20, 2014. Accessed August 2, 2018. <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/teaching-students-to-embrace-mistakes-hunter-maats-katie-obrien>

2. Saunders Medlock, E. "Don't Fear Failure: Nine Powerful Lessons We Can Learn From Our Mistakes." Huffington Post. Updated January 4, 2015. Accessed August 2, 2018. [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/lisabeth-saunders-medlock-phd/dont-fear-failure-9-powerful-lessons-we-can-learn-from-our-mistakes\\_b\\_6058380.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/lisabeth-saunders-medlock-phd/dont-fear-failure-9-powerful-lessons-we-can-learn-from-our-mistakes_b_6058380.html)

3. Kaiser, S. "5 Pieces of Wisdom to Help You Let Go of Mistakes." MindBodyGreen. Published July 26, 2013. Accessed August 2, 2018. <https://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-10215/5-pieces-of-wisdom-to-help-you-let-go-of-mistakes.html>

*For important information about the educational debt, earnings, and completion rates of students who attended CTU programs and other important disclosures, go to [www.coloradotech.edu/disclosures](http://www.coloradotech.edu/disclosures) (financial-aid/student-disclosures).*

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expertise, integral, deliberate, acknowledge, shed light on, be straightforward, end up, procrastinate, make the most of, mindset, frustrating, silver lining

What would you like to have expertise in?

What has been integral to your education?

When you have a problem, who do you reach out to?

Is it easy for you to acknowledge a mistake?

When have you pushed past the doubts of others?

Do you think you are making the most of your university education?

What has frustrated you recently?

Is there anything holding you back from achieving your dreams?


In your opinion, what is the biggest problem facing university students? What can fix the problem?

Believe it or not, -----.

**1** STARTING POINT  
**A mysterious artist**


**A** Read the article and the comments on the right. Whose comments do you agree with?

# The Mystery of **BANKSY**




Banksy is a British graffiti artist who has become famous around the world for two things: his controversial work and the mystery surrounding him. Usually working in disguise or at night, Banksy has managed to keep his identity secret and both his fans and detractors alert. Any clues to his identity always make the news.

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In 2010, *Time* magazine featured Banksy as one of the 100 most influential people of the year. Readers hoping to finally see his face must have been pretty disappointed when they saw the picture of Banksy – with a paper bag over his head.

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In 2011, when a movie by Banksy was nominated for an Oscar, his graffiti appeared on buildings and signs around Los Angeles. (People thought he could have been trying to get publicity for the movie.) At that time, a passerby photographed a man busy taking photos of the graffiti. It may have been Banksy documenting his own work, but nobody is sure.

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In 2013, a website claimed Banksy had been arrested and his identity finally revealed. However, the claims were later discovered to be false. It's not clear who was behind the hoax, but one thing was certain: Banksy's secret was still safe.

## Reader Comments

**CafeLife:** People should stop trying to find out who Banksy is. It's a waste of time.

**Hye\_Jung:** The magazine readers shouldn't have expected Banksy to reveal his identity just because of an article.

**Paul2001:** I'm certain Banksy must have wanted to win that Oscar. But would he have shown his face at the award ceremony?

**ArtFan:** Banksy does return to photograph his art, so it might have been him taking the pictures. He should be more careful.

**Zorro565:** Banksy shouldn't have painted on other people's property. That's illegal.

**WebWatcher:** That website hoax might have been planned by Banksy himself. What a joke.

**More >>**

**B Pair work** Compare your reactions to the article.

*"The people who worked on his movie might know who Banksy is."*

*"Well, maybe, but I'm sure his family must know he is the mysterious artist."*

## 2 GRAMMAR

### Modals with multiple uses

To express degrees of certainty, use *must (not)*, *can't*, *could (not)*, *might (not)*, or *may (not)*.

I'm certain Banksy **must have wanted** to win that Oscar.

People thought he **could have been trying** to get publicity for the movie.

That website hoax **might have been planned** by Banksy himself.

To express obligation, advice, or opinions, use *should (not)*. Do not use *must (not) have* for obligations, advice, or opinions about the past.

Banksy **shouldn't have painted** on other people's property. (*obligation*)

He **should be** more careful. (*advice*)

The magazine readers **shouldn't have expected** Banksy to reveal his identity just because of an article. (*opinion*)

Also notice how these modals are used in the passive and continuous.

**GRAMMAR PLUS** see page 109

**A** Look at the Starting Point on page 14 again. What does each modal express? Which one is used in the passive?

**B** Use modals to write reactions to these situations. Then compare answers with a partner.

1. You and your friend planned to meet, but your friend never arrived.  
*He might have been busy at work, but he should have called to tell me.*
2. You loaned your classmate a lot of money last week, but she still hasn't repaid you.
3. You feel sick after a big fish dinner.
4. You receive flowers from a secret admirer.
5. You haven't received any phone calls or text messages in a week.
6. Your boss promised to promote you, but it still hasn't happened.

## 3 DISCUSSION

### What's the explanation?

**A** Read these headlines about strange events. How would you explain them?

#### MYSTERY SOUND IRRITATES VILLAGE



Each night from midnight to 4 A.M., a mysterious humming sound keeps the 300 residents of Woodland, England, awake. There are no factories or large roads nearby, and so far nobody can explain the sound.



#### Colored Honey Puzzles Farmers

In a French region famous for its honey, bees have been producing it in shades of blue and green. Farmers say the honey is unsellable, and they are investigating the cause.



#### River Runs Red

Shocked residents watched in disbelief last week as the river running through their city turned a deep red color. Some people rushed to save a bottle of the colored water while they had the chance.

**B Group work** Discuss your explanations. Do you agree?

*"Airplanes flying overhead could have caused the noise in that village."*

*"I'm not so sure. I think someone may have been making the sound on purpose as a prank."*

#### Useful expressions

##### Disagreeing

I don't know.

I'm not so sure.

Well, maybe, but . . .

I know what you mean, but . . .

## 4 VOCABULARY & SPEAKING

### Verbs of belief

**A** Put these verbs of belief in the correct columns. Discuss your answers with a partner.

assume    be positive    bet    figure    have a hunch    suppose  
be certain    be sure    doubt    guess    know for a fact    suspect

Certain

Not certain

*assume*

**B Group work** Use the verbs of belief to discuss these questions.

1. Why do giraffes have long necks?
2. Why do some buildings not have a thirteenth floor?
3. Is there life on other planets?
4. Why doesn't a haircut hurt?
5. Why do some people fall in love at first sight?
6. What color is an insect's blood?

*"Why do giraffes have long necks?"*

*"I'm not sure, but I assume they have long necks to eat the leaves at the tops of trees."*

*"Yeah, I bet that's the reason why."*



**VOCABULARY PLUS** see page 131

## 5 LISTENING & SPEAKING

### Solving mysteries

**A** Listen to Sheila and Adam discussing some myths and mysteries researched by the TV show *Solving Mysteries*. Choose the ones discovered to be true.

- 1. Using a cell phone can cause a fire at a gas station.
- 2. Talking to plants for a short time will help them grow better.
- 3. A person can break a glass using just his or her voice.
- 4. Yawning is contagious.

**B** Listen again. What ideas did Sheila and Adam originally have? Answer the questions.

1. How did Sheila think that cell phones could cause fires?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Why did Adam doubt that talking to plants could help them grow?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why did Sheila have trouble believing voices could break a glass?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Why didn't Adam believe that yawning could be contagious?

\_\_\_\_\_

**C Group work** Brainstorm other mysteries you might like to have *Solving Mysteries* investigate for you. Can anyone in the group explain the mysteries?