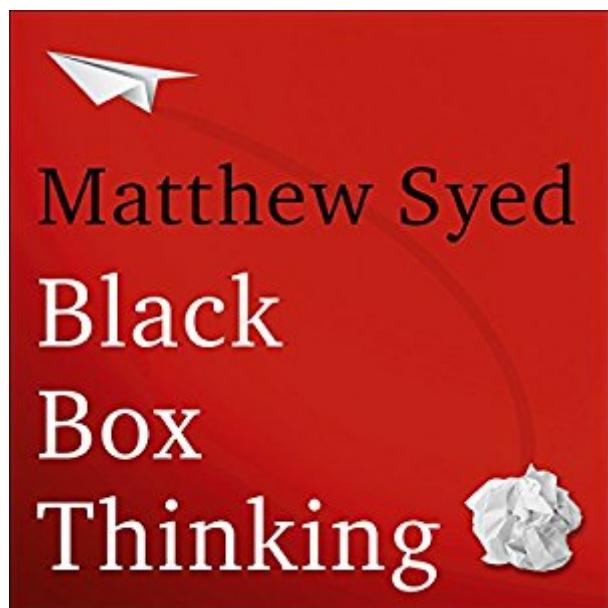


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# Black Box Thinking: The Surprising Truth About Success



## **Synopsis**

Columnist for The Times and best-selling author of Bounce: The myth of talent and the power of practice, Matthew Syed argues that the key to success is a positive attitude to failure. What links the Mercedes Formula One team with Google? What links Dave Brailsford's Team Sky and the aviation industry? What is the connection between the inventor James Dyson and the footballer David Beckham? They are all Black Box Thinkers. Whether developing a new product, honing a core skill or just trying to get a critical decision right, Black Box Thinkers aren't afraid to face up to mistakes. In fact, they see failure as the very best way to learn. Rather than denying their mistakes, blaming others or attempting to spin their way out of trouble, these institutions and individuals interrogate errors as part of their future strategy for success. How many of us, hand on heart, can say that we have such a healthy relationship with failure? Learning from failure has the status of a cliché, but this book reveals the astonishing story behind the most powerful method of learning known to mankind, and reveals the arsenal of techniques wielded by some of the world's most innovative organizations. Their lessons can be applied across every field - from sport to education, from business to health. Using gripping case studies, exclusive interviews and really practical takeaways, Matthew Syed - the award-winning journalist and best-selling author of Bounce - explains how to turn failure into success, and shows us how we can all become better Black Box Thinkers.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

A colleague of mine sent me a link to a BBC article regarding this book several weeks ago. As an patented inventor and product designer I was very intrigued by the title. This is the first book I have

read by this author. As I read through its pages, I found Matthew Syed's writing style to be captivating enough to keep my attention while describing events and facts which could otherwise be very dry. For that reason, I am compelled to read his other works, but merely based on the content, I have already recommended this book to dozens of people. The concept of learning from mistakes is as old as recorded history. However, if you think that is what this book is about, think again. There are many nuances to the subject matter disclosed which can be very thought provoking and enlightening. On several occasions I actually put the book down, feeling compelled to rethink dozens of situations in my own life where I have made mistakes, not learned from them and ended up repeating them, stuck in closed loop logic. My key takeaway from reading this book is that Mr. Syed identifies a well-known flaw in humanity to which some critics at first blush might yawn and say "what, nothing new here?" Failure analysis has been around for centuries. Not exactly, this book covers a lot of ground. The Black Box failure analysis model has only been in use for a very limited amount of time in human history, yielding incredible results in aviation safety used for the benefit of all humanity. Yes, individuals throughout history have used versions of failure analysis to solve issues, either for themselves or for small scale issues. But this recent model transcends others in that it truly eliminates the need or benefit of lying, omitting information or tampering with evidence. By doing so, you only perpetuate a problem which could eventually end up costing you your life or the life of your loved ones. I spoke my friend who is a pilot and Lt. Col in the US Air Force about claims in this book and he confirmed the legitimacy and efficacy of the program, stating that US Military standards are slightly different than commercial aviation, but no doubt that you are immune to prosecution and encouraged to fully disclose information, which is solely used to improve safety for not only for the military, but for the greater good of all mankind. In my mind, that is what makes it unique. If you were to tell a pilot in 1935 that in 2015, more pilgrims would die traveling on foot to Mecca (or being politically correct, Hajj 2015), then 3 billion passengers on commercial airplanes, travelling at 575 mph, taking off and landing in everything from thunderstorms and dense fog to snow, ice and gale force winds, sometimes even banking between skyscrapers on approach, they would have looked at you as though you were insane and told you to seek immediate psychological help. But those are the facts, made possible by human beings working together using this system and for the greater good of all.

The content of this book is a real eye opener to us all who deny our mistakes in life. A very worthwhile book. Full marks to both Matthew Syed the author and Simon Slater the reader. However, the CD version I received contained no title, author, speaker, date, chapters etc in

the file data making it difficult to use other than the obvious disc and track numbers, so a very poor product considering the Penguin publishers. Would have expected better. Packaging was minimal, especially taking into account the international delivery distance involved, resulting in some crushing of the edge of the box, however the CD's survived this ok.

This is an awesome book. It starts out a bit slow but keep reading. It gets deep with loads of knowledge and lots of data to back up his statements. This book really made me think about how I do things, how I react and handle failure and even the team I lead. Also, made me create processes to coach my team to accept failure in a more intelligent way and how to implement the lessons learned. Failure needs to be a welcomed byproduct of our daily activities!!

Such a great book about the value of analyzing and learning from yours and others mistakes . Clear and concise with great examples of individuals, countries and industries who used the valuable lesions learned in the making of a mistake to be infinitely better in the future . In a nutshell the author suggests mistakes are part of life , nothing is ever learned in their cover up , plenty is learned in their dissection. Mistakes are in fact a healthy part of human and organizational development and to some degree ( when not life threatening ) should be embraced .I will re-read many times I'm sure .

I strongly suggest this book. Is very well written and it is fast paced like a good novel. I love the writing style by the author and I think concepts introduced are useful and important.I discussed a lot the content with my team at work and I suggested reading it to many people.

The author tells us how to do things the right way. Regrettably, he did not tell the publisher. Pages are in the incorrect order, there are missing pages and there are duplicate pages. If you are inclined to buy this book, get it a retail store where you can verify that you have a properly compiled volume. Unbelievable! I bought multiple copies of this book and had them delivered to friends that showed me the errors.

I have used excerpts from this book to enthrall and challenge my students about human potential and what blocks it. I very much enjoyed the accessible writing style and the real world examples. Would love to read an account of how organisations have changed and how they did it - like what training and systems have been developed. Many thanks for reviving my faith in the human ability to question in the easiest and most powerful way by simply asking why?

Absolutely fantastic book! loved every page of it. I ended up buying for my boss and for my whole team. Haha.. But seriously - you will do yourself a favor by reading it.

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