



How to be Empowered When You Fail

Written by [Mark Kamin](#), CEO and [Marcus Cracknell](#), Associate Program Leader

What High Performers Must Confront

At Mark Kamin & Associates, we've spent over four decades coaching executives at the highest levels of global business. In that time, we've seen one unavoidable truth: failure is not an exception — it's built into the very structure of performance.

Most coaches will tell you how to succeed. Few will prepare you for the reality that matters more: how to be empowered when you fail.

If you are in the game of performance, you will fail. You will miss targets. Your team will fall short. You will drop the ball. This is not a possibility — it's a certainty.

And here's what most people get wrong: they expect it to get easier. They expect that after enough wins, the breakdowns will stop. That's a delusion. If you are climbing mountains, you will always face setbacks, mistakes, and breakdowns.

The point is not to avoid failure. The point is to relate to it powerfully.

Three disciplines to stay empowered when you fail

1. Be Your Word.

Leadership begins and ends with integrity. Keep the promises that matter. When you can't, don't hide it. Acknowledge it. Clean it up. Recommit.

Integrity is not moralizing. It is the foundation of workability, trust, and power. Without it, leadership collapses. With it, even in failure, you remain in command.

2. Reframe the Game.

I play online chess. After climbing past the beginner level, I hit a wall. Suddenly, I was losing — a lot. At first, I tried harder to avoid losing. The harder I tried, the worse it got.

Then I shifted the frame. Instead of playing *not to lose*, I started playing to learn. Losing became data. Every mistake became development.

That simple shift changed my entire relationship to the game — and it's the same in business.

Most leaders unconsciously fall into contexts of judgment, shame, or proving something. That's where disempowerment lives. Power lives in declaring a new game — one where failure is not proof of inadequacy, but fuel for progress.

In chess, I reframed to learning. In business, you may reframe to innovation, trust, ownership, or contribution. The specific frame is up to you. But make no mistake: reframing is not optional. It is the discipline that keeps you in the game.

3. Connect to Something Bigger Than You.

When your work is only about your success, failure stings. When your work is about impact, contribution, and the bigger game, failure becomes a stepping stone.

At MKA, our stand is simple: to have the world work, everywhere we can. That purpose makes even the hardest failures part of a larger victory.

Leaders who deliver breakthrough results don't avoid failure — they confront it. They see it as part of the game, not a verdict on who they are.

They don't waste time with excuses or drama.

They face reality.

They clean up, recommit, and move forward.

That is what transforms failure into power.

Contact

If you would like to find out how, as a leader, you can effectively make this happen inside your organization, feel free to contact Mark Kamin & Associates, Inc.

<https://mka-world.com/contact/>

Inquire@mka-world.com