



BY DAKSH SUTHAR

Mental models of next-gen  
entrepreneurs.

# Thinking Like Elon

# Unlocking the Thought Patterns Behind Insane Innovation

**This isn't just about Elon Musk.**

**It's about the mental software that powers the most disruptive entrepreneurs of our era — people who don't play the game... they reprogram the game.**

**Let's break down the exact mental models, thinking tools, and brain structures that define the next-gen visionary.**

# PART 1: What Are Mental Models?

**A mental model is how you think about how the world works.**

**It's like the operating system of your brain.**

**Next-gen entrepreneurs don't just think harder. They think differently — using mental shortcuts, filters, and frameworks to solve impossible problems.**



# PART 2:

# Elon-Style

# Thinking — The

# Core Mental

# Models

## 1. First Principles Thinking

Break everything down to its basic truths — then rebuild from scratch.

How Elon used it:

Instead of buying rockets for \$100M, he broke down the raw materials (aluminum, fuel, etc.) and built them for under \$10M.

Ask: “What are the fundamental building blocks of this problem?”

# PART 2: Elon-Style Thinking — The Core Mental Models

## Reasoning from Zero

Don't copy others. Think from a clean slate.

Instead of asking "What's working?" ask:

"If this industry didn't exist, how would I build it?"

## Example:

When building Tesla, Elon ignored car industry rules — and redesigned the car experience from scratch.

## Probabilistic Thinking

Nothing is guaranteed. Smart bets = high upside.

Elon said:

“I’m not confident in success. But I thought it was important to try.”

Build your mindset like a chess AI — always calculating odds of each move, not chasing perfection.



## The Physics Mindset

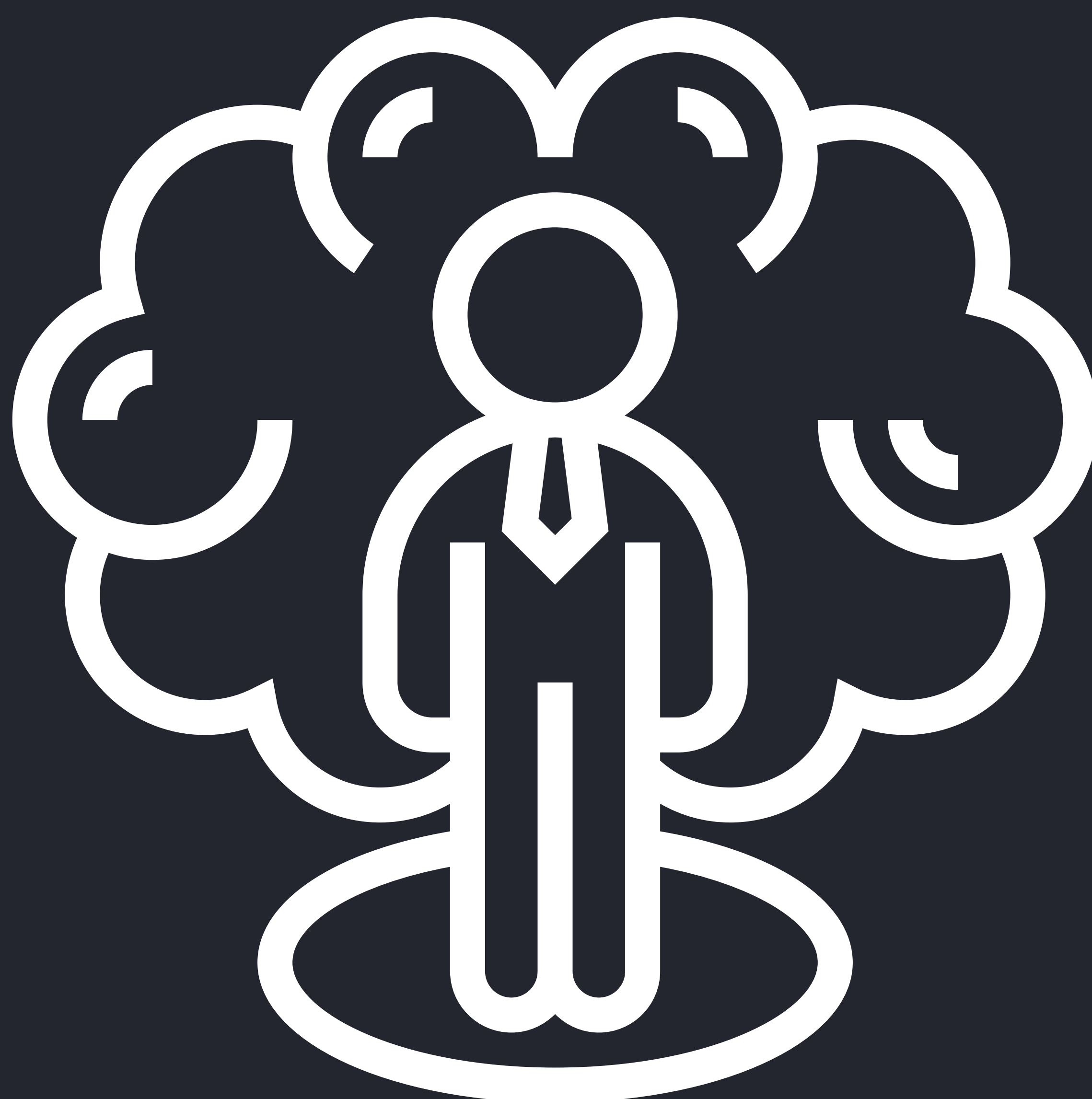
Understand systems, friction, acceleration, and flow.

Next-gen founders see business like physics:

Reduce friction = better UX

Increase momentum = growth hacks

Use leverage = exponential impact



## **Iterative Design Loop**

**Build → Test → Break → Learn → Repeat**

**Musk's approach:**

**"Make your prototype as fast as possible. Blow it up.  
Then make version 2."**

**Don't wait for perfection.**

**Launch. Learn. Improve. Repeat.**





# PART 3: How to Install These Models in Your Mind

Model	How to Apply
First Principles	Always ask: "Why is it this way?" Drill down 3–5 layers deep.
Reasoning from Zero	Don't copy market leaders. Redesign the category.
Probabilistic Thinking	Assign % chances to each idea. Make many small bets.
Physics Mindset	Think in terms of energy, systems, and flow. Not trends.
Iterative Loop	Launch version 0.1 fast. Embrace failure.

# PART 4: Bonus Models from Other Legends

- Inversion Thinking (Charlie Munger)

Ask: “What would destroy this idea?” Then avoid it.

- Network Effects (Reid Hoffman)

Make each user add value for others. Think viral loops.

- Time Arbitrage (Naval Ravikant)

Work today on what will be valuable in 5–10 years, not 5–10 months.

- Regret Minimization Framework (Jeff Bezos)

Ask: “At age 80, will I regret not trying this?”

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