

Confidence Boosting

There are lots of interpretations of what confidence actually is and many people often equate confidence with arrogance and therefore struggle to even want to achieve it.

True confidence is about being comfortable in your own skin. It's being realistic and honest about your own talents and abilities (modesty is a form of dishonesty!). It's about being willing to learn, even if that involves admitting you don't know something. It's about accepting yourself and being OK with what you know and what you don't.

Confidence is largely a state of mind and it is very much within our control.

Tips to help build confidence

Pretend!

If you don't feel confident, pretend! Think of someone you admire, who is confident in these situations, and stand like they stand, breath like they breath, and once you have a sense of how they would feel in this environment, borrow their confidence and walk in and deal with what comes up as they might. The funny thing is, that after you spend some time pretending, you will actually start to feel more confident in that arena!

Imagine it going well.

Lack of confidence can emerge when we set our imagination to picturing all the things that could go wrong. Many of us are very good at terrifying ourselves like this. Imagine if you set the full power of your imagination onto picturing things going really well. Try it!

What can you learn?

See everything as a learning opportunity. Whether it goes well or badly, you will learn something. No failure, only feedback. This is an incredibly powerful mind-set to take into a new situation.

Preparation.

If possible, prepare thoroughly for whatever you are walking into. Find out about who is going to be there, what the event is about, if it's an interview, find out about the organisation and what they do. If you have done your homework, you will be better equipped to contribute effectively to conversations and make a better impression.

Always have a plan B.

If you think this opportunity is your only or last chance, the stakes can be too high for you to relax and perform at your best. If you know that you have other options, then it puts whatever happens into perspective. It's a chance, not the chance!

Celebrate your achievements...

...and keep a record of them. Go through them all when you are preparing, and remind yourself what a talented, resourceful and wonderful person you are. This will help you to stand tall and recognise that you have a lot to offer, which transforms the power dynamic of the situation. If they don't want you, it's their loss.

Focus on how far you have come.

Don't compare yourself with the best in your business. Compare yourself with where you were six months ago, and six months before that. Review and celebrate all you have learned and the experience you have accumulated.

We are all equals.

Make sure you see the people you are going to meet as human beings and not exalted gods! When you think of someone you respect it's easy to perceive them as all seeing and all knowing. Look for ways you can connect to them as real people.

Stay optimistic.

One of the most common factors in confident people is that they hold a belief that eventually, somehow, they will succeed. So tune into the attitude that if it's not this one, something else will work for you in the future.

The Glad Game!

Finally, exercise your Pollyanna muscle. Pollyanna is a character in a book who was orphaned and sent to live with a distant aunt. In spite of having a very hard life herself, she learned to play the 'Glad Game' where she found something to be glad about in every situation, regardless how tough that seemed. So, however hard that knock back may seem, make sure you can find an up side to it, or at the very least, a funny side.