

CONFIDENCE RESOURCE PACKET

SECRETS TO BUILDING YOUR CONFIDENCE AT WORK

Training and talent can help you do your job well and keep you moving forward in your career. But your performance can take a nosedive when your self-confidence is low.

The following suggestions can help you increase and restore your on-the-job self-confidence:

Do your homework

Learn as much as you can about the subject at hand-whether you're giving a speech, asking for a promotion or making a sales call. You can't be over-prepared when your performance is on the line.

Analyze your mistakes

Knowing what went wrong and what you can do to keep from making the same mistake again can help you turn a negative situation into one that boosts your confidence in your problem-solving abilities.

Don't take the easy way out

One reward of taking risks is an increased potential for higher achievement. Ask for added responsibility when given a choice between maintaining the status quo or doing something more.

Always act confident

Do your best to dismiss your fears if you're worried a speech, meeting or sales presentation will bomb. Force yourself to smile and shake hands firmly. Walk with your head up and your shoulders back.

Prioritize your tasks each day

Daily to-do lists are a must, but to really take control of your day, you should complete tasks in order of priority. Completing one high-priority assignment will boost your confidence more than doing four or five low-priority ones.

Keep a list of accomplishments

Refer to the list when your confidence needs a lift. Items to include: a major project you completed on time and under budget, a successful meeting you conducted, a reorganization of your filing system or mastery of a new computer program.

Post your goals where you can see them

Keeping them in front of you increases your chances of internalizing and achieving them. Setting goals and meeting them creates a pattern of success you can build on.

Stay calm when speaking with others

Rehearse difficult negotiations ahead of time. Excuse yourself if you are unable to control your emotions during a discussion.

Be responsible for your actions

Making yourself accountable for your failures also makes you responsible for your successes. If you take responsibility for your actions, you will believe that your hard work and intelligence-not luck-caused your achievements.

Avoid negative self-talk

Pay attention to your inner dialogue and replace negative comments with positive ones. For example: When your inner voice says, "I've got so much to do, I'll never get this assignment done on time," replace that thought with "I'm capable of focusing my energy on the task at hand and completing it in a timely fashion."

Don't be afraid of nervous energy

Butterflies in your stomach and a racing heart are your body's way of preparing for a challenge; they're confirmation that what you're about to do matters.

Compete against yourself

Assess your workplace performance for the past year. Then establish some specific goals for the year ahead. For example: increasing sales by 10 percent, getting to work on time every day, returning all your phone calls within 24 hours or completing routine administrative tasks 20% faster.

Keep your life in perspective

Maintaining a healthful balance between your personal and professional lives can help you weather a workplace crisis because you're less likely to define your self-worth by how well you do your job.

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SEEING YOURSELF THROUGH SOMEONE ELSE'S EYES

There's nothing like positive feedback to generate self-confidence. In this partner exercise, you and your partner are going to share something positive about each other.

Choose a partner who knows you and who is honest and can be reasonably objective about you. Each of you will have a copy of this exercise and will write for five minutes about the other's strengths. You can make a list or write in sentences, but be specific. What do you admire about your partner? In what ways does your partner enrich your life? How does your partner make you proud? In this exercise, be honest, but discuss only the positive aspects of your partner's character. Ready? Begin.

Now trade papers.

The paper your partner gave you is yours to keep. Sometimes it's hard for you to see yourself as others see you. Did your partner mention any strengths that you didn't know you had? Next time you're being hard on yourself, a quick review of this list can give your self-confidence a boost.

BEING YOUR BEST

A Mental Health Overview

Each one of us is unique. Every person sees and relates to the world differently and for this reason, what is mentally healthy includes a wide range of possibilities. Generally speaking, however, people who are able to be successful in their own lives tend to share the following traits.

Self-Esteem

Do you value yourself? While all of us enjoy being praised on occasion, people with a good sense of self-esteem know their own value and don't always rely on others to tell them they're worthwhile.

Life's Challenges

Are you able to 'roll with the punches'? Successful people are able to handle challenges at each stage of life, even though they might be temporarily put off by them.

Flexibility

Are you flexible or do you always have to be right? Successful people are able to make mistakes, accept them as mistakes and not moral failings, and admit them readily.

Realistic Expectations

Do you expect too much of yourself? Of others? While successful people can and do set goals, they are realistic about what they can accomplish and aren't afraid to redefine their goals when it's clear the expectation is too great.

Acknowledge Feelings

Are you aware of your feelings? Do you allow yourself to experience them without judging them as good or bad? We all have feelings that may sometimes seem irrational, but successful people are able to acknowledge them and move on instead of denying their existence.

Accept Responsibility

Can you accept responsibility for what you do or the choices you make? While it's human nature to make excuses once in a while, successful people are able to accept responsibility for themselves and their actions. At the same time, they refrain from denying responsibility or blaming others.

Ask for Help

Can you ask for help? Sometimes it's hard for us to admit that we can't solve a problem ourselves, but successful people ask for and get help if they need it. That's how they struggle and learn to be successful.

Source: Parlay International

For confidential help with self-esteem through one-on-one counseling,
call: 800-834-3773 or visit www.claremonteap.com.

BUILDING KIDS' CONFIDENCE

What do children need most to grow into healthy, successful adults? Self-confidence, say the experts. What can parents do to bolster their children's self-confidence?

Here are a few suggestions:

Accentuate the positive

Stop at least once a day to look for something you really like about your child, and then mention it to the youngster. "Most kids love to hear Mom and Dad bragging about them -- even if they won't admit it to their friends!" says Gerald Taylor, M.D., a child psychiatrist in Greensboro NC.

Start early

Building a child's self-esteem starts from birth. The key is "unconditional love." If a child feels a parent's affection, confidence will develop naturally.

Respect your child's rights

Remember that kids deserve the same respectful treatment that you would automatically extend to other adults. Some examples: Don't interrupt your child when he or she is trying to tell you something. Don't "borrow" a child's belongings without asking, and never belittle your children in front of their peers.

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For confidential help, call: 800-834-3773 or visit www.claremonteap.com.