

Why does confidence matter?

Understanding Confidence

Some people assume that people who have made it to the executive level have no problems with confidence. In fact, we all continually face challenges where self-confidence is needed. No one is insulated to feelings of being unsure, insecure, self-doubting, and self-distrustful. Some people have just learned to develop his or her confidence in a healthy and productive manner.

Self-confidence is as unique as the individual and varies in different parts of your life. It is not something that you can click off your list as learned, but is a process.

There is not one simple definition because confidence is an attitude or perception. It stimulates action and belief in one's ability to succeed. It is a behavior that reflects your feelings of trust in your abilities, qualities, and judgment. Confidence is a pendulum where too little can lead to not taking enough risk and too much can lead to taking on too much risk.

There are two primary contributors to confidence. The first is self-esteem and it is how you evaluate yourself and your right to be happy. Self-esteem is about your present view of your worthiness. The other contributor is self-efficacy which is your belief in your capacity to influence your life or exert control over your motivation, behavior or social environment. Self-efficacy is forward looking.

Increasing your self-confidence will not magically get you a promotion, but psychologists have made a correlation between self-confidence and happiness in all areas of our lives: work, relationships, love, hobbies, passions, etc. Building self-confidence takes work. The first step is to be honest with yourself with self-

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compassion and kindness. The next step is to make life goals that will change your confidence level. Low self-confidence is a result of inaction. Step back and look at why you make the choices you make and understand how you come across to others. Learn to focus on what you can control and not let circumstances change your confidence.

Evaluating your self-confidence

Self-confidence is an attitude and discipline that can be improved upon. Use the statements below that describe high and low self-confidence to evaluate yourself.

High self-confidence

1. Admit your mistakes and learn from them: "I missed that this time, but I will add it into my process, so I don't miss it next time."
2. Accept a compliment on a job well done graciously: "Thanks, I really worked hard on that presentation."
3. See potential as unique and equal: "I have a right to pursue my dreams and make a contribution in ways that are meaningful to me."
4. Don't let your thoughts overwhelm you: "I am feeling negative, but that is just a feeling and I also have other ones I can pull from in this situation."
5. Sees more than one way to be confident: "I am an introvert and am fine with being quietly confident and see value in my communication style."
6. Know what you are good at and what you are not good at: "I know that I can give the presentation easily, but struggle with the impromptu questions and answers, so I will prepare by thinking of potential questions beforehand."

7. See others first: "I am comfortable with who I am and walk into a room eager to talk to the people.
8. Exercise regularly: "I know that exercise is a commitment, but one that will improve my mood and confidence."
9. I take criticism and rejection: "I see helpful feedback as a road to success and do not take rejection personally."
10. Prepare an appropriate amount: "I plan what I am going to say before a big meeting, but will not obsess over it."
11. Handle conflict well: "I can speak my mind and still listen for differences of opinions."
12. Do not shy away from fear: "Everyone is nervous sometimes and being anxious about new experiences is normal."
13. Are a team player: "I know that I need to speak up for team and organization and not just speak for myself."
14. Sees life as series of ups and downs: "Today is a bad day, but tomorrow will be a different day."
15. Have goals: "I set goals for my personal and work life and then work hard to achieve them."

Low self-confidence

1. Stay in your comfort zone: "I am not sure if I should apply for that new job because I can't do all the things in the job description."
2. Dismiss compliments: "Oh, that presentation was easy, anyone could have done well on it."
3. Walk in a room and think how everyone is viewing you: "I look dumpy and I'm sure that I will say something stupid."
4. Obsess over potential failure: "I usually spend hours practicing before a big meeting and obsess over all the things that could go wrong."
5. See confidence as arrogance: "I hold back because I do not want to be like someone who steps on others toes or be seen as someone who thinks they are the most important person in the room."
6. Can't move off topic in head: "I am having trouble getting my work done, because I have monkey brain today."
7. Avoid even small change: "I only eat food that I like and that I am used to."
8. Use 'sorry' and 'just' in speaking: "When I get nervous, I tend to apologize and use filler words to give me time to find my words."
9. Fix other people problems: "I need to correct their mistake before anyone finds out so the department doesn't look bad."
10. Unaware of mannerisms: "I am who I am and how people see and hear me is their problem."
11. Seeks perfection: "I need to have everything figured out before I start project."

12. Look to others or social media for ideals: "I wish I had their dream job, their perfect marriage, or their house."
13. Doesn't seek out help: "I don't know how to do that, but if ask for help I will look like I can't do my job."
14. Lacks respect for self: "I am useless in this situation and have nothing to contribute."
15. Do not have mentor: "I see a mentor as someone who is successful and someone who doesn't have the time to spend with me and is only doing it because they have to."

How work culture affects confidence

Most companies have the standard disclaimer that they do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, disability, age (40 or older) or genetic information (including family medical history). Too often the legal words do not translate into corporate culture. Strong companies and leaders explore the gaps in confidence between these groups. They know that biology, upbringing and society affect confidence, but so does organizational culture. A strong company culture downplays the differences between types of people and instead emphasizes the similarities between people.

Career planning needs to incorporate self-confidence. Job descriptions need to explicitly list the technical and prosocial skills needed for success. Self-confidence should also be a part of goal setting and the performance-review process. Confidence needs to be viewed as much as a factor in success as competence.

Companies need to place a high value on role models. Role models should be elevated and represent a varied range of skills and talents that reflect a more diverse workforce. Promotion and career advancement processes need to create a culture that welcome diverse leadership styles and make sure the leaders in positions also reflect that.

Leaders need to adopt a more of a communal leadership style. One way to do that is by modeling empathy and listening. Strong leaders seek to broadening the scope of attributes and value them in their organization and reward based on them. They publicly talk about failures and struggles. They focus their attention on all levels in the company and not just the jobs that lead to the executive level. They have a mindset that values risk taking, failure and perseverance.

As a coach, I can help you identify your value and wants. Self-assessments and 360s are a good tool to identify your strengths and opportunities. I can also help you gain insights into your current performance. I can guide you in



setting SMART goals for life and career. Together we can identify habits and thought patterns that can help you achieve your goals.

Harmony Coaching and Consulting can help your company develop the knowledge, skills and abilities your workforce needs. As a coach, we facilitate classes to add tools to your leadership tool box, including coaching that can help improve your confidence in a variety of situations. The next Coaching Clinic workshop is Oct 16 & 17. To register for Coaching Clinic, or find out more information, [click here](#) If you're interested in exploring any of these services contact Bill Burtch at Harmony for a consultation at 901-272-7390 or bburtch@harmonycc.net

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Schedule of Public Courses

The following courses are being offered to the public by Harmony Coaching & Consulting. Click on the associated link for more information on the program or to register.

Course Title	Date(s)	Time	For More Information/Registration
<i>The Coaching Clinic</i>	<i>Oct 16 & 17</i>	<i>8:30 am – 5:00 pm</i>	

