

## Quick Guide: Build your confidence

Some lucky few seem to be born with loads of confidence. Most of us need to develop it through practice. Confidence is about gaining the inner strength to do something and then feeling comfortable about using that strength without worrying disproportionately about what others will think of you. So, pursuing a job promotion, or a personal dream, or even just standing up to speak in a team meeting, all take confidence. It's not uncommon to think we don't need to build up our confidence until we're in a situation where it's needed. However this often means we are unprepared for it. So here are the top ten tips to help you build your confidence:

- 1. Stop making excuses.** You are not doomed to fail again because you failed before. Instead of creating reasons why you can't do something, use your time to create reasons why you can!
- 2. Be honest** about whether you "can't" do something or simply "won't" do it. Self-defeating behaviour serves no purpose other than to endorse inaction.
- 3. Recognise how worthy you are.** We are all born with special talents. Don't compare yourself to everyone else. Just accept it, and embrace it.
- 4. Practice makes perfect.** Evaluate how skilful you are with your talents or abilities and then work to improve the areas you think are weak. If you can speak up in a meeting of four people, try doing it in a meeting of ten people, and so on.
- 5. Instead of telling yourself "I wish I could do that",** take the thought further and ask "What's that person doing that I wish I could do?" Once you have something more concrete to emulate, the task becomes easier.
- 6. You are as likely to succeed as anyone else.** So challenge limiting expectations from yourself or others. Especially, don't make the inability of others to move forward your burden to bear.
- 7. Things don't need to be perfect!** If you are a pro at everything there's nothing to improve and therefore nothing to congratulate yourself for.
- 8. Pat yourself on the back more often.** Learn to give yourself credit for all the little - and big - positives in your life.
- 9. Finish what you start.** Narrow down your "improvement projects" (not weak areas!) to two or three that will give you the most sense of pride so you can keep moving on to the next "project".
- 10. As long as you learn to believe in yourself** and your talents, and you do what it takes to make those beliefs and talents even stronger, there's no reason ever to think you are less important or able as anyone else!

**Compiled by Des Whitehorn**