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BUILDING SELF CONFIDENCE

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PREPARING YOURSELF FOR SUCCESS!

- ✘ From the quietly confident doctor whose advice we rely on, to the charismatic confidence of an inspiring speaker, self-confident people have qualities that everyone admires.
- ✘ Self-confidence is extremely important in almost every aspect of our lives, yet so many people struggle to find it. Sadly, this can be a vicious circle: people who lack self-confidence can find it difficult to become successful.

HOW CONFIDENT DO YOU SEEM TO OTHERS?

- ✘ Your level of self-confidence can show in many ways: your behavior, your body language, how you speak, what you say, and so on. Look at the following comparisons of common confident behavior with behavior associated with low self-confidence. Which thoughts or actions do you recognize in yourself and people around you?

CONFIDENT BEHAVIOR

- ✘ Doing what you believe to be right, even if others mock or criticize you for it.
- ✘ Being willing to take risks and go the extra mile to achieve better things.
- ✘ Admitting your mistakes, and learning from them.
- ✘ Waiting for others to congratulate you on your accomplishments.
- ✘ Accepting compliments graciously. "Thanks, I really worked hard on that prospectus. I'm pleased you recognize my efforts."

BEHAVIOR ASSOCIATED WITH LOW SELF-CONFIDENCE

- ✘ Governing your behavior based on what other people think.
- ✘ Staying in your comfort zone, fearing failure, and so avoid taking risks.
- ✘ Working hard to cover up mistakes and hoping that you can fix the problem before anyone notices.
- ✘ Extolling your own virtues as often as possible to as many people as possible.
- ✘ Dismissing compliments offhandedly. "Oh that prospectus was nothing really, anyone could have done it."

WHAT IS SELF-CONFIDENCE?

- ✘ Two main things contribute to self-confidence: self-efficacy and self-esteem. We gain a sense of self-efficacy when we see ourselves (and others similar to ourselves) mastering skills and achieving goals that matter in those skill areas. This is the confidence that, if we learn and work hard in a particular area, we'll succeed; and it's this type of confidence that leads people to accept difficult challenges, and persist in the face of setbacks.

BUILDING SELF-CONFIDENCE

- ✦ So how do you build this sense of balanced self-confidence, founded on a firm appreciation of reality? The bad news is that there's no quick fix, or five-minute solution. The good news is that becoming more confident is readily achievable, just as long as you have the focus and determination to carry things through. And what's even better is that the things you'll do to build your self-confidence will also build success – after all, your confidence will come from real, solid achievement. No-one can take this away from you! So here are our three steps to self-confidence, for which we'll use the metaphor of a journey: preparing for your journey; setting out; and accelerating towards success.

STEP 1: PREPARING FOR YOUR JOURNEY

- ✦ The first step involves getting yourself ready for your journey to self-confidence. You need to take stock of where you are, think about where you want to go, get yourself in the right mindset for your journey, and commit yourself to starting it and staying with it.
- ✦ In preparing for your journey, do these five things:

LOOK AT WHAT YOU'VE ALREADY ACHIEVED

- ✦ Think about your life so far, and list the ten best things you've achieved in an "Achievement Log." Perhaps you came top in an important test or exam, played a key role in an important team, produced the best sales figures in a period, did something that made a key difference in someone else's life, or delivered a project that meant a lot for your business. Put these into a smartly formatted document, which you can look at often. And then spend a few minutes each week enjoying the success you've already had!

START MANAGING YOUR MIND

- ✦ At this stage, you need to start managing your mind. Learn to pick up and defeat the negative self-talk which can destroy your confidence. See our article on rational positive thinking to find out how to do this. Further useful reading includes our article on imagery.
- ✦ – this teaches you how to use and create strong mental images of what you'll feel and experience as you achieve your major goals – there's something about doing this that makes even major goals seem achievable!

AND THEN COMMIT YOURSELF TO SUCCESS!

- ✦ The final part of preparing for the journey is to make a clear and unequivocal promise to yourself that you are absolutely committed to your journey, and that you will do all in your power to achieve it. If as you're doing it, you find doubts starting to surface, write them down and challenge them calmly and rationally. If they dissolve under scrutiny, that's great. However if they are based on genuine risks, make sure you set additional goals to manage these appropriately

STEP 2: SETTING OUT

- ✦ This is where you start, ever so slowly, moving towards your goal. By doing the right things, and starting with small, easy wins, you'll put yourself on the path to success – and start building the self-confidence that comes with this.

BUILD THE KNOWLEDGE YOU NEED TO SUCCEED

- ✦ Looking at your goals, identify the skills you'll need to achieve them. And then look at how you can acquire these skills confidently and well. Don't just accept a sketchy, just-good-enough solution – look for a solution, a program or a course that fully equips you to achieve what you want to achieve and, ideally, gives you a certificate or qualification you can be proud of.

FOCUS ON THE BASICS

- ✦ When you're starting, don't try to do anything clever or elaborate. And don't reach for perfection – just enjoy doing simple things successfully and well.

SET SMALL GOALS, AND ACHIEVE THEM

- ✦ Starting with the very small goals you identified in step 1, get in the habit of setting them, achieving them, and celebrating that achievement. Don't make goals particularly challenging at this stage, just get into the habit of achieving them and celebrating them. And, little by little, start piling up the successes!

STEP 3: ACCELERATING TOWARDS SUCCESS

- ✦ By this stage, you'll feel your self-confidence building. You'll have completed some of the courses you started in step 2, and you'll have plenty of success to celebrate!
- ✦ This is the time to start stretching yourself. Make the goals a bit bigger, and the challenges a bit tougher. Increase the size of your commitment. And extend the skills you've proven into new, but closely related arenas.

KEY POINTS

- ✦ Self-confidence is extremely important in almost every aspect of our lives, and people who lack it can find it difficult to become successful.
- ✦ Two main things contribute to self-confidence: self-efficacy and self-esteem. You can develop it with these three steps:
 1. Prepare for your journey.
 2. Set out on your journey.
 3. Accelerate towards success.
- ✦ Goal setting is probably the most important activity that you can learn in order to improve your self-confidence

INSTEAD... BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

- ✦ No one will believe in you until you believe in yourself

And, smile often 😊

THANK YOU