**How to Build Confidence in Others**

**Creating Self-Assured Teams**



**Boost your team's confidence to achieve great results.**

Think about watching a sports match between two teams, where one team is more confident than the other.

The more confident team members know that they have a good chance of winning. As a result, everyone makes good decisions, and the players work together seamlessly. Meanwhile, the other team's confidence is shaky. Players doubt their abilities, hesitate, and don't commit fully to any particular course of action.

When this happens, the more confident team will likely win.

The same principles apply in the workplace. When people on your team have low self-confidence, it can hold them back from reaching their full potential. That's why it's essential to build the confidence of those around us, especially if we're leading a team.

**Note:**

In this article, the strategies we look at the focus on building confidence in people you manage. However, you can apply many of these strategies to colleagues and even your boss. If you do this, make sure you approach them sensitively and with [**empathy**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/EmpathyatWork.php).

If you want to boost **your** confidence, take our quiz, [**How Self-Confident Are You?**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTCS_84.php), and see our article on [**Building Self-Confidence**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTCS_96.php).

**Recognizing Low Self-Confidence**

People who lack self-confidence rarely thrive. They see more risks than opportunities, don't perform particularly well in new situations, and often have low self-esteem. What's more, they rarely trust their judgment, and they may see any successes that they do achieve as resulting from luck rather than from their efforts.

By contrast, people who have high self-confidence are often more productive and more effective and can raise the morale of the entire group. They're also more comfortable taking risks, which can have benefits for their careers and their teams.

Confidence can make or break people's ability to achieve their goals. Once you've identified a team member suffering from a lack of confidence, apply the steps below to boost their self-confidence.

**Develop Knowledge and Skills**

The chances are that there are several skills you rely on to do your job well. When you use these skills successfully, what happens? You feel confident! These are the skills you've worked on over the years, and you're comfortable using them to accomplish the task at hand.

The same is true for the people on your team. The stronger their skills are, the more confident they're going to feel.

So an excellent way to increase the self-confidence of people in your team is by encouraging learning and providing plenty of opportunities for additional training. The more knowledge and skills people have to do their job, the more confident they will feel, especially when they approach challenging projects.

**Set Clear Goals**

Many people get confidence from completing tasks and projects successfully. But that confidence only comes if people know what they need to do.

This is why it is so important to set clear goals for every team member. Goals define success and give people an objective to shoot for. Without them, they're working aimlessly.

So make sure that the people on your team know what goals they're working toward and help them achieve these goals. Then, when they succeed, celebrate their achievements!

**Tip:**

If you'd like to learn more about team goal setting, our Bite-Sized Training session on [**Setting Team Goals**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/Bite-SizedTraining/SettingGoals.php) will help.

**Identify "Triggers"**

Very few people can claim to be self-confident, and most would like to be more confident in certain areas of their lives.

Whenever we are faced with a new challenge or are asked to do something we don't like, we may lack confidence. We may worry that it won't go well, that our performance will be disappointing, and we will come out of it with a poor image.

If you work with someone with low self-confidence, help them identify their "trigger situations." When they know what causes their confidence to waver, they can build the knowledge and skills they need to feel more confident.

To do this, ask them to list all the work situations that make them feel confident. This could be anything from writing the company blog to helping shape your department's budget. Anything that makes them feel happy and confident should go on this list.

Then, have them consider why they're confident in each of these situations. What knowledge or skill are they using that makes them feel good?

Next, ask them to list the situations that **don't**make them feel confident. This could include giving presentations, expressing an opinion in meetings, or writing a report. Why don't they feel confident in these situations? What new knowledge and skills would help them feel better in each scenario?

It can be an eye-opening experience to identify these triggers. But, once they can see which skills they could improve on, they'll be more motivated to face their fears.

**Tip:**

Talking to someone about their self-confidence maybe something they instinctively try to avoid. You'll more likely be successful if you have this conversation as part of a [**coaching**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTMM_15.php) or [**mentoring**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newCDV_24.php) relationship.

**Empower and Delegate**

If you want your team to tackle tasks with confidence, you must allow them the autonomy to make their own decisions.

When your people can decide what needs to be done, they start to take ownership of their work. It truly becomes their responsibility, and their confidence can soar when they succeed.

Whenever you can, [**delegate**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newLDR_98.php) tasks and give your people the power to make their own decisions. By handing over more responsibility, you'll show that you trust their judgment and ability, which in turn will empower your team members.

Be aware, however, that people who have low self-confidence may resist this at first: after all, they may doubt that they'll make the right decisions. To fight these doubts, encourage them to take on small, achievable projects. Then, if they rely on you too much for help or guidance, encourage them to be more independent (see our article on [**preventing manager dependency**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/preventing-manager-dependency.php) for more on this). This will push them to make their own decisions instead of running to you for help or advice.

**Celebrate Success**

We all must celebrate the success we've achieved because recognition of success builds self-confidence.

Celebrate with them whenever your people accomplish a goal or hit a key target! [**Reward them**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTMM_54.php) with a team dinner, or even gift them tickets to an event they enjoy. At the very least, congratulate them on their success, and let them know how much you appreciate their hard work.

It's also essential to keep your team excited about what they're doing. Celebrating success helps with this, but maintaining motivation high long-term is key to building a team with high confidence levels. You can learn more about this in our article on the [**Sirota Three-Factor Theory**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTMM_57.php), which explains the importance of fairness, achievement and a sense of camaraderie in motivating people.

**Encourage Positive Thinking**

Many people who lack self-confidence focus on negative thoughts. They may think things like "I can't do that!" or "I'm not smart enough." These negative thoughts cause people to spiral down further, reinforcing their belief that they'll never be good enough to succeed. Of course, this makes things worse!

Encourage people to [**think positively**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTCS_06.php) and use affirmations. One technique is to show them how to "flip their thoughts" – every time they catch themselves thinking a negative thought, teach them to think its rational opposite.

For instance, if they think, "I'm not smart enough to finish this project," instead they should consider ", I know I have the knowledge and skills to finish this project. If I do need help, I can always ask for it."

Flipping a thought from negative to positive creates a subtle shift in our minds. The change in our outlook and energy is almost palpable, so that this technique can make a big difference in confidence!

**Tip:**

Again, this technique is most likely effective when used as part of a coaching or mentoring partnership.

**Balancing Self-Confidence and Over-Confidence**

When people become more self-confident, there's always the risk of becoming [**overconfident**](https://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newCDV_74.php) or arrogant. There's no doubt that there is a fine line here, but once it's crossed, these people can start to negatively impact the morale and productivity of the group. What's worse is when people get careless because they overestimate their ability to improvise in difficult situations.

If this happens to a person on your team, start by gently bringing the situation to their attention. Chances are they haven't realized that they've crossed the line into arrogance. Meet with them privately, be specific about what they're saying or doing, and explain why their behaviour could be construed as arrogance.

If their behaviour has caused tension or upset the team, make sure you let the person know. Usually, when people are aware that their behaviour hurts others, they're motivated to change.

**Key Points**

If you work with people who have low self-confidence, there are several ways that you can help.

First, encourage them to develop additional knowledge and skills. Please help them to set clear goals and sit down with them to identify specific situations that cause their confidence to plummet.

If you're leading a team, give your people as much power as you can to make their own decisions and celebrate the success they achieve along the way. But remember that too much self-confidence can be just as damaging to your team as low self-confidence, so help them find the right balance.