

NEWSLETTER

“BEING A CONFIDENT LEADER”

You've got your property business up and running, but sometimes you may feel a lack of confidence. Is it due to a lack of knowledge or experience? Are you a woman in a male-dominated field? There are always going to be reasons to doubt yourself or have negative thoughts, and this month I'm going to show you some tools and techniques to improve your confidence straight away, and also how to adapt and re-deploy them in the future.

When you think about confident leadership, who comes to mind? Is it a political leader like Nelson Mandela or Michelle Obama? Is it someone in property at the top of their game? Think of examples of people in your own life who appear to be authentic and charismatic leaders.

WHAT CHARACTERISTICS DO THEY SHOW?

Everyone thinks of aspects that other people seem to call on easily which we ourselves find harder to summon and that causes us to write off aspects of our skillset that actually got us to where we are. For me, I think confident leadership means being organised, decisive, taking accountability and owning decisions; being open, honest, respectful and fair are all attributes I look up to and look for in others and what I do. *Have a go at this yourself and come up with a list.*

A second revealing exercise is to ask yourself how confident a leader you are on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest. Now reflect on why you scored yourself like this and what would need to happen to raise this one or two points? What skills do you need to develop to get you there? Often we don't rate ourselves as highly as others would do – it has been shown that the people around you will often score you much higher than you would yourself, so give yourself a break – look how far you've come! Notice as well that you have just come up with more reasons to bump that score up and get rid of any negative thoughts that keep you away from a higher score.



**ARE YOU READY
TO SCALE WITH
CONFIDENCE?**

If you are scoring yourself really low, firstly know that as a business owner you are more than likely wrong (it takes guts, independence and self-belief to even get started!). Therefore you may be telling yourself you're not good at certain things. Rather than this being wrong though, flip the thought and work out how these could be seen as positive attributes? For example, if you are slow at making decisions you are in fact thorough and considered where others rush in! If you don't like taking risks, you are valuing your resources properly and aren't ready to gamble where a bit of thought and patience can return an easier win.

SO WHAT CAN WE DO TO BUILD UP YOUR CONFIDENCE?

Here are a few techniques I love and use regularly:

- 1. Give yourself praise** – at the end of every day, think of three things you have done well. Your brain wants to process and sort through the events at the end of the day anyway and will do so by itself; by taking positive control over this process and guiding it towards the positives this will ensure you have left the day with all the best bits intact rather than focusing on the irks and shortfalls. If you've had a bad day – even better; you can assess what's got you down and pull a win out of it by recognising what went well.
- 2. Keep a praise journal** – write down praise when you receive it. It can be an outright pat on the back from a client or someone you know or as subtle as seeing the hidden tells when someone is quietly impressed with something you've done. You can even bring goals you've achieved to the attention of others and harvest a nugget of pure satisfaction when they recognise what you've done! Record these either as a standalone document or as a well-highlighted section of your usual diary (all the best CEOs keep a diary!). This is such a lovely thing to look back on if you're having a rubbish day or need a kick, and really helps with your confidence. It allows you to look back and realise the amazing things you've done.
- 3. Transformative language** – if you are constantly having negative thoughts about you or the people or situations around you, you need to flip this ASAP! The stories we tell ourselves are all tied up in the words we speak and choose to hear as well as the internal voice that sometimes usefully picks up things you need to improve but just doesn't know when to put a sock in it! You don't need to alter your entire language, work on changing individual negative words to positive ones and you will see a huge difference in your outlook, attitude and mental health! Change 'I can't do that' to 'I can't do that yet'. 'I didn't do that very well' becomes 'I can do that better!'. Empowerment starts from within.
- 4. Modelling others** – look at the people you who you feel are inspirational leaders and notice everything you feel contributes to their success. How do they speak? How do they treat people – observe their behaviours and see if you can mirror these. You can even incorporate how someone holds themselves, dresses or the cadence of their speech to feel a little bit different and as though you are taking on some of that person's successful recipe of personality, disposition and delivery to improve how you feel about yourself.



SO NOW YOU'VE HAD A CONFIDENCE TUNE-UP, LET'S LOOK AT THE LEADERSHIP ASPECTS OF IMPROVING YOUR OFFERING AS A KICK-ASS BUSINESS LEADER!

If you take the time to look at how established businesses and organisations are arranged you'll notice that there is always some kind of leadership but there are a vast number of ways that leadership asserts itself and gets the best from the people in the organization as well as external suppliers and stakeholders to, in the end, build success and profit.

There is no one magical formula as each leader's style will in some way dictate what this structure looks like and you will have taken on some ideas of what you like and don't like as you go through life. From Saturday jobs through student gigs and working your way up from the bottom in someone else's organization we have all come across the kinds of tyrants, pettiness and 'not my problem'ism that we probably would hate to have in our own businesses. You've probably also come across those gems who trust others to get good results, see what each person can individually contribute and takes the time to grow people as much as their bottom line.

Remember that leadership doesn't just relate to those sitting below you on the company ladder but also is a culture that pervades relationships with suppliers, contractors and customers. How business leaders treat their colleagues is a great indication of how they engage others outside of the business, so getting that language right will have benefits both vertically and horizontally as well as externally. Word will spread that yours is a company that listens, inspires, changes and is a pleasure to deal with.

As a final task, now go through the steps above but this time think about your leadership and not your confidence. What is your leadership score and why? What is working and what needs work? Ask what language you use when working; do you ask people to do tasks or do you inspire others to help get everything done that we need to succeed as a team? Do you shy away from telling a supplier that they haven't done something right or do you point things out constructively and banish a repeat performance through mutual respect and setting out your shared goals?

Finally, look at some organisations that absolutely smash the kind of business you want to build. It is never too late (or ambitious) to model your organisation on one of the big hitters either in your industry or somewhere unrelated; what matters is how you want others to feel and communicate about your brand either as an employee or customer. They should both equally feel they can trust you and be trusted to make their own decisions because what you offer benefits them and not because they have no choice.

