

How to Be a Confident Leader

Description

Do Not Copy

Do Not Copy



Do Not Copy

What Confidence Isn't

I'm a confident speaker. Whenever asked to get in front of a group of people, I almost look forward to it now. Almost. I still have a wave of anxiety, of electricity running through my body before I get up and go. When I think about what confidence is, it really isn't the lack of fear, or total belief that what you do is right. We look at people we call confident, and it can be a bit intimidating, daunting, impressive to see someone so at ease with what they're doing. How did they get so good at it? Why can't I be like that?

The truth is we all have confidence within us. I think we're born confident. Look at a toddler navigating a room on 12-month-old legs. Sure they look like a drunk stumbling out of a bar at 2 am, but no one can question their confidence in walking for the first time.

We have a fundamental problem in defining what confidence actually is and what it is not.

It is not bravado, cockiness, or aggression. It isn't Donald Trump telling you how amazing his leadership is, and how he's probably the most amazing President ever, how he probably has the best economy, foreign policy, twitter likes, crowd sizes, best hair, biggest shoe size, a heart healthier than a 20 year old, how he understands the coronavirus better than the doctors, or how staring at a solar eclipse actually made his eyesight better.

It isn't a lack of fear either. Confident people don't wake up, step into the shower and scrub the fear off them. People don't get confident by staring at themselves in the mirror in the morning and repeating, "I am confident, I am confident" 100 times.

It also doesn't come from knowing everything all the time, so you're never wrong. I know that where I have more knowledge about a topic I am more at ease in a situation where that knowledge is useful. But I could also know what I know and be totally insecure about what I'm doing. Confident people aren't always right. They are human after all.

So what is Confidence ?

Confidence comes from a place inside, where you are okay with who you are. It is a simple belief that no matter what happens to you, around you, and within you, that you will not stop accepting you.

If you just like and accept who you are honestly and be the authentic you, then no one can change that except you. And if you decide that you won't ever stop liking and accepting who you are, even if you fail, even if you're criticized, then you are going to be completely confident.

Confidence is believing that you have the right to be you, and by being you, go about your business of leading. You may fail, you may be wrong and you may face all kinds of difficulties, but staying true to yourself means you always have that safe place inside no matter what happens.

Dare to be You

Be yourself, everyone else is already taken.

Oscar Wilde

What truly confident people have figured out is how to be themselves, no matter what comes their way. I firmly believe that this is the essence of true confidence. Confident people have learned to not “act” as someone else wants them to be, or guess how they should be in a situation. They have learned to stop that noise, and just be how they are, knowing that whatever happens they will be ok.

This takes an enormous amount of courage sometimes. For example, my French sucks. Anyone who has ever heard it will attest. I try, occasionally, to order my breakfast in French, or have a small conversation, but the effort in my brain is still high.

When I first took my current job at F/List Canada as CEO, I had to deliver a speech during our opening, in front of media, some local dignitaries, and my bosses from Austria in, you guessed it, French. I stressed over it for days, because while I enjoy speaking publicly, I do not enjoy delivering that speech badly. And I knew my French would be bad. I had to remind myself that I would be ok no matter what, and I focused on being myself, be vulnerable and let my rough speaking be the authentic me.

The speech will never win any awards, but I faced my fears, and stayed true to myself and built another notch of confidence in being me. This is the real essence of building confidence. When you do something that is true to you and takes courage for you to do, no matter what the outcome you will build a little confidence that being the true you is ok, and the next time gets a little easier.

Meditation and Therapy “ again

It’s a tired theme of mine I know, but I truly believe that meditation brings a lot of benefits to leadership. By training your mind to be present, and to notice your thoughts and feelings, you are more likely to stay focused on being yourself, and will by effect be more confident in your day to day interactions.

And as always in my blogs, therapy can be a great way to sort through any negative thinking you have around being yourself. You may discover that you have built a belief that leaders have to put on an act or behave in a certain way to achieve great results, so you try to put on a mask that isn’t you. And you don’t feel confident in that mask. Or you may just need some tools to help practice those small moments of courage in being yourself. At any rate, if you find it difficult to feel confident, therapy is a very good tool to understand the mechanisms behind it and address it.

Be Patient and Persistent with Yourself

As with anything worth doing, true confidence (being ok with who you really are) takes time and action. Taking small courageous steps of letting the authentic you out, and being patient with the results because it will take time to feel more secure and more confident. But it will come because that authentic you is there just waiting to come out.

Category

1. Uncategorized

Date Created

April 28, 2020

Author

platypussolutionsadmin

Do Not Copy