

The Self-Assured

SUPERVISOR



The Self-Assured Supervisor

As a leader, you deal with many challenges each day. Occasionally, you may feel defeated, question your abilities, and wonder whether you're making a difference. But even in the most difficult of times, your confidence still lies deep inside. Discover how to unlock it when you need it the most.

What is self-assurance?

Essentially, self-assurance is the confidence you have in yourself and your abilities. A self-assured manager has confidence in their judgment and believes they are able to do their job, lead others, and succeed at both.

Why confidence is important as a manager

The way you come across to your employees matters and confidence plays a vital role in how your employees view you. They take cues from your attitude and behavior that tell them whether they can rely on you to lead them forward, trust you to make smart decisions, and count on you to provide a positive, collaborative work environment. Ultimately, your employees' confidence in your ability to do these things is directly tied to the degree of confidence you have in yourself.

Tips for finding inner confidence

We often think of confidence as something that you're either born with or not. In reality, a good part of it is the product of your thoughts and behaviors. Being confident is a decision and has less to do with whether you have the *ability* to accomplish something and more to do with whether you *believe* in your ability to accomplish it.

Here are a few things you can do each day to build more confidence in your role as a manager:

Embrace setbacks

Setbacks are inevitable in any job, but how you respond to them is crucial. Your confidence takes a hit when things don't go as planned or you make mistakes and there's a tendency to be hard on yourself and ruminate over what went wrong. Instead of getting discouraged, view stumbling blocks as opportunities for growth and learning. Use missteps to pinpoint areas for improvement or to develop new skills. Brushing yourself off and moving forward when your efforts fall short projects confidence, builds resilience, and shows your employees that it's okay to make mistakes.

Leverage your strengths

Inner confidence comes from knowing who you are, what you're good at, and the value you bring. Take time to reflect on your skills and expertise. Identify your strengths and look for ways to apply them in your role. Using your natural talents can help you to feel more confident, capable, and ready to tackle challenges.

Educate yourself

Some leaders, especially first-time managers, come to work and feel they have no idea what they're doing or have any business leading a team. Believe it or not, feeling like a fraud in this way is quite common. One way to overcome this — or at least look the part — is to learn everything you can about your job and what it takes to be a manager. The more you know and understand, the more confident you'll feel. Attend training sessions, read books and articles, and seek new challenges. Stay current on developments that pertain to your agency's mission

or departmental goals. Also, keep in mind that the person who hired or promoted you to your position did so for a reason. They believe in your abilities, and you deserve to be there.

Practice positive self-talk

Your internal dialogue can significantly affect your confidence. Practicing positive self-talk and reframing negative thoughts can help you overcome self-doubt and feel more secure in your abilities. For example, instead of saying, *"I can't do this,"* say, *"I'm capable of figuring this out."* Focus on the positive aspects of a situation and remind yourself of your past successes rather than dwell on negative thoughts or outcomes.

Solicit feedback

Constructive criticism can help you improve and grow, and positive feedback can boost your confidence. Ask your supervisor to comment on your performance and welcome suggestions for potential areas to work on. It's also a good idea to invite your employees to offer their feedback. Doing this shows that you're committed to personal and professional growth and secure enough to recognize that there's always room for improvement.

Set realistic goals

Set yourself up for success by breaking down your goals into smaller, more manageable tasks and celebrate your progress along the way. You'll feel a sense of accomplishment and pride as you complete each one, which gives your motivation and confidence a little boost.

Gaining confidence in yourself and your abilities is a process that takes time. Be patient and focus on progress, not perfection. If you'd like more guidance on building self-assurance or identifying your strengths, contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP is available 24/7 to support you and your unique management needs. And remember, you've got this!

The EAP is a voluntary and confidential employee benefit available to eligible federal employees at no cost.

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