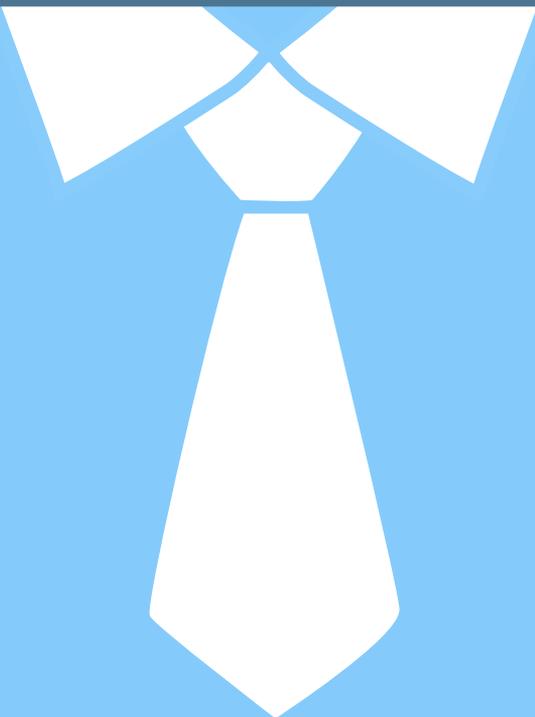


Show Your

Confidence
At Work



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*“To be yourself in a world that is constantly
trying to make you something else is the
greatest accomplishment.”*

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Demonstrating confidence in your work setting is an important element of being successful. In most workplaces, you're involved with multiple people on any given day, such as your supervisor, other managers, and various co-workers. You likely want to not only appear as if you know what you're doing, but actually know what you're doing.

How you conduct yourself on a day-to-day basis demonstrates to those around you what kind of worker you are and, indeed, what kind of person you are.

There will be times when you'll have to ask others for assistance with tasks or maybe even assign them special projects. It is during those exchanges that you'll especially want to show others your confidence in doing your best job possible.

How can you ensure that you demonstrate confidence at work?

Show Your Confidence at Work

This guide provides many tips about using your voice, words, body language, and appearance in ways that reflect confidence.

Also, you'll learn the importance of having a strong work ethic and using honesty and tact with others. Finally, paying attention and identifying what you believe about yourself and designing who you want to be complete the picture of how you can successfully display your confidence at work.

Your Voice, Speech, and Words Matter

Everything about how you communicate with others illustrates who you are and your feelings about them and even yourself. When it comes to your work arena, your voice, speech, and words demonstrate how well you get along with others. Learn to take advantage of these aspects to showcase your level of confidence.

Keep these points in mind when communicating at the office:

1. **Use your voice to show self-assurance.** Having a pleasant tone of voice, even in stressful situations, shows that you can stay calm. ***A friendly tone will make you appear much more approachable to others, which is an important element of confidence.***

2. **Voice volume is also important.** Although it's helpful to speak at a level that others can hear, projecting too loudly is rarely the best plan at work. Actually, it can be wise to lower your voice when saying something important, as it tends to obtain and hold others' attention. You'll notice others leaning in toward you when you drop your voice volume.

3. **Your speech, especially word choice, has an impact.** Confident people choose words that indicate they have at least a basic understanding of grammar and know the best way to get their ideas across.

4. **Speak in concise, complete sentences.** Although you may be thinking, "Of course, I talk in whole sentences," you may be surprised when you really listen to bits of your own conversation. Focus on expressing a complete, yet concise, idea to co-workers when providing your ideas or instructions.

5. **Avoid using slang or "colorful" language.** Although you may be tempted to occasionally use slang or curse words when frustrated, ***you'll come across as if***

you're in relaxed control if you keep your responses at work at a more tactful, dignified level.

Decide to be straightforward without using unsavory language.

- 6. If you find yourself feeling frustrated or angry, take heed.** Stay in touch with your feelings, especially at the office or when interacting with co-workers. ***Avoid allowing negative feelings to overflow onto others at work.***

➡ The safest way to express such feelings is to say something like, "I find myself feeling frustrated about this project. I need some time to get my thoughts together about this and then I'll get back to you. Is this afternoon okay for you?"

➡ Showing you can handle your feelings in appropriate ways indicates confidence.

- 7. Thinking before speaking is always your best option.** You'll find that your ability to access relevant thoughts and suggestions increases vastly when you

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give yourself some time to thoroughly consider the options involved in a work project or situation.

Your communication skills can help you rise above any type of challenging event at the office. How you speak to others also demonstrates that you believe in yourself and know how to best deal with stressful situations and your co-workers.

*“Confidence is contagious.
So is lack of confidence.”*

~Vince Lombardi

*Your Body Language
and Appearance
Project How You
Feel About Yourself
and Others*

Your body language and appearance are as important as verbal communication skills in demonstrating self-assurance.

Why? The ways you move your body, stand, sit, lean forward, or tilt your head to listen provide clues regarding how you feel about yourself, others, and tough situations at work. Your clothes and personal hygiene also reflect your confidence, or lack of it, at the office.

Apply these tips to ensure you evoke confidence at work:

1. **Stand tall.** Having shoulders hunched forward or head cast downward are unhelpful when it comes to radiating confidence. Straighten your spine, hold your shoulders up and back, and lift up your chin a bit.

You'll feel much more self-assured from the inside, plus you'll project confidence to the world around you.

2. **Avoid turning your back to people when possible.** Sometimes, showing you have confidence is as simple as practicing good manners.

➡ Taking actions like turning your body slightly toward someone who ought to be included in your discussion shows that you're self-assured as well.

3. **Have excellent personal hygiene.** Even though you likely engage in a daily routine of hygiene, it's always a good idea to review it to ensure you're looking your absolute best. Recognize that when you're speaking directly to others at work, you're usually within three or

four feet of them. Appearing well-groomed shows confidence.

4. **Choose hairstyles that are easy-care.** A neat-looking haircut demonstrates that you care about how you look and are consistent with self-care. Clean hair smells incredible, looks radiant, and helps you feel great about the way you look.
5. **Make your clothing count.** When shopping, look for pieces that will go with other pieces you already have at home. Look for higher quality clothing for work as it will wear longer and look sharper on you. You've likely heard the expression, "Clothes make the man." When it comes to confidence, clothes are an important part of the equation.

➡ However, it's not the cost or name brand of your clothing that helps you feel and appear confident.

It's the cleanliness, quality, and look of the style on you that does the trick.

6. **Well-cared-for shoes support your overall look.**
Have you ever seen someone look absolutely fantastic

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and then look down at their shoes, only to notice worn, uneven heels, and scuffed or unpolished surfaces? Consider your shoes as the very foundation of your look and confidence.

- ➔ Check your heels and the shoe's surface. If they need washed or polished, take care of it. Include a quick examination of your shoes before you walk out the door. Have one of those nifty sponge polishers on hand. It's important to keep your shoes looking nice.

When you pay attention to your body language and appearance, you'll notice that you're feeling better about yourself. As your own opinion of how you look changes and becomes more positive, it contributes greatly to your feelings of self-confidence. When you feel confident, you project those feelings out to others.

*"Never bend your head. Hold it high.
Look the world straight in the eye."*

~Helen Keller

Work Ethic and Confidence

What kind of worker are you? Are you proud of the effort you put into your work? These elements add up to your work ethic. Interestingly, your work ethic is closely connected to your level of self-assurance.

To sharpen your work ethic and pump up confidence, put these suggestions to work:

1. **Show up on time or even a few minutes early.** When you're the early bird, you have time to set up your work station so you can start the day in an organized, thoughtful way without being rushed.
2. **Remain at work for the whole day.** Avoid leaving early, even by five or ten minutes. Supervisors and co-workers notice this sort of thing and it will elevate you in their eyes.

3. **Volunteer to do projects no one else wants to do.**

Although you may not have considered it, nothing shows your confidence like stepping in to fill a vacuum at work. Challenging yourself keeps you sharp and learning new things all the time. Plus, ***your boss will begin looking to you for your knowledge and skills.*** Your self-confidence will soar.

➡ When you consistently go forward to volunteer, you'll gain wonderful experience that makes you more valuable. You'll also gain some great information to list on your résumé.

4. **Avoid being afraid to show a lack of knowledge.** Let your supervisor know when he asks you to complete a certain project that, although you're unfamiliar with the subject matter, you're willing to do the research to get up to speed.

➡ Nothing shows confidence like revealing when you lack information while showing a willingness to go the extra mile to gain new knowledge.

5. **Treat all co-workers with respect.** Regardless of your personal feelings about someone, it's important to be equally kind and understanding toward each individual you come into contact with at work.

A solid work ethic will benefit you throughout the course of your life. You'll have pride in your work, which is closely connected with healthy self-confidence. When you feel confident, those you work with see it.

“Nothing will work unless you do.”

~Maya Angelou

Exhibiting Honesty and Tact to Show Self-Assurance

How you treat others at work demonstrates the kind of person you are. As you allow your honesty to tactfully reveal itself at the office, your self-assurance will be evident.

Follow these ideas for showing confidence in how you treat co-workers:

- 1. Show a sense of genuineness and honesty. *When people see that you avoid sarcasm and state your opinion openly and honestly, yet with kindness, they'll have great respect for you.***
- 2. If you're a manager, be honest with those who report to you.** When you provide underlings with helpful, honest feedback, you aid them in becoming

better, more dependable workers. Ultimately, employees will appreciate your open, tactful nature.

3. **Use tact in your communications with others.** To be tactful is to avoid offending others when speaking to them. There are ways to do so, even when communicating information that isn't good news.

- ➔ For example, if you're required to inform an employee of his lateness to work, an effective way to show tact is to call him in your office and sit down with him. Say something like, "I'm concerned about your being late to work three times in the past two weeks." Listen to their response. Then state clearly what you require from them.

- ➔ ***Be clear and concise in stating what you want from others.*** "I'd like you to arrive on time each day from now on. Let's schedule a meeting now to talk again in a month to see how you're doing. "

- ➔ Even if you aren't a manager, your ability to use tact is important. For example, if you're working on a joint project with Tom and he's two days late getting his work to you, you could say, "Tom, can

you give me your part of Project X this afternoon? I would really appreciate it because I need to get started on my portion of the work.”

4. **Admit your mistakes.** It’s human to make an error from time to time. If you notice a mistake on a report you did, take steps to correct it right away. If, for some reason, you’re unable to correct the report, share the situation with your boss.

➔ ***Noticing your errors, admitting them, and committing to correct them show that you have integrity and a strong drive to complete your work with excellence.***

5. **Recognize that you can be a role model at work.** Many workers are unsure of how to act in certain challenging situations. When fellow workers see you can appropriately conduct yourself in any work situation that presents itself, they’ll begin to look to you with admiration. ***When you exude confidence, others want to emulate you.***

Using honesty and tact in the workplace has numerous advantages for you and your co-workers. As you sharpen your skills to be truthful in non-offensive ways with others, you'll become more and more confident in your work behavior and performance.

*“Let the beauty of what
you love be what you do.”*

~Rumi

How Well Do You Pay Attention at Work?

Sometimes, the workplace can be pretty overwhelming. There are a lot of people around, it might be noisy, and plenty of distractions are taking place. It can be difficult to hold your focus on the topic, project, or co-worker at hand. Yet, showing confidence at work is portraying that you have a handle on yourself and your work.

Learning to focus your attention at work will earn you the reputation of a stellar employee!

Consider these ideas to show your confidence by focusing on what you need to at work:

1. **Make eye contact when speaking or listening to someone.** You'll likely periodically look away, which is

fine, but for the most part, maintain eye contact to show you're paying attention.

- 2. When a co-worker is talking, focus on them.** As someone else speaks, you'll want to demonstrate that all your attention is directed to them. Turn toward them. Respond by shaking your head affirmatively and saying, "Uh-huh" or "I see" or "Okay."

➡ You'll gain a better understanding of what they're saying if you stop what you're doing to pay attention.

- 3. Clear your mind of personal matters.** Work requires all of your effort. You'll benefit from focusing only on work while you're at work. If you like, take advantage of break times that your employer allows to pursue personal business.

➡ ***Taking care of personal issues during your break time will free you up to re-focus on work when break time is over.***

Show Your Confidence at Work

You're more efficient when you're paying attention at the office. As you train your mind to stay work-focused, you'll discover what a diligent worker you are and your self-confidence will grow.

*“Far and away the best prize
that life has to offer is the chance
to work hard at work worth doing.”*

~Theodore Roosevelt

Your Beliefs About Yourself Are Important Sources of Confidence

Although we've discussed a lot about your communication, actions, and co-worker exchanges, ***probably the single most integral factor in having confidence at work is what you believe to be true about yourself.***

These actions will raise your opinion of yourself and build confidence at work:

1. **Keep your focus on you.** Avoid office gossip or negative talk about others at work. If you can stay focused on your work tasks, you'll realize that you possess the personal strength and fortitude to remain above the fray.

2. **Know what you do well.** After you've identified the things you're good at, figure out how you can use those strong points to get ahead at work. ***The better you recognize your talents and skills, the more confident you'll become.***

3. **Act like the little engine that could.** Rather than feeling overwhelmed about a work project, take time to get organized for it. Jot down some notes for yourself. Keep everything together in a project notebook.
 - ➔ Tell yourself, "I can do anything." Know in your heart that you can do it. Say things like, "Even though it will take some effort, I know that I can do this project."

4. **To increase positive feelings about yourself, keep a list of daily achievements.** Although it may sound a bit silly, obtain a spiral notebook and simply put the date on the left side of the page and list what you accomplish each day. You'll feel pretty good at the end of the work day.

- ➔ ***As you add to your daily list, your self-confidence will multiply.*** Plus, you'll stay better focused on work throughout the day when you know that you'll be listing what you achieve.
5. **Stay positive.** You stand a much better chance of feeling positive about yourself and believing you can excel if your overall attitude is positive. At first, it may take some practice to clear away the negatives and replace them with a sunnier attitude.
 6. **Practice in front of a mirror, if necessary.** If you're planning to give a presentation at next week's staff meeting, gather your materials right away so you can prepare, revise, and review your presentation several times before the meeting. Practice speaking in front of a mirror.
 - ➔ As you become comfortable with the material, feelings of nervousness will dissipate and you'll gain confidence.
 7. **Put your toe into unfamiliar waters.** It's always a good idea to stretch yourself a bit. If you've only served

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as second-chair on a project and never been the leader on one, why not try it? You've watched others do it. Reaching for more skills and abilities will bring on feelings of self-assurance, in addition to showing it to others.

Your personal beliefs about yourself can either pull you down or strengthen the best parts of you. Applying these suggestions will put you on track to becoming one of the most confident workers at the office.

*“You yourself, as much as anybody
in the entire universe,
deserve your love and affection.”*

~Buddha

Design Your Work Persona

Recognize your power to create your own work persona. Take the reins and become that self-assured worker you want to be.

Follow these steps to create the work persona you desire:

1. **Select a mentor.** Who do you know who is the perfect picture of a confident worker? They may not necessarily work where you do. We all need a mentor to follow. When you know who your mentor is, watch them and learn. What behaviors do they exhibit that show they've got it all together?

➡ Start doing what they do.

2. **Give up the need for power and control at work.** Getting into minor skirmishes with co-workers simply to

assert yourself is probably leading you down a path that is unhelpful if you want to be a model employee.

3. **Avoid feelings of competition with your co-workers.** Ask yourself where these feelings are coming from and whether they're actually contributing anything positive to your work experience or your confidence. If the answer is "no," it may be time to turn loose of those feelings of competition.

4. **Reflect on your prior successes.** What have you achieved in the past? How did you do it? How did you feel about it? Take note of some of your past achievements to incorporate them into your sense of self. ***When you carry your successes within you, you're more apt to become inspired and achieve great things.***

5. **What are you passionate about at work?** Talk with your supervisor about how you can pursue your passions and interests to benefit the company. You'll work harder and achieve more when you're doing something you have passion for.

6. **Develop your own goals for work.** Sure, you know what your boss wants you to do and you're working on those, but what about what you see as important? Designing your own goals will help you take full ownership of your work life, boosting your confidence.

7. **Smile and show a healthy sense of humor.** Your co-workers will appreciate it when you bring some lightness and humor to your workplace. A smile will help you appear more relaxed and when you look more relaxed, it shows you know what you're doing.

Designing the person you want to be at work is within your power. You can be the most proficient worker at the office and exude the confidence you seek. Discover the worker you want to be by following these steps. You'll be amazed at how personally fulfilling it is to showcase your confidence at work.

Summary

Working can be a more rewarding experience if you feel confident about what you're doing. Mustering your confidence and sharing it with others will help you build a positive, supportive work environment for yourself and your coworkers. You'll take great pride while on the job.

How you conduct yourself at work largely influences those around you. Your work behavior can be the difference between feeling like you have to go to work and loving to go to your workplace.

Construct a workplace philosophy where you can accomplish your goals and achieve whatever level of success you're seeking. Begin now to show your confidence at work and discover a fulfilling career!

"The harder I work, the luckier I get."

~ Samuel Goldwyn