

Memorandum

From:
David A Gammon, Sixth Sense

To:
Everyone

Date:
April 2023

CC:
Managing Directors
CEO's

Subject: Confidence

I've dealt with many client issues in the last few weeks alone. These include disagreements with business partners, stalled marketing strategies, ineffective management team meetings, company restructures and problem employees.

These look like relatively isolated challenges, but they all share something. The underlying problem is the level of confidence (or lack thereof) exhibited by the individuals involved.

So what is confidence, and what causes us to experience it (or lack it)?

My working definition of confidence is "your ability to take decisions or actions in the face of uncertainty or risk".

Beyond that, how confidence feels is a uniquely personal experience, as are the situations and events in which we feel confident (or not). Also, our actions and behaviours are unreliable indicators of our confidence.

This means there is no single solution to identifying and resolving confidence matters. Instead, personalised coaching is the only realistic way forward.

We are constantly faced with risk and uncertainty in the business world, so dealing with a lack of confidence would seem pretty damn important.

However, I don't buy the idea of confidence as the problem itself. Lack of confidence is often a misdiagnosis of challenges (for ourselves and others).

Let me explain.

Climbing confidence

In my mid-twenties took up rock climbing. After attending a week-long course in Snowdonia (where I met my climbing partner Alex), I climbed for around a decade across Wales and the West country. I often refer to some of these experiences in my work.

Years later, I relayed a particularly unpleasant climbing experience (we renamed the route brown pants crag for reasons you can probably figure out for yourself), and my friend said they wouldn't have the confidence to climb.

I replied that confidence played a tiny part in rock climbing. In fact, confidence only really gets you the first twenty feet up the rock face (the point beyond which a fall would likely lead to injury). Beyond that, first, push climbing is about capability and commitment (many sustained and exposed climbing routes are referred to as 'committed' in guidebooks).

I've also found that this is true in business and in leadership. So the solution to a lack of confidence always comes from addressing the root cause of the feeling.

You can do this by understanding six underlying causes of lack of confidence.

THE ROOT CAUSE OF CONFIDENCE

CONFIDENCE – Ability to take decisions or actions in the presence of uncertainty or risk..



CLARITY – Ability to perceive situations as they actually are and to notice signals in the system.



CURIOSITY – The power to discern what is known and unknown in any situation and to engage in the necessary enquiry.



COMMITMENT – The power to stay focused on your outcome.



CREATIVITY – The power to identify a solution or range of solutions, that move opportunities forward or to resolve blockages.



CONNECTION – Ability to initiate and build deep, mutual relationships with prospects, customers, suppliers and colleagues.



CAPABILITY – The skill (or the ability to acquire it) to take the required action.



So when you feel like you lack confidence in any situation or event, you could ask yourself a question and then use these six elements to guide your enquiry. The question is:

What would need to be true for me to experience high confidence in this situation?

Try this out for size and see how quickly you can move past a lack of confidence.

*David A
Gammon*
LEADERSHIP COACH