

If I Had More Confidence



Just like me I'm sure that every executive coach in the world helps leaders to work on their 'confidence' issues in some shape or form.

Does that mean that we are naturally supremely confident beings and have 'all the answers'?

No, of course not!

At times I'm fearful, vulnerable and worried about making an idiot of myself. Worried I'll fail or not do as great a job as I could do.

And I know that in my first senior corporate role I lacked confidence in my own decision making, ability to stand up for myself and put myself 'out there'. It took me a long time to feel comfortable in my skin and to feel that I deserved my place at the table.

I often say that I wish I had a 'self-confidence magic wand'. Sadly, there is no such thing. But here's what I've learned about developing self-confidence.

Self-confidence is a learned behaviour. You become self-confident by trying things and discovering you can do them. And that the more you do them, the better you get.

You start small. You plan, prepare and practise. And build from there.

Many of us will avoid something because it just seems too big to tackle.

The key is to break it down into really small steps.

Need to have a candid conversation? Plan, prepare and practise. (I like to write down my opening lines and practise saying them out loud. It's not a script but it gives me the courage to start rather than to avoid!).

Need to speak out more at your next meeting? Plan, prepare and practise. Think about **ONE QUESTION** you might ask or **ONE OBSERVATION** you would like to make.

Need to look like you have more authority in the weekly meeting? Plan, prepare and practise. Think about how you walk into the room. Do you scuttle in like a frightened rabbit or hold your head up high, walk in slowly and make eye contact with everyone in the room?

Think about the things that terrified you at first that are now effortless. I'm pretty sure you too will have gained your confidence from making something a habit and doing it again and again.

So in the absence of that magic wand – keep practising!