

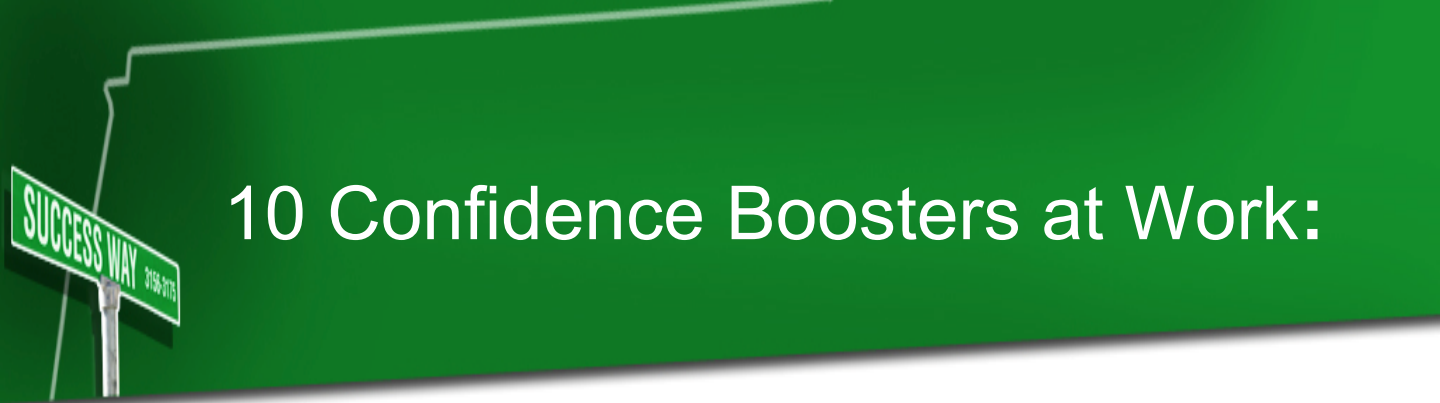


*Words,
Women & Wisdom™*

10 Confidence Boosters at Work©:

*surprising concepts you
never thought about...*

From Bestselling Author: Yvonne E.L. Silver
Executive Coach, CHRP, Women of Inspiration Award 2018



10 Confidence Boosters at Work:

Surprising concepts you never thought about...

Sections:

1. Know your Values
2. Understand your Personal Value Proposition
3. Align with your Company Mission or Purpose
4. Strong Body Language
5. Respond vs. React
6. Questions that Retain your Power
7. Mentors and Sponsors
8. Volunteer on a Committee
9. Build Trust from others
10. Have a Career Roadmap
11. About the Author

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CONFIDENCE – WHAT DOES IT EVEN MEAN?



con•fi•dence [kon-fi-duh ns] definition:

noun

1.

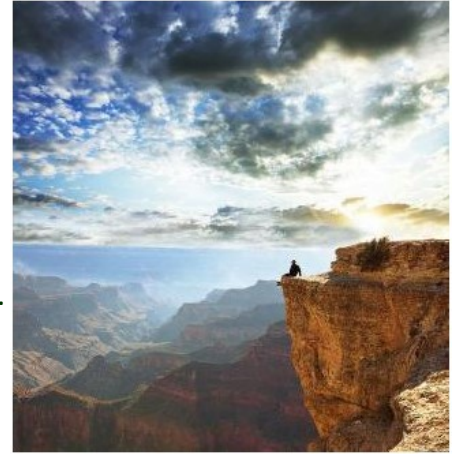
full trust; belief in the powers, trustworthiness, or reliability of a person or thing: We have every confidence in their ability to succeed.

2.

belief in oneself and one's powers or abilities; self-confidence; self-reliance; assurance: Her lack of confidence defeated her.

3.

certitude; assurance: She described the situation with such confidence that the audience believed her completely.



1 - KNOW YOUR VALUES

When you understand your own personal values and character strengths, you can look for ways to align these with the work that you do, the culture of your team at work, and the overall culture of your organization. If one of your values is “excellence”, working on a team that forgets to pay attention to the details will drive you crazy! Look for signs that your strengths and values are aligned with those of your leader and your team. Being stressed at work is caused by many things, however, not using your strengths, misalignment of work and work-style preferences, overwork (due to a lack of personal boundaries or outdated/dysfunctional processes), and not feeling you are able to speak up are frequent stressors. To take a short (free) online assessment to learn your character strengths:

<http://www.viacharacter.org/www/The-Survey>

(click the big round red button – FREE VIA Survey)

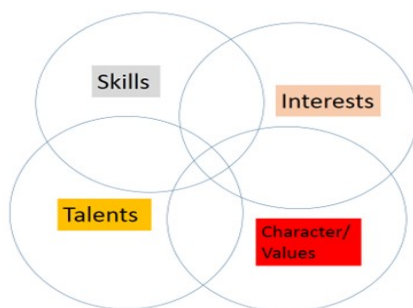
Your character strengths and values are the primary "anchors" that will determine "fit" with organizational culture, and creating more meaningful purpose and work. Knowing what is important to you is key to your success. (The survey results will show on the screen, which you cut and paste to a personal document for your reference.)



2 - UNDERSTAND YOUR PERSONAL VALUE PROPOSITION (PVP)

You may have heard the term in sales your Unique Sales Position (USP) however, in the workplace, think about your own PVP – your Personal Value Proposition. What do you do in your work that you know you do far better than anyone else? You may be performing a job that several others in your department also perform. What enables you to be more efficient, more effective, to work faster or more accurately, to have better customer relations, to be a stronger team leader? (Is it your sense of humour, customer-service orientation, empathy, discipline, attention to detail, influence or relationship building perhaps?)

Look at your values and character strengths list (from VIA), and see how these characteristics intertwine with your skills (what you know how to do), your interests (what you like to do), and your talents (what you are very good at). If you draw 4 circles that overlap, you will start to see the commonalities between the lists.



Look back at your accomplishments, the activities you completed in your role that had a specific outcome, find ways to show a measureable result. (For example: if you are a Leader responsible for Human Resources, do you know your department metrics – cost per new hire, the number of employees with over 3 years of service, the cost of turnover, the % or dollar value for training given to each employee.) Knowing these metrics gives you an opportunity to be more efficient with your time and the organization’s budget. If you find out the “cost per hire” is \$1,878 (including the cost of a job posting, time to interview with a manager, complete references, prepare an offer of employment letter, etc.) think about how you can add value to your role by reducing this cost. What steps can you eliminate, do more efficiently, more creatively, or automate to reduce the expense?)

Even if your role is answering the telephone in the reception area of your organization, you can still answer the phone consistently on the 2nd ring. Can you take ownership of transferring a caller to the right person who can answer their question every time? Can you develop a system to ensure that you remember a returning visitors name every time, or 8/10 times? Where are you adding value?



Be proud of your accomplishments! Be clear when you are talking about the unique way that YOU use your natural strengths and abilities to deliver value. Articulate your expertise and your value by using statistics and looking at the numbers – it is much easier to feel confident and to blow your own horn!



3 - ALIGN WITH YOUR COMPANY MISSION – know how your role aligns with the overall mission and the specific objectives for your role. Clarity builds confidence. Have you ever felt that you are working in the dark, or feeling as though you do not have a clear understanding of exactly HOW your role and activities support your organization's success? If you have a small task to do, even if this is a small part on a manufacturing line, ask your leader to share how it fits in with the bigger, overall team success and the products completion or customer experience. When you can see the broader picture, you can more readily find ways to do your job more efficiently, possibly using less resources, and can be more personally accountable for the quality of the work that you do. If you do not know your company's mission, ask your leader, your Human Resources department, look at the company's website, or in your organization's annual report (if it is a public company). If it is still not clear how your job fits into the organization's success, ensure that you ask in your next performance meeting with your leader. Ask him or her to share 3 things that you are doing well, and 3 things that you could do even more effectively.

These are simple examples, however, a challenge for you is to develop your Personal Value Proposition tailored to your current position. Instead of worrying if anyone else appreciates the value you bring to work every day, spend time looking at the key metrics for your role and developing EVEN BETTER ways to do it more efficiently.



4 - STRONG BODY LANGUAGE – what does your body language say to others about how you are feeling?

Can your co-workers, your leader, your customers, (as well as your friends and family) tell when you are upset, embarrassed, elated, sad, disappointed or proud? How will you know if they are reading your body language correctly? Watch for their reactions. How they treat you will provide clues to how your actions and your communication is being observed and received. If you are feeling shy or lack confidence, you may withdraw to make yourself seem smaller (so that others do not notice you), and your shoulders may droop, your chin will drop, your eyes may not look straight at another person, or you may show a lack of engagement by sitting back in your chair with your hands in your lap. Learn how to show confidence, even if you are not feeling it that moment! (For an excellent example of how to boost your confidence, watch an informative video on TEDTalk with Amy Cuddy, on how cortisol makes a difference to our confidence levels.) Social psychologist Amy Cuddy, Associate Professor at Harvard Business School, uses experimental methods to investigate how people judge and influence each other. If you act powerfully, you will begin to think more powerfully.

To learn more on this topic, watch this informative video,
then practice some of her suggested poses and see
how your temperature decreases and your confidence level rises:

http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are#t-37436



Take a brisk walk with your shoulders back and head held high, with your chin level and eyes straight – it is hard to feel lacking in confidence if you are striding forwards. Smile – it takes more muscles to frown, and the added bonus is that usually someone will smile back! My colleague Leslie Davies (Impact Image Essentials) has taught me that we can influence others in our wardrobe too. If we want to be perceived as influential, wearing straight lines (pinstripes) and high contrast combinations, we exude authority. (For example a white shirt is a high contrast to a navy blazer.) If we want to be inviting, wearing a tie or a blouse with a curved pattern is softer and creates a more approachable feel. Try some of these concepts as you prepare your wardrobe for the day (unless you are in a uniformed environment or role where safety clothing is mandatory), and see how others respond to you. The more formal your attire (a matching suit vs. a coordinating jacket and pants) the more authority your overall image creates.



5 - KNOW HOW TO RESPOND VS. REACT

How often have you found yourself in situation that derails? You were not prepared for a co-worker to object to your idea in a meeting, your Leader is not happy about the quality of the project you just handed in, or you are asked a question that you do not know the answer to – and either mumble something irrelevant, or turn beet red and are unable to even talk?



Embarrassing situations at work can erode confidence. To reduce the likelihood of this happening, spend a few minutes preparing 3-5 statements that will provide you with a reply, and “buy you some time” to think about the situation, and CHOOSE how you will RESPOND vs. REACT. For example, here are several potential replies:

“That is a really interesting observation, I would like to give you a complete answer, however, I have that file in my desk. Can I get back to you tomorrow on this topic?” “I would like to respond to your question, and rather than a 2-minute conversation, can we book a separate meeting time to discuss this important issue?” “That is an excellent point. It is something I am not an expert in, however, can we address this at the weekly staff meeting...”

Your response will be situational, so develop 3-5 generic statements that could be made in response to a question, a statement or a request that puts you “on the spot”. If none of your “prepared responses” apply in the situation, you can often excuse yourself to “get a glass of water as my throat is very dry and I can hardly talk right now” – it is something to try! Buy yourself some time to enable you to choose HOW you will respond. Being prepared fosters confidence.



6 – ASK QUESTIONS THAT RETAIN YOUR POWER

Often in a work situation we are asked questions that we simply do not have the knowledge to respond to. My clients tell me frequently that “not knowing” causes them to lose their confidence, and be embarrassed. In my experience, NO ONE knows EVERYTHING! No single person can know everything in the world, on every topic.

So remain confident and treat each situation as an opportunity to learn. You might choose to say, “Hmmm, I am curious... I have not been asked that before, let me do some research and unearth the details behind this question.” Or “Hmmm, that is an interesting question. How can we find out the answer? If you were me, where would you start?” Another reply is: “Now you have me interested, as I currently do not know the answer to that question. However, I will find out and be back in touch with you.”

By asking “HOW” at the beginning of the question you are opening the conversation to exploring more than one answer, or a direction to finding the solution to the question. (I.e.: “How can we find out the answer?” sounds much more curious and collaborative.) Try to limit asking “why” in your questions to another person when inquiring about a past decision of why they did something, as it often causes others to be defensive about their past actions and decisions. Instead use Appreciative Inquiry concepts, i.e.: “What is working really well already, and how could it be even better?” Take an approach of curiosity vs. inquisition to build questions that foster collaboration, and have a forward focus.

Powerful questions start with...





7 – FIND A MENTOR, SPONSOR or WISDOM CIRCLE – for support

In each of my Career Visioning conversations I encourage that building your support network is a critical action to support your growth, and to bolster your confidence when you need it. When you first start in a new organization or a new role it is a great time to ask your leader who might be a good mentor for you. Asking for someone to mentor you gives you an opportunity to learn from their experience. Typically I encourage selecting a person that holds a role which is the one you will be hoping to be promoted to – just one level up from the one you hold right now. In small organizations there may not be anyone that is a great mentor for you, or you may find that rapport is missing when you first meet them. Seek out other organizations where your current role (or equivalent) exists, and find an industry mentor in another organization. Agree that the conversations that take place between you will be “in confidence” to reduce any concern about sharing any related competitive information which may arise in your conversation. Keep the discussions focused on what YOU can be learning and developing, and the skills that you can hone which will enable you to develop more confidence in your role. Here are some guidelines in selecting a Mentor:

Mentor:

- **Someone you admire**
- **One level higher in the organization**
- **Respected and Influential**
- **Someone with a strength in your area of need.**



Once you have identified your Mentor, request to calendar a meeting once each quarter. Come to the meeting prepared by keeping a log of questions you want to ask your mentor, so that each conversation is as rich in examples for them as it is in knowledge for you. By adding to the calendar in advance, this puts your development as a priority for you (and for them), and keeps the conversations on track. Having someone with more life experience to send a quick email note to for guidance or advice at short notice, that is a fan and supporter, can be a great way to maintain or boost your confidence at work! For more on Wisdom Circles, connect at: WordsWomenAndWisdom.com/contact



I also encourage finding a sponsor as well as a mentor in your organization. This is someone that can recommend you for a promotion, someone who knows the quality of the work that you do, and some of your strengths and interests.

Here are some guidelines for selecting a Sponsor:

Champion/Sponsor:

- **Someone you admire**
- **Two levels higher in the organization**
- **Is an advocate and a fan**
- **Respected and influential.**



Ask an individual who you respect and who is influential in the organization. You might start this conversation by requesting a research interview with your desired sponsor. Find a topic that you would like to know more about, and one that they have knowledge about. Check out their LinkedIn profile to see where they have worked previously, their education, organizations or charities that they volunteer with, etc., and prepare your questions ahead of time. If you find good rapport, and the connection is valuable, ask if they would be willing to meet with you periodically (once or twice a year) to discuss industry trends.

Calendar well in advance again, as the more senior the person the more likely their calendar will be booked up way in advance. Cultivate Mentor and Sponsor relationships, as the more they know about your perspective or work accomplishments and personal growth, the more likely they are to recommend you when an opening for a promotion arises. Keep track of your PVP (from p. 3) and your proudest accomplishments to share at this meeting, and casually mention these in the last 5 minutes of your meeting together. In the short term, you have supporters when your confidence may waver...



8 – VOLUNTEER ON A COMMITTEE

Volunteering is a great way to give back to the organization, to the community, and to build some excellent relationships. Volunteer organizers recognize that committee members are all coming to the table at an equal level, with the greater good as the focus (vs. a typical meeting where a Leader and a subordinate may be together and will not have equal status). Bonding over a project or a problem that needs resolving is a great way to build strong relationships. There is generally less ego observed or personal competition in these types of activities as they are unpaid and outside the working environment, and they tend to attract those that enjoy helping others.

Generally the expectations of volunteers are less than in our 9-5 jobs, so it is a great way to learn new skills, ask for help from others, and feel that we are contributing without having to be “an expert”. When you need help, encouragement, knowledge or an introduction, you will likely be amazed at how supportive your committee members will be, and how they can help boost your confidence. Often when working in the community it is humbling to see and help others who are less fortunate than ourselves, another confidence booster.





9 – BUILD TRUST FROM OTHERS (the 3 C's*)

Our confidence is often impacted by how others interact with us. If people ignore us, are unwilling to engage with us, or build a relationship of any depth, often this impacts our confidence in ourselves. Build trust from others very deliberately. Three things matter when building trust.

Competence:

Put emphasis on demonstrating that others can rely on you to get the job done (or task completed). Show them that knowing you provides value by giving first – give a piece of information, an article, a coffee, an introduction to another person – a gift.

Consistency:

Always do what you say you are going to do, and then do it before the deadline promised. Add “as promised” to the beginning of your emails and notes when delivering a service, product or any type of deliverable. This reinforces that you are a person that delivers on their promises to others – and that you are competent. Being consistent also builds the trust of others – by showing that each and every time you can be relied upon, their trust in you will flourish.

Caring:

Finally, ask their opinion and show that you are listening by taking their input into account. Showing empathy, caring for their perspective and opinion, and asking how they see things will demonstrate teamwork and that you truly care HOW the work gets done, not just the end result. When others show they trust you, it increases your confidence.



* Ref: *Building Trust in the Workplace – A key to Retaining Women* - Sarah Stawiski, Ph.D., Jennifer Deal, Ph.D and Marian Ruderman, Ph.D – Centre for Creative Leadership



10 – HAVE YOUR “CAREER VISION” ROADMAP CLEAR!

Finally, have a plan for your career growth – leaving it to chance it just that – taking a chance that you may be on the road to career successes, or perhaps not... If you have a roadmap, will you reach your destination faster, with less stress and fewer detours? YES! (If you have no plan, my **7-Step Career Visioning Roadmap** will get you on the right track).

Before going to bed, take a few precious moments to reflect on your day, and where you saw some success. Sometimes a very small step still keeps us moving forwards and can build momentum. Sometimes writing down our feelings and results in a journal can clear our head, eliminating the “mind chatter” that we often have if we are replaying an event from our day that did not go as planned.

However, journaling affirmations and successes is much more positive. Writing in a journal on a daily basis is not a new concept, however, adding 3 things that you are grateful for will raise your positive vibrational energy, and you will be more likely to see events unfold that support your success... Track what simply “showed up” for you, as often these “gifts” reinforce that we are living our purpose. When there is a natural rhythm and flow to life it is much easier and less stressful.

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Try these confidence boosters and let me know which strategies work the best for you. I welcome your feedback and your personal success stories! Connect with me at: <http://www.wordswomenandwisdom.com/contact>

Warmly,
Yvonne





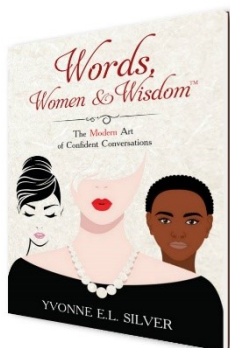
11. About the Author:

If you would like additional support on any of the concepts in this e-book, please connect via: <http://www.wordswomenandwisdom.com/contact> If you are challenged with moving into a leadership role, or more senior Executive position, starting a business, or with difficulties engaging your staff - many offerings exist leveraging Emotional Intelligence, Work-Life balance, New Leader On-boarding techniques, and developing authentic Leadership. With over 20 years of Leadership and success in business, combined with extensive Coaching expertise, perhaps I can help... Feel free to explore more by sharing a little about your goals, at the page link above. I offer a few 45-minute Visioning Sessions each month, which give great clarity.

About the Author:

Yvonne E.L. Silver “inspires positive change” with a passion for Business Harmony. She is a vibrant Executive Coach, Consultant and Speaker, with over 20 years of business success at the Leadership level, and a focus on developing exceptional leadership, high employee engagement, and reducing burnout in the workplace. She is an expert in reducing burnout, for more joy in business – having more fulfilling careers with less stress and more balance, enabling more quality family time.

Yvonne draws on extensive experiences in high-growth organizations and start-ups, as a corporate VP, Board Member, business owner, her volunteer activities and parenting four children. Professionally she holds a CEC, CHRP, and Certified EQ-i Consultant, and well as being a Reiki Practitioner. Her company is Flourish – with Yvonne Silver.



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