When self-confidence affects leadership performance

“Trying to teach leadership without first building confidence is like building a house on a foundation of sand. It might have a nice coat of paint, but is ultimately shaky at best.” – Francisco Dao

One of the most influential motivators and regulators of behaviour in an individual’s life is self-confidence. It is the cornerstone of leadership and can teach a leader to be a bunch of things, but without a leader first believing in themselves, true leadership will only exist as a title.

Confidence is a feeling of trust in someone or something. To be self-confident is to be secure in yourself and your abilities. In almost every aspect of our lives, self-confidence is extremely important, yet so many people struggle to find it. Unfortunately, this can turn into a vicious cycle: people who lack self-confidence can find it very difficult to become successful.

Self-confidence in leadership

People tend to think that leaders who are dominant and aggressive in their communication and leadership style have strong self-confidence - this is not necessarily the case. These types of leaders can be seen as bullies and are often lacking confidence. Those with a strong sense of self-confidence do not need to be aggressive or dominate to get their goals accomplished. Generally speaking, people have a natural tendency to trust those who appear confident in themselves as it helps assure others that the person is a competent. When a leader exhibits a certain amount of self-confidence it makes it easier for people to trust that individual and people will often want to work with leaders they trust.

Those without a strong sense of self-confidence will find it hard to make tough decisions, lead meetings with authority, get others to communicate with them candidly and find it difficult to listen to feedback. Without this sense of self-confidence, leaders will also tend to second guess their decisions, find that they easily become defensive and find themselves lacking one very important component of leadership – followers.

How to improve self-confidence for performance

As a leader, the way you see yourself and feel strongly affects your role. As your self-confidence increases so will your leadership skills. Below you will find a list of the ways you can improve your self-confidence as a leader:

- **Recognition** – Recognize that your own self-confidence impacts every aspect of your role as a leader.
- **Standards** – don’t compare yourself to others, set your own standards and strive to achieve these on your own accord.
- **Goals** – set realistic and attainable goals. Once you have achieved one of these goals, your self-confidence will rapidly increase as you feel like you have mastered something.
- **Associations** – associate with others who you view as having a strong sense of self-confidence.
- **Laugh** – bring the positives out in every situation even if it is challenging. Laugh about challenging situations or mistakes sooner.
- **Compliment** – don’t be afraid to pass out compliments and accept compliments from others.
- **Feedback** – be sure to ask for feedback from others and be open to it.
- **Responsibility** – take responsibility for your own actions and decisions.
- **Be positive** – be positive in everything you do. Develop positive self-talk – what you think about eventually comes about.

**REMEMBER:** CONFIDENCE SEPARATES AVERAGE LEADERS FROM GREAT LEADERS!