

Eight Things That Set Truly Confident People Apart

Successful people often exude confidence—it's obvious that they believe in themselves and what they're doing. It isn't their success that makes them confident, however. The confidence was there first.

Think about it:

- **Doubt breeds doubt.** Why would anyone believe in you, your ideas, or your abilities if you didn't believe in them yourself?
- **It takes confidence to reach for new challenges.** People who are fearful or insecure tend to stay within their comfort zones. But comfort zones rarely expand on their own. That's why people who lack confidence get stuck in dead-end jobs and let valuable opportunities pass them by.
- **Unconfident people often feel at the mercy of external circumstances.** Successful people aren't deterred by obstacles, which is how they rise up in the first place.

No one is stopping you from what you want to accomplish but yourself. It's time to remove any lingering self-doubt. With proper guidance and hard work, anyone can become more confident. Embracing the following behaviors of truly confident people will help get you there.

1. They Take an Honest Look at Themselves

Johnny Unitas said, "There is a difference between conceit and confidence. Conceit is bragging about yourself. Confidence means you believe you can get the job done." In other words, confidence is *earned* through hard work, and confident people are self-aware. When your confidence exceeds your abilities, you've crossed the line into arrogance. You need to know the difference.

True confidence is firmly planted in reality. To grow your confidence, it's important to do an honest and accurate self-assessment of your abilities. If there are weaknesses in your skill set, make plans for strengthening these skills and find ways to minimize their negative impact. Ignoring your weaknesses or pretending they're strengths won't make them go away. Likewise, having a clear understanding of your strengths enables you to shake off some of the more groundless feedback and criticism you can get in a busy, competitive work environment—and that builds confidence.

2. They Don't Seek Attention

People are turned off by those who are desperate for attention. Confident people know that being yourself is much more effective than trying to prove that you're important. People catch on to your attitude quickly and are more attracted to the right attitude than what, or how many, people you know. Confident people always seem to bring the right attitude.

Confident people are masters of attention diffusion. When they're receiving attention for an accomplishment, they quickly shift the focus to all the people who worked hard to help get them there. They don't crave approval or praise because they draw their self-worth from within.

3. They Seek Out Small Victories

Confident people tend to challenge themselves and compete, even when their efforts yield small victories. Small victories build new androgen receptors in the areas of the brain responsible for reward and motivation. This increase in androgen receptors increases the influence of testosterone, which further increases your confidence and your eagerness to tackle future challenges. When you have a series of small victories, the boost in your confidence can last for months.

4. They Speak With Certainty

It's rare to hear the truly confident utter phrases such as "Um," "I'm not sure," and "I think." Confident people speak assertively because they know that it's difficult to get people to listen to you if you can't deliver your ideas with conviction.

5. They Exercise

A study conducted at the Eastern Ontario Research Institute found that people who exercised twice a week for 10 weeks felt more competent socially, academically, and athletically. They also rated their body image and self-esteem higher. Best of all, rather than the physical changes in their bodies being responsible for the uptick in confidence, it was the immediate, endorphin-fueled positivity from exercise that made all the difference. Schedule your exercise to make certain it happens, and your confidence will stay up.

6. They Dress for Success

Like it or not, how we dress has a huge effect on how people see us. Things like the color, cut, and style of the clothes we wear—and even our accessories—communicate loudly. But the way we dress also affects how we see ourselves. Studies have shown that people speak differently when they're dressed up compared to when they're dressed casually. To boost your confidence, dress well. Choose clothing that reflects who you are and the image you want to project, even if that means spending more time at the mall and more time getting ready in the morning.

7. They Are Assertive, Not Aggressive

Aggressiveness isn't confidence; it's bullying. And when you're insecure, it's easy to slip into aggressiveness without intending to. Practice asserting yourself without getting aggressive (and trampling over someone else in the process). You won't be able to achieve this until you learn how to keep your insecurities at bay, and this will increase your confidence.

8. They Get Right with the Boss

A troubled relationship with the boss can destroy even the most talented person's confidence. It's hard to be confident when your boss is constantly criticizing you or undermining your contributions. Try to identify where the relationship went wrong and decide whether there's anything you can do to get things back on track. If the relationship is truly unsalvageable, it may be time to move on to something else.

Bringing It All Together

Your confidence is your own to develop or undermine. It's the steadfast knowledge that goes beyond simply "hoping for the best." It ensures that you'll get the job done—that's the power of true confidence.

Please share your thoughts in the comments section below, as I learn just as much from you as you do from me.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dr. Travis Bradberry is the award-winning co-author of the #1 bestselling book, [Emotional Intelligence 2.0](#), and the cofounder of [TalentSmart](#), the world's leading provider of [emotional intelligence tests](#) and [training](#), serving more than 75% of Fortune 500 companies. His bestselling books have been translated into 25 languages and are available in more than 150 countries. Dr. Bradberry has written for, or been covered by, *Newsweek*, *TIME*, *BusinessWeek*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *Fast Company, Inc.*, *USA Today*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Harvard Business Review*.