

CONFIDENT PEOPLE WHAT'S THEIR SECRET?

You are going to read an article in which five people talk about the secret to being confident. For each question choose from people A-E. Some may be chosen more than once.

Which person or people state(s) the following?

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| I used to avoid giving my opinions at work. | 1. |
| Taking time off for your professional development can make you feel more self-assured. | 2. |
| I never thought I'd be a confident person. | 3. |
| I'm not influenced by people's opinions of me. | 4. |
| Everyone gets nervous that times | 5. 6. |
| Initially, I misunderstood what confidence was. | 7. |
| I find making notes very supportive in my work. | 8. |
| A certain event changed the course of my life. | 9. 10. |
| I've worked on having a confident appearance. | 11. |
| I am realistic about my abilities. | 12. 13. |
| My behavior helps others relax too. | 14. |
| Getting things wrong can have a positive result. | 15. |



CONFIDENT PEOPLE - WHAT'S THEIR SECRET?

Confident people may look as though they were born that way, but most will tell you that it's a skill they've learned because they had to. Nina Hathaway asks five people how they did it.

A Jenny, When I left school I was very shy and I always thought I'd stay that way. I was about twenty-five when I was asked to help out at my daughter's school. I was sure I wouldn't cope, but I surprised myself by doing well and someone there suggested that I should do a university course.

There was a huge knot in my stomach the day I turned up for my first lecture. But my confidence gradually grew - I became more outgoing. Looking back, working at the school was the turning point in my life that has helped everything else fall into place.

B Michaela It all started four years ago when my father became ill and I had to take over the family business. I was so scared, I went over the top and became a bit too aggressive and impatient. I thought that was what confident people were like, but gradually I learned otherwise. To be confident you've got to believe in yourself.

If things get too demanding for me at work, I don't let myself feel guilty if I save a number of tasks until the next day. When I'm confronted with something difficult, I tell myself that I've got nothing to lose. It's fear that makes you lack confidence, so I'm always having quiet chats with myself to put aside those fears!

C Lisa People think I'm very confident but, in fact the calmer I look, the more terrified I really am. I've had to develop the ability to look confident because it's the most vital thing in TV. Interviewing people has helped me realise that most - if not all - of us get tense in important situations, and we feel calmer when we speak to someone who's genuinely friendly. The best ever piece of advice came from my mother when I was agonizing as a teenager about wearing the right clothes. She simply cried. "Who's looking at you? Everybody's too busy worrying about how they look." I've found that's well worth remembering.

I also think you gain confidence by tackling things that scare you. When I took my driving test I was so nervous, but I passed. After that I felt sure that I'd never feel so frightened again, and I never have."

D Barbara My confidence comes naturally from really enjoying the work I do, but it's something that I've built up over the years. If you just get on with it and learn from any mistakes you make, you're more confident the next time round. I work hard and I'm popular in the restaurant, but it's probably that one out of ten people doesn't like me. I don't let that affect me. You've got to like yourself for what you are, not try to be what others expect.

My company runs a lot of training courses, and going on those has built up my self-esteem. The company also encourages employees to set manageable targets. It helps no end if you can see you're achieving something tangible, rather than reaching for the stars all at once, and ending up with nothing but air!

E Kim. After I left college I worked for years as a secretary and would sit in meetings, not always agreeing with what was being said, but too scared to speak up. Eventually, I summoned up the confidence to start making my point.. Even so, when I first worked in politics, I'd never spoken in public before and always used to shake like a leaf. I would say to myself, "Don't be so silly. People do this every day of their lives, so there's no reason why you can't." I also found it helpful to jot a few things down to refer to - rather like having a comfort blanket!

I don't think there is anyone who isn't a little shaky when it comes to talking publicly. The real secret of confidence lies in telling yourself over and over again, "Nothing is impossible."