



## Confidence Masterclass Key Insights

### Start before you're ready!

#### Confidence vs Competence

- **Recognise and manage the gap between confidence and competence.** While competence is built through education, training, and experience and is evaluated objectively based on outcomes, confidence is subjective and influenced by factors like your past experiences and mindset. Maintaining a balance between the two is important, as overconfidence without the necessary competence can lead to unmet expectations. Know your strengths, seek feedback, be realistic about what you can do, and keep learning and improving along the way.
- **Be prepared to fail with confidence.** True self-confidence isn't about expecting everything to go perfectly but rather about being comfortable with not knowing the outcome and having the resilience to handle whatever arises, even if it's a failure. Believe in your ability to navigate challenges without letting them define your self-worth. Remember, real confidence gives you an overriding inner belief that you'll be okay, no matter what.
- **High achievers are notorious for not stopping to embed or celebrate success;** after all, the next thing to achieve is vying for your attention! You may not be used to celebrating your work, but appreciate that it's essential for building self-esteem and confidence (and eliminating imposter syndrome - the feeling of not being deserving of your achievements). By intentionally celebrating your successes, you validate your hard work and reinforce a positive mindset, helping you stay motivated and focused on your journey toward even greater accomplishments. Celebrations can be small - get some flowers or large - buy some jewellery to celebrate the promotion!

#### Personal Brand Confidence

- **The 10/10/10 rule:** we often avoid doing things that might get us closer to our goals or dreams because of confidence. Reframing the worse case scenario is useful here. If you are concerned about applying for a job because you don't feel a good enough candidate, ask yourself what is the worse that can happen? Will this matter in 10 minutes, 10 weeks and 10 years?
- **Shift from fear to purpose:** remembering the reason why we are striving to do something can help focus our brain on purpose vs fear. The drive behind our want to achieve certain goals can be more powerful than the lack of confidence.
- **The three truths:** I will invite everyone to write down three things they know to be factually true about themselves as professionals (1 minute). Whenever they need to boost their confidence or tackle the feeling of inadequacy, they can refer back to the list, extend it, repeat the exercise and so on.
- **Find your cheerleader:** Architectural practice is often not an environment where you are given feedback on how you are doing apart from maybe an annual review which may or may not happen! At times of low confidence it's really good to have someone you can go to who can give you a boost and prevent you from spiraling downwards. This could be a colleague, a friend or a partner, but usually someone who is in the industry will have more weight. Try and offer this to others also.





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**Build confidence in increments, then motivation comes when you see progress!**

### Leadership Confidence

- **Shift perspective from an expert to an enabler.** Understand that to be an effective leader you don't need to know all of the answers or to have the loudest voice. Instead it's about seeking the right solutions and sometimes this means you need to be one of the quietest people in the room. Quiet confidence is beautiful.
- **Make sure you have the mandate to lead.** This might sound simple, but you would be surprised how many people with titles don't actually make decisions or feel empowered to do so. Seek clarity on your roles and responsibilities and define them yourself if given the opportunity. Take time to know the situations you are heading into and prepare accordingly.
- **Be able to share your own experience (personal and professional).** This is the skills and life experience that you take with you wherever you go. Think of it like a backpack that stays with you regardless of what project you're working on or in which organisation you currently work. You can shape, refine and hone these skills. They're unique to you so own it.

### Diverse Observations

- **Sometimes you have to fake confidence!**
- **It's easy to 'panic'** when we receive a new or unexpected request; I found that taking time before replying to it - creating a mental and temporal distance - it helps to manage and ease the feelings of fear and uncertainty. I understood that many times I know the answer already but I only need time to look for it. I might be slow at first, but it helps to remind myself that many people must have felt this way before me.
- **Comparison is the worst enemy of confidence.** When you catch yourself comparing to others, consider what aspects of them can inspire you to achieve more, rather than focusing on what they possess.
- **Somebody needs you to be more confident** (so that they can be too). Focus on this instead.
- **It's so vital to build each other's confidence** at all stages of our careers so that our wisdom and experience can grow in tandem.
- **Know when you are in a toxic environment** and when to leave, sometimes it's just not you! This might look like this . . . You don't get the feedback or support you need. You can't speak without fear of failure or judgement. You are not playing to your strengths. Your values are being compromised
- **Confidence in decision making/ decision paralysis.** There are very few decisions where you can be 100% certain, especially in architecture. When presented with all the facts and you reach 51% in favour of one direction, then consider your decision made. Remember the reasons and facts available to you at that point, know that you were over 50% sure, and then you will know you made the best decision you could at that point in time, then move on!

