**How to succeed at work? Believe in yourself!**

TASK: Read through the work either by yourself or with a family member and then watch the clips following the links below. Most of what is written below is mainly covered in the video links if the reading becomes to much.

**Stacey Dooley tackles one of the hardest issues for young people starting out: how can you be self-confident when you’re not experienced?**

**It’s funny, isn’t it, that when you meet a group of people for the first time you just know who is confident and who is a little unsure? Also, the self-assured person isn’t always the loudest one!**

But being confident in the workplace can be a tricky thing to pull off. When you are at work, especially when you’re starting out, you face lots of new challenges and often you are surrounded by colleagues who may have been there a lot longer than you and have more experience. It’s only natural to feel a bit jittery or even lose your nerve.

Self-assurance doesn’t come naturally for everyone: that’s just the way it is. But there are small tricks that everyone can learn to get you over any small wobbles and get you back up and running. Even those people brimming with confidence will sometimes struggle a little from time to time - and that’s totally fine.

On The Nine to Five, I recently worked with a lovely 16-year-old girl called Mersadi, who I took on work experience into five different industries, with four other teenagers. She was such a joy to be around and everywhere we went the bosses loved her and welcomed her with open arms into their businesses.

**[Watch The Nine to Five with Stacey Dooley on iPlayer](https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/p06zhf9j)**

[Five teens, five industries. Will they thrive or struggle?](https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/p06zhf9j)

**Fear of failure**

But Mersadi didn’t believe this herself at the start. She had always battled with low confidence, which started when she had a tough time at school and had continued into her teens. The worse other people made her feel, the worse she felt about herself and then not believing in herself became her reality. So when it came to going into the workplace she thought it would all come back again and that everyone there would know all the answers to everything whereas she would been seen as being not up to the job.

In fact the opposite was true: what they saw was someone who cared about getting things right, someone who would keep on trying even if they found things difficult and someone who had complete respect for the different workplaces and everyone in them.

What she had to do was overcome her fear of failure, stop doubting herself, and not compare herself to other people in the group. She realised everyone else was out of their comfort zone too and, if she let it, her lack of confidence would stop her progress in its tracks.

**Surprise yourself**

It was so lovely to see that with each new work experience placement, Mersadi’s confidence grew and grew, as she could see the appreciation that the bosses had for her and she allowed herself to enjoy their praise. She suddenly felt okay about asking questions if she was unsure of things and she realised that everyone has to learn somehow and that’s okay.

At the beginning it was clear to everyone else but Mersadi that she was a hard worker and someone who would always try and give everything a go. Even at times when she really didn’t think she could do the task at hand, she stuck with it – and 9 times out of 10, not only did she manage to do it, she smashed it!

When she realised how much she was appreciated she couldn’t stop smiling! She started telling others: if you just give something a try, you can surprise yourself with what you are really capable of. In turn, this really helps to boost your confidence.

"People would always tell me, you must be confident at work, but what if it just doesn't come naturally? I mean, it didn't for me."

Video Transcript

**Know your worth**

So do please try out the things that boosted Mersadi. Remember the good things others have said about you, and learn to accept compliments. Don’t look at other people and judge yourself on how they are doing. They are different from you and they will always do things differently. That’s life. How you do things is part of what makes you an individual.

Building your sense of self-worth isn’t about knowing it all: it’s about understanding what you excel at, what you might need a bit of support with, and understanding all this makes you the person you are.

I think the key is self-belief. It’s important to believe in what you are doing and have a passion for it. That can distract you from thinking about how people may see you and instead make you think about what people are seeing in your work. It’s your work that’s the important thing. You just need to appreciate your own abilities and qualities first, and then others around you will follow.

**Not about knowing it all**

Being driven and enjoying your career really helps you to be successful, as well as giving personal fulfillment. The key misconception that some young people have, I think, when they are starting out is that employers want them to be the finished article. But this couldn’t be further from the truth. Employers are actually looking for the energy, enthusiasm and new ideas that someone young and fresh to a business will have.

Realise that confidence brings confidence and it grows quickly. There can be a lot of pressure now to conform, to act a certain way or talk a certain way. But actually your USP is that there’s only one of you, just like wonderful Mersadi. So the next time something nice happens, think to yourself - yes, this is me and I deserve this!

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zdr37nb>

Watch Mersadi’s video from her experience.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/p06zhf9j/the-nine-to-five-with-stacey-dooley>

Watch Series 1.5 by following the link