

CONFIDENCE

Think 2 Win Performance
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Athletes and coaches have identified self-confidence as critical to sporting performance and success.

**THE GREATER AN ATHLETES CONFIDENCE,
MORE OFTEN THEN NOT THE GREATER
THEIR PERFORMANCE.**

Confidence levels do and will fluctuate. These changes in confidence can be for many different reasons but in particular recent performances can have a large impact. Players and athletes that can be termed 'in form' usually improve in self-confidence. Coincidentally if an athlete is not performing well then the self-confidence will in turn tend to decrease.

SO HOW CAN YOU BE MORE SELF-CONFIDENT?

Self-confidence is built over time and if you find that yours is lacking, there are several steps that you can take to improve your mental strength and belief in your own ability.

KEY POINTS



Work From Your Strengths

Focus on what you are good at. By focusing on your strengths over your weaknesses you can see what you have achieved leading to confidence.



Control the Controllables

Confidence should come from the knowledge that you have left no stone unturned and are prepared as humanly possible to compete.



Reflect on Experiences

Draw from your previous winning experiences, these should give you confidence and show your ability.



Imagery + Self Talk

Use these tools to focus and motivate yourself on a positive result, leading to confidence to achieve the success.

STEPS TO IMPROVE CONFIDENCE

Step 1- Analyse

Analyse your situation and ask yourself why you lack confidence. Getting to the root of the problem often can help solve it.

Step 2 –Control the Controllables

Sport is full of factors you cannot control, from the weather, to the opposition, to the referees or umpires decisions; this is what makes sport so varied and challenging. However there are still a lot of factors you can control, and the control of these factors is an excellent source of confidence.

- **Physical Fitness.** The best athletes in the world spend countless hours on their fitness level outside the court or field. By working on your strength, endurance and agility, you can be more assured during the heat of a game that you have the fitness level to compete with the best.
- **Sleep, Hydration and Nutrition.** Knowing you are resting and fuelling correctly can not only help you to perform better from a physical perspective but also make you feel mentally prepared, and therefore more confident.
- **Practice.** The more you practice the better you get, the more prepared you feel and the more you trust your own abilities. Put in extra time going over the skills you need for your sport until you feel confident within each play or strategy.
- **General Preparation.** Arriving on time, knowing where you are going and having all your kit. Not being prepared can really negatively impact confidence.

Step 3 – Reflect on Previous Experiences, and Experiences of Others

Reflect on previous experiences and build on previous successes, these help remind you of accomplishments and build confidence through your own recognition of your strengths and achievements. Alongside your own experiences you can gain confidence from watching others perform successfully. Whether that's teammates performances, or by utilising technology to watch higher-level athletes perform successfully (i.e., YouTube).

Step 4 – Imagery and Self-Talk

Imagine yourself succeeding in your sport. Visualization is a powerful confidence booster. When you mentally picture yourself making the shot, basket or serve you can feel the power running through your mind and body. Hold that feeling and take it into the game. Create a positive word or short phrase that you can say to yourself whenever you have feelings of doubt. The word can bring you out of your negative thought patterns and remind you that you have the ability and skill.

CONFIDENCE PROGRAM

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Complete steps 1 to 3 to lay the foundations for your confidence building plan. Then use it regularly to check in with what you're doing to work on your confidence.

Get focused on the things that will influence you the most.

1. Review the list of statements below of things that are typically true when you're confident.

For each one of these, rate how much this is true for you (0 = this isn't at all like me, 10 = this is so incredibly like me)

My confidence is high when I...	True for you (0-10)
Am very clear on the performance I need to deliver and so are the people around me who matter	
Have a plan which I know I can deliver and am focused on delivering it	
Am not thinking about the outcome, result or what others think	
Think about my strengths and times I've done a good job in the past	
Feel really prepared and ready – I've done everything I can	
Visualised/imagined myself performing really well	
Connected with people who are really supportive and fuel my confidence	
Say positive and supportive things to myself	

2. Now choose the top 3 things that you know make a difference to your confidence.

They might be things from the list above, or other things, or a combination of both. List those in the table below, and for each, rate how consistently you do this thing (10 = I'm so consistent you could set your watch by me and 0 = it's hit and miss about whether I do this). Then rate how valuable this would be to your confidence if you invested more time in it more regularly (0 = waste of time; 10 = really helpful)

Confidence building activity	Consistency	Value
e.g. starting my preparation early so I know everything is done	2	8

3. Now for each of the 3 things write down what things you're going to do on a regular basis to increase your confidence.

So, for example if starting your preparation early is an area to get better and more consistent at, you'd be deciding what exactly you're going to do and how often. Get detailed and specific with this – write exactly what you'll be doing and when. Choose a maximum of 5 things only. You can always add to that list once you've got great at doing the first lot!

What to do	How often/when
1	
2	
3	