

**IF YOU'RE IN BARN斯LEY,
DONCASTER, ROTHERHAM,
CHESTERFIELD, BASSETLAW,
BOLSOVER, DERBYSHIRE
DALES, NORTH EAST
DERBYSHIRE OR SHEFFIELD
WE CAN HELP SUPPORT
YOUR BUSINESS.**



HOW TO INCREASE SELF-CONFIDENCE AND SELF-BELIEF FOR STARTING UP IN BUSINESS

www.scrgrowthhub.co.uk
Call: 03330 00 00 39





IF YOU'RE NOT SURE WHETHER YOU FEEL CONFIDENT ENOUGH TO START UP IN BUSINESS AT THE MOMENT, DON'T WORRY. INCREASING YOUR SELFCONFIDENCE IS A PROCESS THAT CAN BENEFIT ALL AREAS OF YOUR LIFE, EVEN IF YOU DECIDE THAT YOU'RE NOT QUITE READY TO START UP A BUSINESS AT THE MOMENT. HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF HAS A BIG IMPACT ON HOW OTHERS SEE YOU.

Working to increase your selfconfidence and self-belief can help you to make the most of your potential. Starting a business in itself can also be a great way to increase your selfconfidence, as you start to see just what you are capable of. Maybe you've been out of the job market for a while, your confidence has taken a knock and you want to get it back by working for yourself. Maybe you feel confident but just want to refresh your memory about different tools for building confidence.

THIS MINI-GUIDE WILL HELP YOU TO:

- think about different ways of 'seeing' yourself and your business using metaphors. (a metaphor is a figure of speech, not a literal meaning – for example: 'raining cats and dogs').
- develop an action plan to help you get started on your journey to starting up in business.
- Think about what you see as your personal barriers.
- learn about how to use exercises to relax and control your voice to speak more confidently to others.
- Get tips about increasing your self confidence

TIPS FOR INCREASING SELF CONFIDENCE

1. Build up your confidence 'bank'. Write a list of all of the good qualities you have. Include all the things you are good at and all your qualities as a person. For example, if you gave up your seat on the bus for an older person today, this shows you are a caring person, so one good quality to list would be 'caring'. Look at this list every day, and keep adding to it. Re-read the list until you feel you can really believe all the good things it says about you.
2. Practice positive selftalk. Keeping your inner voice positive will help to build your selfconfidence. Be aware when you are criticising yourself. When you are being too hard on yourself, think if you would say what you're saying to a good friend. Remind yourself often of what you've done well. The more you can focus on talking positively about yourself in your own mind, the more the positive thoughts and self-belief will follow.
3. Fake it until you make it. Act as though you feel confident and sure of yourself and soon enough it will start to feel more natural, until it gradually becomes part of who you are. See yourself as an actor playing the part of someone who is feeling confident and positive about themselves.
4. Avoid negative people. Try and find positive people from your friends, family or work-life who want you to be the best you can be. Avoid negative people who bring you down with negative thoughts and comments.
5. Look for confident role models. What do confident people do that makes them look confident? Can you copy any of these characteristics, ways of talking or non-verbal behaviours? Confidence is a skill that you can learn from others.

RELAXATION EXERCISES

It's easier to feel confident when you are feeling more relaxed. Try these relaxation exercises to help you handle the stress you might feel before speaking at business meetings, networking events or just at any time in life you need help to feel a bit more relaxed.

BREATHING EXERCISE

Breathe in slowly and fill up your lungs with air. Hold your breath for about three seconds then slowly breathe out through your mouth. As you are breathing out, try and picture all the tension and stress leaving your body with that breath. Repeat this two or three times, until you feel a little calmer.

RELEASING TENSION

Tense up all of your muscle groups one by one and then start to relax them. Start working upwards. Beginning with your feet, screw up your toes as tightly as possible and then hold for a few seconds. Slowly relax the muscles and let everything feel floppy. Work upwards through your body, legs, stomach, hands, shoulders and your face. By the end your body should feel lighter and looser - this helps to release any stored up tension.

LEARN TO CONTROL YOUR BREATHING

Increasing the amount of air your lungs can hold, means that you will have better control of your voice and keeping it sounding calm and confident, even if you're feeling stressed. The aim of the exercise is to keep talking for longer, each time you breathe out.

- Relax yourself first using the exercises above.
- Talk aloud about anything on one breath (if it feels easier, read from a book or a magazine). The aim is to become better at using your breath to support your voice over longer periods.
- Time yourself each time you practise this exercise and keep a note of your progress.
- Repeat the exercise and you will find it becomes easier and you are able to keep talking for longer on one outward breath. Try to practise any presentations or phrases about yourself or your business in front of a mirror so that you get used to seeing someone else looking at you while you're talking. You could also ask any willing friends or family members. This will boost your confidence so that you can do it on the day.



USING METAPHORS TO SEE YOURSELF AND YOUR BUSINESS MORE CLEARLY

A metaphor is defined as a 'figure of speech' – it is not a literal meaning. For example, the phrase 'a blanket of snow' is used to describe a snowfall that covers the ground evenly as if the snow were a fabric, or 'a heart of gold' is used to describe a generous person. It's a useful way of 'carrying' a meaning from one idea or word to another. For example, if you feel like you're getting nowhere with your business idea at the moment, you might use the metaphor 'running around in circles.'

Think of a metaphor for how you feel about yourself and your business idea now. You could draw a picture to make the image more powerful– try not to use words.

How would you like to see your business and yourself in the future? Think or draw another metaphor for this and focus on the 'future' image. How does it make you feel? Look back at the 'now' image. How does this make you feel? Images can be very powerful tools for helping us to quickly get into certain thoughts or feelings. Thinking of positive images or inspirational quotes that mean something to you, could make it easier to tap into confident and positive feelings within yourself.



INCREASING CONFIDENCE FOR MAKING PRESENTATIONS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

It's normal to feel nervous about giving a presentation or talking to new people about your business. Becoming more aware of the importance of nonverbal communication can be one way to increase your confidence. Think about the messages you are giving to your audience (even if this is just one other person you're talking to at a networking event). You might be surprised to know that most people will pick up more on your body language and tone of voice than the actual words that you say. Research shows that the total impact of your message (100%) will break down as:

WHAT YOU SAY (CONTENT) = 7% OF OVERALL IMPACT

THE WAY YOU SAY IT (TONE OF VOICE) = 39% OF OVERALL IMPACT

BODY LANGUAGE (NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION E.G. FACIAL EXPRESSIONS, EYE CONTACT, BODY MOVEMENT) = 54% OF OVERALL IMPACT

Consider the body language (or non-verbal communication) in the table below and try to identify the message it conveys

A = Aggressive B = Bored C = Confident D = Defensive R = Relaxed

Answers at the bottom of the page

	ACTIVITY	MESSAGE
1	Brisk walk, holding head up	
2	Standing with hands on hips	
3	Sitting with legs crossed, foot kicking slightly	
4	Sitting, legs apart	
5	Arms crossed on chest	

Answers: 1=C, 2=A, 3=B, 4=R, 5=D

VOICE CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Whether you want to go up to someone new at a business network event, ask a question in a meeting or give a presentation to a group of potential customers about your business idea; if you're feeling in control of your voice you'll feel more confident in yourself.

pitch: Higher tones of voice are linked with stress while lower tones are linked with a relaxed and confident attitude. Try and be aware of the pitch of your voice – if you feel it going up too high, take a deep breath and pause, have a sip of water – anything to give you chance to bring it lower again. Practice will help with this.

pace (speed of delivery): Speed and timing when you are answering a question in a meeting or giving a presentation is something that it is important to be aware of. Speaking too quickly can sometimes hint at a lack of confidence and can confuse listeners. Too slow a speed can be boring for the

listeners. Try and get a balance and keep the speed conversational and confident where possible.

pause: Using pauses when you're talking lets the listener know that you are thinking about what you say carefully and also helps to emphasise certain points that you think are important. Pauses can also let you get your thoughts straight and take a deep breath if you're feeling the pressure.

power: The strength of your voice needs to be matched to the meeting or presentation – you need to be able to either fill the space of the room for a presentation or the 'space' between you and the other people. As always, practice makes perfect. Practise speaking louder or more softly at home and in different situations to make sure you get used to how it feels to hear your voice coming out at different volume levels.

PITCH + PACE + PAUSE + POWER = PERFORMANCE

CHARTING YOUR CONFIDENCE



Using the chart below, start plotting out where you feel your confidence levels are at the moment and then come back to the miniguide in two months time and mark your progress. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is 'I'm the most confident I could be in starting up a business' and 0 is 'I'm really not confident at all in starting up a business', where are you now? Mark your answer as an X on the chart. Be honest

with yourself, try not to under or over-rate your answer. Bear in mind that for most people, 10 is not realistic to aim for, so what level of confidence would be good enough for you to feel you had the confidence to start a business? Mark your answer with a Y on the chart. What small steps could you do next week that will move you forward half a point on the confidence chart?

My small steps to increase confidence will be:

1

2

3

Remember to make these steps small things that you could make a start on this week or even today. For example, 'make a list of my good qualities' or 'call Business Link today to find out if they are offering any workshops at the moment on building confidence for business'. This way you'll start to see progress quickly.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT'S HOLDING YOU BACK

Sometimes thinking about making a major change in your life like starting a business, can worry you and make you believe that there are just too many barriers for you to get started.

This exercise helps you to think about what you feel are your barriers to starting up in business and how it would feel if you could remove them.

It might help to imagine that all your barriers are like weights on the bottom of a hot air balloon, weighing the balloon down. To help the balloon rise higher in the sky, you need to get rid of some of the weights.

You could write down your barriers on separate postits or rough paper and then look at each one in turn. Ask yourself:

- Which one could I get rid of first so that I can keep rising up towards my goal of starting up in business?
- Which one's next? And next?
- Keep working through each of your barriers until you are just left with one that you feel impossible to get rid of. This is your biggest barrier. In order to overcome it you may need to get help and support from others to help you reach your goal.

LOW
CONFIDENCE

NO MONEY

NOT
GOOD WITH
NUMBERS

GETTING BACK IN TOUCH WITH YOUR CONFIDENCE

Everyone has situations where they feel less confident but there will also be times you can remember when you have felt confident in the past. Sometimes tapping into past experiences where things have gone well for you, rather than focusing on times that maybe haven't gone so well, can help you to get back in touch with your confidence. Think back to when you were at school or college, with family or friends, working or undertaking charity work. Can you think of one time when you felt that something went well and you were feeling confident? Work through your example by answering these questions:

DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED IN DETAIL. HOW DID YOU FEEL BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE EXPERIENCE, THAT MADE YOU FEEL CONFIDENT?

WHO ELSE NOTICED THAT YOU FELT CONFIDENT?

WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY NOTICED ABOUT YOU WHEN YOU WERE FEELING CONFIDENT?

ARE THERE SOME THINGS YOU COULD TRANSFER FROM THIS PAST EXPERIENCE TO YOUR CURRENT LIFE?

WHAT SMALL STEP COULD YOU TAKE TO BRING BACK SOME OF THOSE CONFIDENT BEHAVIOURS AND FEELINGS?

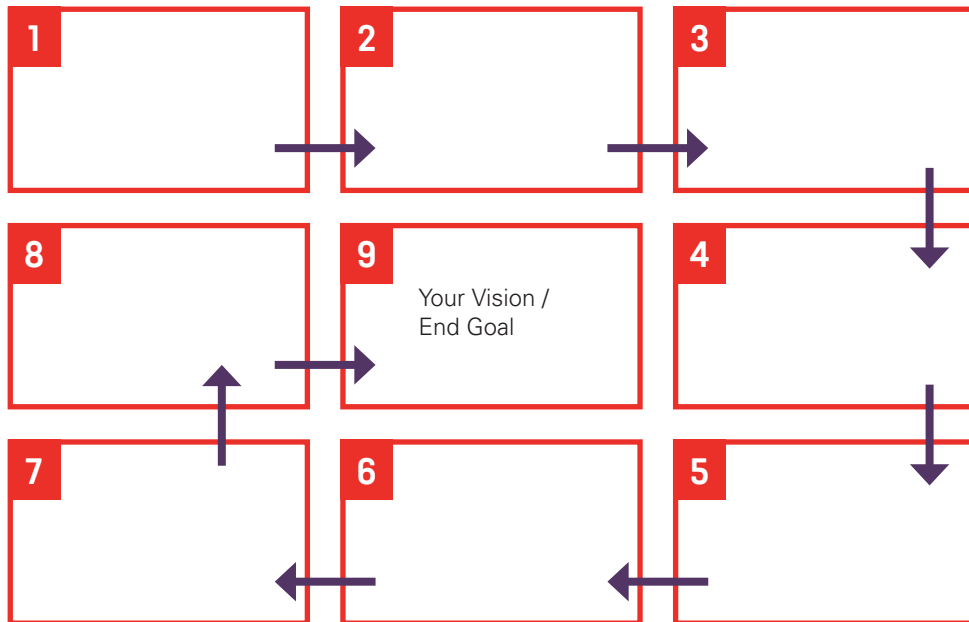
YOUR VISION BOARD FOR STARTING UP IN BUSINESS

It can sometimes feel like a huge goal to start a business, but by working backwards you can more easily break the journey down. You might want to use the vision board below to draw or add words, for each stage of your journey to starting up in business or to becoming more selfconfident.

Think about all the steps you will need to go through in order to reach this goal. Working backwards helps to make this an easier exercise. Start in the middle box (9) and write or draw what you will have achieved, how you will feel, what you will be doing when you have reached your end goal. Now go back one step (8) and write down what you will need to have achieved or completed

by this time in order to move onto the middle box. Keep working backwards until you end up in box 1- this should be where you are now and will have the tasks you are working on and your feelings and thoughts now as you start this journey.

Remember, 'a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step' (lao tzu, chinese philosopher). even what might seem to be a long journey for you of becoming more confident and starting a business, it all starts from where you are now.



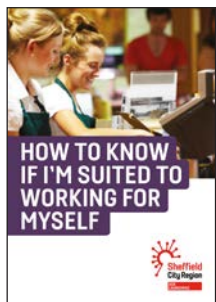
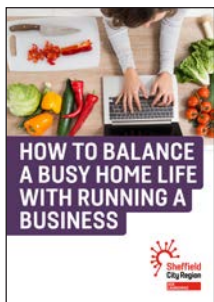
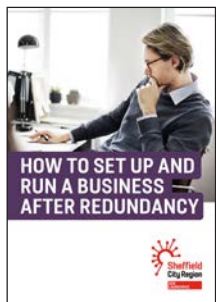
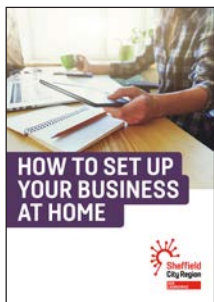
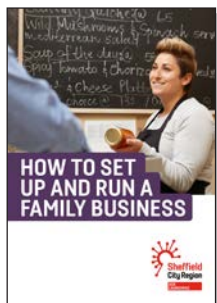
PREPARING YOUR ACTION PLAN

Preparing an action plan can help you to keep on track with how you are getting on with building your self-confidence. You could use the table below as a guide and break down every issue into smaller actions you are going to do. Remember to stick to SMART goals to make the actions - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound. Add in names of people or organisations that can help you. Contact Gateway Team on 03330 0000 39 to find out about the current support that is available.

ISSUE	ACTIONS	BY WHEN?	WHO CAN HELP ME?
Self confidence	1. find out what support is available from The Growth Hub	5th sept	The Growth Hub
	2. go to the library or go online and find books or video about relaxation techniques	20th sept	library team
	3. Make a list of people I know who are confident and break down what they do that I could learn from.	15th sept	could think about this with a friend

OTHER TITLES IN THIS SERIES...

- How to... understand if I'm suited to working for myself
- How to... balance a busy home life with running a business
- How to... manage the move from employment to self employment
- How to... set up and run a retail business
- How to... increase self-confidence and self-belief for starting up in business
- How to... set up and run a business after redundancy
- How to... set up and run a family business
- How to... set up and run a business if you are new to doing business in the UK
- How to... set up and run a business when you have been out of the job market



USEFUL RESOURCES

To find out more about legal, financial or general information about starting a business from home contact us:

SCR Growth Hub **03330 00 00 39** or growthhub@sheffieldcityregion.org.uk
Visit our website for useful information on starting up or running a business and to watch video case studies of how other businesses have overcome different barriers to make their business a success.

BUSINESSBALLS

offers hints and tips on assertiveness and self-confidence.
Visit: www.businessballs.co.uk

DISCLAIMER

This information is intended to give an overview and introduction to the subject. Any legal information is provided for guidance only and should not be regarded as an authoritative statement of the law. Sheffield City Region Growth Hub cannot be held responsible for any actions taken as a result of this guide.