



YOU! The Confident Pharmacist

Special Report





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Confidently L.E.A.D. Your Life and Career

Do you remember the last time you felt on top of the world? You felt invincible - ready to take on whatever life would throw your way. Perhaps it was the perfect spring day, sun shining, breeze softly blowing, and flowers bursting into bloom. Your mood matched the moment. You felt capable, positive, and alive!

Or maybe you just landed a new job, got a call from a “certain someone” or received praise for a job well done. Just thinking about those moments can cause a lift in your spirits, bring a smile to your face, and a bounce to your step.

That’s mojo! You know what it is. You’ve heard the phrases, “*He’s got his mojo back.*” “*My mojo’s working!*” “*Watch out, she’s got mojo!*”

And we know exactly what those feeling and words are all about. But just in case you don’t, according to the urban dictionary, **mojo is a slang term used to describe self-confidence or a belief in one’s self in a situation.** Mojo is also the belief in your ability to bounce back after life throws you a curve ball – and we all know that life will throw us an occasional curve ball.

This special report is designed to help you get more mojo in your life – or recapture it if yours has gone missing. We will take a look at confidence; what it is and what it isn’t. We will explore the difference between natural confidence and situational confidence, and how to gauge your confidence level and improve it. And finally, we will talk about how to make deposits in your confidence bank account.

Confidence – What Is It Really?

In 1966 a new television series aired and was an instant success. Marlo Thomas starred as Anne Marie in the weekly sitcom, *That Girl*. The show was historically significant because it was the first time in television that a young, single, career woman played the lead character on a television program. But, the most important thing about the show is that Anne Marie was portrayed as a confident, independent, single woman. Most females on television up to that point were dependent on a husband, boyfriend, or friends to carry the story and were secondary characters. Not *That Girl*. Sure, Anne Marie did have a great haircut, was physically appealing, and, of course, was a fictional



television character. But what she represented was something that spoke to the hearts of a new generation. *That Girl* was confident. She defined her life instead of letting life define her. She liked herself and was true to herself. And she had her share of foibles, failures, and flukes. But when it was all said and done, she smiled at the world, and with flair her persona shouted, “*I’m going to make it! I can count on myself. I am okay!*” She had mojo! She had confidence!

In my “**YOU! The Confident Pharmacist** and **Confident YOU!** Online Workshops, we spend 90 minutes doing a deep dive into different aspects of Confidence, starting with “What is Confidence?”

Confidence is about letting go of the need to be what others want you to be and becoming who you are destined to be.

Confidence is about being comfortable in our own skin. We are confident when who we are on the outside is congruent with who we are on the inside.

It’s about experiencing self-worth – knowing that we are valued and valuable.

Confidence is the belief that whatever comes our way, we can handle.

It is like an aura that surrounds us, making us aware of what we can do and giving us faith in our ability to try.

Our inner most desire is to be accepted for who we are – to be okay. But for many of us, somewhere along the way we went from being a celebrated infant and toddler to being told what to do and who to be. Here’s a story that says it all:

Adam was a typical 6 year old boy -- full of life, laughter, and mischief. As adults are prone to do, someone asked him one day, “*Adam, what do you want to be when you grow up.*” He looked up excitedly and replied, “*Adam!*”

Now fast forward several years. Someone asks him again, “*Adam, what do you want to be when you grow up.*” His reply, “*I guess I’ll be Adam, that’s what people call me, anyway*”

As you take time to think about this story, you can see the profound implications. As children, bit by bit, we lose connection with who we are, thinking that we must become the person that others want us to be.

Then we grow into the tumultuous teenage years, trying to differentiate ourselves from our parents by becoming carbon copies of our peers. And self-esteem is determined by how much we “fit in.”

We eventually outgrow that phase (hopefully) and as young adults begin to realise and appreciate our uniqueness. Yet, we continue to struggle with meeting a certain standard and measuring up to a



specific image. **If we are not aware, life becomes a contest of comparing and competing.** We look around a room to see if we are the smartest, the healthiest, the most popular, the wealthiest, or the best dressed. The old adage, “*The one with the most toys, wins!*” can easily make life more about *having* and less about *being*. Self-worth is the recognition that who we are defines us – not what we have.

Why Are We More Confident In Some Situations Than Others?

Do you ever find yourself feeling really confident in some situations, and nervous and uncertain in others? This happens for one of two reasons:

The first reason is that our confidence is directly related to our ability to **predict the outcome of a situation**. In circumstances where we know what to expect, and we have had prior or similar experiences, we are naturally more confident. It’s like driving through a well-known part of town versus being in an unfamiliar city, full of road construction. On the well-traveled route, you can drive with confidence and not worry about losing your way. However, in new territory, you might find yourself anxious, hesitant, and unsure – questioning every turn.

In situations that are unknown, like the first day on a new job, participating in an OSCE exam or receiving performance feedback, we have to figure out how to belong to the group, learn everyone’s name, learn what is expected of us and how to perform the tasks of our job. It takes time to “get our bearings”. Locum pharmacists experience this every day.

Familiarity breeds confidence. In new situations, or situations where you cannot predict the outcome, here are a few tips to help you feel more confident:

1. Project as much confidence as possible. Think of the old adage, “Fake it till you make it.”
2. Pay attention to others and adjust your behaviour accordingly. For example, if the group is more subdued and formal, avoid being overly gregarious and comedic.
3. Connect with one other person as quickly as possible to begin establishing a relationship.
4. Give yourself positive messages, even a simple mantra that you use when you are feeling anxious or uncertain.
5. To build familiarity, give yourself the opportunity to practice role-plays of the new situation with experienced practitioners, a coach and peers.



The second reason we feel our confidence fluctuate is related to **specific situations** we find ourselves in. This is referred to as situational confidence.

Listed below are the most common types of situations where confidence – or lack of it – shows up. As you read the list, assess your confidence in each area. Prepare for the next time you find yourself in these situations and make attempts to raise your level of confidence.

1. **Social confidence** – People with social confidence have the ability to interact naturally and easily with others. They have empathy for others. They are friendly and easy to talk with. They are aware of moods and feelings. People with strong social confidence are accepting of themselves and are willing to reach out to others regardless of traditional social barriers. They are comfortable with new people and new situations.

People with low social confidence find themselves awkward around other people – especially strangers. In order to develop your social confidence you might want to learn how to start a consultation, practice with a supportive colleague, join a mastermind group or engage the services of a coach to identify your fears, develop engagement skills, practice role-plays and build your confidence and competence in handling social situations.

(The L.E.A.D. Online Engagement Module and L.E.A.D. 4-day Leadership Development Coaching Programme both specifically address social confidence).

2. **Physical confidence** – People with physical confidence project a commanding presence (regardless of their size). They carry themselves with more robust energy. They walk tall which often causes them to appear taller than they are. They hold their heads up and their shoulders back. They smile and make eye contact with others. They even engage in friendly conversation.

People notice when physically confident people enter a room. Physically confident people can garner attention without using a lot of verbal language. People with physical confidence are often seen as more gifted or skilled than others. They are usually quicker to get promotions or special attention.

Pay attention to your posture. Practice walking tall. You will be surprised how people respond. Remember, how you show up has a tremendous impact on how people respond to you. Raising your awareness of your impact on others is an area where working with a coach can deliver life and career changing results. With your coach, you can benchmark how people respond to you now, identify the impact you WANT to have and design actions



and milestones to help you achieve more of what you want and less of what you don't want!

3. **Peer independence** – People with peer confidence have the ability to resist peer pressure. They are often described as marching to a different drum. They are not unduly influenced by the group and remain true to their values and beliefs in spite of the group's behavior. These people often become leaders, and can struggle as followers. They will challenge the status quo. Peer independence gives you the confidence to try new things, trust your own judgment, and live with less anxiety about fitting in with a certain group.

This is not easy! As pharmacists and health care professionals, we are expected to be professionally independent, and yet we also have to balance independence with the competing pressures of regulatory compliance and safe-guarding the health, welfare, care and safety of each person with whom we interact.

Pay attention to different situations to determine if you “go along with the crowd” more often than you like. Do you keep your opinions to yourself? Are you afraid to speak up because everyone will think you are different? And most importantly, do you fear being different?

If you do, don't worry. We all have experienced the need to fit in and belong at such a level that we give in, even when the situation does not feel congruent with our values and beliefs. *(This is why in both the L.E.A.D. Online Programme and the 4-day L.E.A.D. Leadership Development Coaching Programme, we spend a whole module focused on exploring ALIGNMENT of self and the organisation / profession to which you belong.)*

By paying attention to these types of situations, you will be able to gauge your confidence level of peer independence. You can start small by learning to express yourself in small ways – choose the restaurant, decide not to participate in something you don't enjoy, share your opinion without apologising for it, take the time to prioritise you in your life, even if it is only for one hour per week.... unapologetically place yourself first.

If peer independence is a challenge for you, you may want to take some courses or work with a coach on language skills that help you assert yourself when you do not agree with others.

4. **Stage presence** -- If you have stage presence, you do not mind having the “spotlight” turned on you or stepping up to the role of leader. Stage presence is not about acting in a role. It is about being able to easily express opinions and thoughts in a natural, confident manner. It is



the ability to speak up during meetings, stand before a group to present, advocate for your patient with other members of their healthcare team and step into a leadership role when appropriate. It is not about dominating, but about **articulating**.

It is not unusual to fear speaking up in a staff meeting, making a speech, giving a report, or even delivering a toast at a wedding. Stage fright is common to many people – none of us want to appear or feel foolish in front of others.

A confident stage presence is necessary for many career advancements. It is vital to facilitate optimal outcomes for your patients. It is equally important for people who are passionate about specific causes. The ability to raise money, garner attention, and persuade others can make the difference in many social causes.

If you find that you are lacking in stage presence, there are several things you can do. First and foremost, take baby steps. The more preparation you do and the more you practice, the less likely you will feel intimidated when called on. Here are some options to consider:

- Make a short presentation to a small group of people.
- Force yourself to participate in group meetings.
- Make an effort to speak to people in public that you do not know.
- Take a Train The Trainer course (*4Front, in collaborate with TeamLife Training offer a QOI accredited Train The Trainer course specifically tailored to pharmacy professionals*)
- Participate in an online workshop to develop your communication skills (*Pharmacy specific options include L.E.A.D. Online Personal Leadership and Engagement Modules and the L.E.A.D. 4-day QOI Accredited Leadership Development Coaching Programme*)
- Work with a personal development coach.
- Join Toastmasters®.

Learning to express yourself with confidence is important. When you do, you can articulate your beliefs and knowledge, influence others, and literally change the course of your life and indeed the lives of others.



5. **Status confidence** – If you have status confidence, you are unaffected by others’ social status. For people who have lower confidence in this area, they experience their confidence waxing and waning based on the status of the people they are around.

Think of how tongue-tied you might feel if a celebrity or someone of importance was suddenly seated next to you. You might second guess everything about yourself from the clothes you are wearing to the words you speak.

On the other hand, if you were suddenly in a room where your status was considered “superior” to those around you, you in turn might have the confidence to dominate. To make this concept even more real, think of a work situation and the organisational chart. Entry level employees typically experience less confidence in the presence of company leaders and therefore do not assert themselves. The same can be true in some families where certain members are considered “favourites” or superior to others.

If you lack status confidence, you have probably been taught to “stay in your place,” or “don’t try to act above your station.” The important thing to understand here is that we are all worthy and deserving. Learning assertiveness techniques and continuing your work on confidence development would serve you well.

Becoming **aware** of your confidence levels in different situations is a very positive step to developing more confidence. (*The L.E.A.D. Online Topic Removing Barriers to Success - Beating Self-Sabotage and Reaching Your Potential - in the ALIGNMENT module is a great place to start this exploration*).

Changing your behaviour will take practice, but remember the more you practice something, the better you will be. And when that happens, your confidence will surely grow.

Your Confidence Bank Account

By now you probably have a better sense of what causes your confidence to go up and down like a roller coaster. You can be on the top one minute, and feel your confidence sink the next.

To stay more even-keeled, think of confidence like a bank account. You want to make regular deposits into your confidence bank so you can stay positive when people and situations make withdrawals on your confidence.

The key to having a more sustained level of confidence is to make more deposits. The ways you can



make deposits into your confidence bank account are numerous. Here are a few you might try:

- Project a positive presence. This goes beyond good grooming (but does include good grooming). A positive presence is projected through good posture, a smiling face, and a quick and light step. If you don't believe this, then try this experiment:
 - Walk into a pharmacy with slumped shoulders, eyes diverted, feet slow. Pay attention to how people react to you – if they even react at all. You may feel that you are invisible.
 - Now walk into a pharmacy with a positive presence – good posture, light step, smiling face. Hold the door for someone. Look them in the eye and Say “hello”. Now, how do people respond to you?

One of the take-aways from this experiment is this: When you project a positive presence, most people respond to you in a positive way. That in turn gives your confidence a boost. When you have a bland or negative presence, most people ignore you – and that in turn diminishes your confidence. How you show up has a real and tangible impact on how people (your customers, colleagues, employees, employer, friends, family members etc.) respond to you. The good news is ... how you show up is 100% within your control. *Focusing on what IS within our control and making changes there, is what we do in each of the L.E.A.D. Modules (Online and Face to Face).*

- Make a list of things you like about yourself. It's okay to be a little egotistical here. Include in this list the positive things your friends and family say about you. Not only is it important to like yourself, it helps to be aware of your positive attributes. Keep the list and refer to it prior to going into situations that seem intimidating. You will be reminded that you have value! *We explore these themes in ALIGNMENT and PERSONAL LEADERSHIP modules of the L.E.A.D. online programme.*
- Pay attention to your self-talk. Is it negative? Critical? Blaming? Hurtful? If so, switch the language to positive comments. You have wonderful qualities and you also have some “needs improvements”. Yes, you may be disorganised at times AND you also do wonderful things for other people. You are a blend of your positive traits, sprinkled in with a few areas that may “need improvement”. Seek self-acceptance, not perfection. *(This is explored in more detail in the online workshop YOU! The Confident Pharmacist).*
- Recognise your mistakes for what they are. Most mistakes can be defined as mistakes of ambition. This means that you are trying something new, solving a problem, working too



hard, or trying to do more than you are actually capable of accomplishing given your resources. You will make mistakes. And when you do, take responsibility. Raise your hand and say, “I made a mistake.” Then, seek a solution, learn your lesson, and move on. (*We explore this in more detail in the PERSONAL LEADERSHIP Module of L.E.A.D. Online Programme*).

- Be supportive of others. People who are overly self-critical are usually critical of others. When you put yourself in the position of helping, not judging, you will find that you judge yourself less. *Creating a safe, supportive, non-judgmental learning environment is a key cornerstone of ‘The Coach Approach’.* Peer support facilitates all participants to give and receive support throughout the programmes.

Confidence can be developed. Sure – it seems that some people were born with a leg up in life. We all know people who started life in supportive and nurturing families that provided opportunities for them to get ahead. But many, many successful people have had to pull themselves up by their boot straps and go it alone. They took responsibility for their lives and you can too.

Conclusion

This special report was designed to help you understand more about confidence, and more importantly, help you become aware of the factors and situations that influence your confidence.

Just remember, the route to confidence is not a sprint. Instead, by **consistently taking small steps** to reclaim the natural confidence you were born with, and strengthen your situational confidence, you will feel your MOJO rise!

You don’t have to wait for a spring day, land a new job, get a call from a “certain someone” or receive praise for a job well done. Simply visualise yourself as *That Girl* or *That Guy*. See yourself managing whatever curve balls life might throw your way. See yourself competent, capable, and confident. Feel the energy, hope, and possibilities. And when you do that, don’t be surprised if you suddenly have a lift in your spirits, a smile on your face and a bounce to your step.

And when that happens, people will see you walking down the street and say:

“I like his MOJO!”

or

“Look at her, she’s got MOJO!”



Meet Rachel Dungan – The Pharmacist Coach



A Trinity Scholar and pioneer in the field of pharmacy coaching, Rachel is the first pharmacist in Ireland to become a credentialed member of the International Coach Federation. Rachel has been a registered pharmacist for 20 years. In addition, she has been a professional coach since 2011.

Rachel is passionate about advancing the profession of pharmacy and assisting pharmacists to achieve their potential through the use professional coaching and training. Part of Rachel's driving force is her passion to assist pharmacies to be THE hub of community health and wellness.

Being a pharmacist can be professionally isolating. Rachel founded 4Front Pharmacy Solutions to offer programmes uniquely designed to facilitate EVERYONE in the pharmacy to be 100% aligned with the delivery of pharmacy excellence. The professionalism, competence and engagement of the whole T.E.A.M. is optimised. Together Everyone Achieves More.

4Front offers on-site, one-to-one, classroom, accredited, workshop, online and e-learning programmes, centred around “The Six Core Pillars of Pharmacy Excellence”, which provide an integrated blueprint to experience personal, professional and business success. Without a blueprint, pharmacists struggle, play small and remain overwhelmed.

Rachel continues to be lead author and facilitator on cutting edge, innovative programmes, specifically designed to meet the needs of Irish Pharmacy. These include “Supporting Mental Health for Pharmacy Practice”, “Leadership Development Coaching Programme for Pharmacists”, “Train The Trainer for Pharmacists”, “Management of Asthma in Pharmacy”, and “Vaccination Training Programme for Pharmacists”.

Over the past 20 years, Rachel has coached and trained thousands of pharmacists and coaches around the world and is here to share her wisdom with us today. For pharmacists and pharmacy teams that want to receive gold standard support, Rachel is the pharmacist coach of choice.



If you would like to learn how you can develop the skills to confidently L.E.A.D. your life and career, please visit Rachel at <https://racheldungan.coachesconsole.com>