

Career management involves all aspects of your career. Lifelong learning and personal development are essential to career and entrepreneurial advancement. Part of a good personal development plan includes improvement in the area of self confidence.

Building self confidence is something that does not happen overnight. Just like anything else, if you didn't start out with self confidence, you'll have to take some time to develop your skills.

Conversation is a great place to start. Having good communications skills is a prerequisite in almost every job for which you'll ever apply. Having exceptional communications skills is an absolute requirement if you aspire to any type of leadership role.

So how do you develop your conversational skills? You do that by practicing. Take a look at some of your peers and friends.

- Select someone who has great conversational abilities and note what they talk about.
- How do they engage others?
- What questions do they ask?
- Look at their body language - do they appear to be open?
- How is their eye contact?
- Do they have great listening skills?

Emulate their actions to start. Once you get the hang of it, develop your own personal style.

If you feel uncomfortable with small talk, consider current events or other topics of interest. You'll have to do a bit of research and come up with some conversation starters - keep them in your hip pocket so you'll always be prepared.

By practicing and by having conversation starters, you'll be more confident in your ability to speak to others. You won't have to rack your brain for something to say.

Don't forget to listen. If you're able to listen without worrying about what to say, you'll be able to engage in a back and forth dialogue with greater success.

Practicing with your buddies is a great way to work out the kinks and build your confidence. Remember, you're building a skill set - like learning to type or how to paint - you won't be an expert overnight.

If you work at it you'll be a great conversationalist. You'll have the self confidence to engage anyone in an interesting conversation.