

5 Ways to Beat Impostor Syndrome

By Lucinda Pullinger

With an estimated global 70% of people experiencing impostor syndrome at some point in life according to The Journal of Behavioural Science, the persistent feeling that you're not as good in your career as other people think you are, has nothing to do with skill level or competence, but the impossibly high standards you've set for yourself. With this in mind, Lucinda Pullinger provides five ways on how businesses can beat impostor syndrome at work.

As more high-profile people speak up about their own feelings of inadequacy in the face of soaring success, more are beginning to realise the impact of this phenomenon. What's more, it can be especially damaging in the workplace and can affect men and women differently. Despite evidence of success, women experiencing this paralysing self-doubt are more likely to believe they are intellectual frauds. This level of stress – waiting to be found out by peers – can lead to anxiety, burnout and increased unhappiness among everyone from entrepreneurs to employees moving up the ladder.

How to Turn Impostor Syndrome Around:

Even though so many people have experienced impostor syndrome, the good news is that it's not a permanent condition but rather a reaction to a set of circumstances, unrealistic self-expectation and stress. Some of the most popular suggestions on ways to turn it around include the following:

Accept Praise And Know Your Worth

Don't shy away from praise and compliments. Accept your achievements and if need be, write them down. When you try to talk yourself out of feeling confident in your role, all the proof is on paper. Knowing your worth means allowing your work to speak for itself and letting others see it too.

Stop Thinking Like an Impostor

Learn to recognise self-defeating thought patterns and replace them with more positive affirmations. The only way to stop feeling like an imposter is to stop thinking of yourself as one.

Don't Seek Perfection

Stop believing that if you don't excel at every facet of your job that you're a failure at all of it. Facing challenges and losses is a key part of growth, so recognise that you don't have to be good at everything.

Know You Are Not Alone

Impostor syndrome tends to be the domain of overachievers, while underachievers tend to internalise less when faced with failure. If you're constantly worried about not being good enough, chances are you're in good company – most successful people constantly over analyse themselves!

"The feeling of thinking someone is going to come in and call you out on your experience, your achievements and put you in a league much lower than you are currently working at is very real. Impostor Syndrome can happen at any time in your career," says Jodie Harris, Head of Content & Digital PR at MediaVision

"From being an intern to being in the boardroom, questioning your place at the table can be disruptive to your progress and your confidence. One piece of advice I always tell my teams and myself is that your career did not come by chance, and where you are now and where you aim to be is justified. Know your worth and have conviction with your career goals. Success isn't a lottery ticket, it's earned."