

Confidence Trick by David Finney



Roles become redundant, not people. I have experienced seven mergers and 2 redundancies but I'm still here and now I run my own business – a role I have no intention of making redundant (although I may one day choose to retire with a house in the country near the coast). I have been an 'Assistant', a 'Supervisor', a 'Manager', a 'Director', a 'Head of', a 'Trainer', a 'Coach' and a 'Managing Director'. These are simply roles I have occupied, hats I've worn - chairs I've sat in.

Confidence is like an onyx table and naturally gets chipped from time to time especially if there is a lot of activity going on in the area. The trouble with confidence is that it sometimes gets handled with extreme, if obsessive care. There is a tendency to adopt the following (sometimes unconscious) mindset: *if you like me and if you like what I do my confidence will be high*; hence a confidence dependency is adopted.

Of course we need feedback from those around us so that we can improve, but what kind of trap are we setting ourselves if our confidence is wholly reliant on the words and actions of others? It's a confidence trick that we are playing on ourselves. To define confidence we could look in the OED: "self-assurance arising from an appreciation of one's abilities". When facing a new challenge, we could view confidence like this: "I will go ahead and I will do it and whatever the outcome I will still feel good about myself and comfortable with who I am".

The essence of this mindset is to keep confidence at a stable level – to manage it – and not to connect it wholly with success or positive feedback. It stands alone for it is only concerned with the root of our being and is not tied to the parts we play or the roles we perform. It means we work from a new base where constructive criticism is welcomed as an opportunity to improve and positive feedback is received in a relaxed state, never more than icing on an already strong cake-base.



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