

# The Smart Social Skills Course

→ **Week 6: How to Build Your Social  
Confidence**

Copyright Henrik Edberg, 2013. You do not have the right to sell, share or claim the ownership of the content of this course.

This course is for informational purposes only and it contains my opinions based on my experience. You should always find the advice of a professional before taking action on something I have published.

# How to Build Your Social Confidence

We are now half-way through the course, well done!

This week we will look at one of the most common questions I get about social skills.

That question is:

“How do I become more confident in social situations like on dates, in job interviews or in meetings?”

Well, building social confidence is in large part the same as building confidence in other areas. It mostly comes as a by-product of taking action and of smart thought habits that help you instead of hurting you.

**Remind yourself: you are prepared.**

Before an exam, public speaking or a competition it certainly helps to prepare. Both for a better performance and for feeling more confident.

The same goes for social situations. I for example mentioned this during week 3 where one of the three steps to handle approach anxiety and starting conversations was to have an opening question in your mental back-pocket to feel more confident.

With that technique and with the other techniques and habits you learn to add to your social toolbox in this course you'll be and feel better and better prepared.

You already know that you can focus on your breathing + assuming rapport to step into the right headspace for a good conversation.

You know that if a conversation stalls then you have the FORD technique that you can use.

You know it will be easier to listen and to fully understand in this conversation if you know that you are going to tell someone else about what you have learned.

And so on.

**Take small steps or bigger steps outside of your comfort zone with the help of what you have learned.**

Knowing more is not enough. One must apply what one learns.

And that is often the trickier part. But if you like then you can take small steps outside of your comfort zone instead of larger ones right off the bat. This is often less uncomfortable.

And as mentioned at the start of this course, you can spend as much time as you like with each part of the course. You can spend 2 weeks or a month on some parts or all of the parts if you like.

For example, if it feels like too much to use assuming rapport or FORD in many conversations you have during one day then just use one of those techniques in one conversation that day. Then the next day you can take another small step forward and assume rapport in two conversations for instance.

## **Be kind and grateful to yourself for the action you have taken.**

A sure-fire way to not build confidence is to focus on what went wrong or how things did not go perfectly. Even if things did indeed go pretty well.

If you look back at the things you do in such a way then confidence will elude you no matter what results you get.

A smarter way to go about things is to look at what did not go so well and to see what you can learn from that for your next date, meeting or conversation.

But after you have done so and written down what you have learned so you'll remember it then focus on what is positive. Don't go over the negative parts over and over and beat yourself up.

That will only deflate your motivation and self-confidence.

Instead, after you have written down what you have learned from for instance a mistake follow up with adding more positive things. Small and bigger successes during the meeting or conversation.

A part you did well. Something that made him or her laugh. A part during the interaction where you felt relaxed and positive.

Yes, the actual results do of course determine how you feel. If a date turns into passionate kissing or a job interview ends with a big smile on the person who interviewed you then that will help you feel more confident the next time.

But how you interpret your reality during those other times – and in some cases even after big wins as overthinking can puncture even the best date – determines how your confidence goes up or down. So be smart about these things and build a spiral of confidence that goes upward and not downward.

## **Talk slower**

The last technique and habit of the week might sound slightly odd. But it has helped me to feel more confident and centred very quickly in social situations.

What you do is simply to talk slower.

Think about how movie stars, politicians or celebrities that seem confident to you seldom talk quickly or at a rapid pace.

No, they talk quite slowly. Thoughtfully at times. They pause between sentences or in sentences sometimes and that adds weight to what they are saying and you feel more compelled to listen to them.

Well, you can do the same. This week, try talking just a little slower than you usually do. Make a few pauses during a conversation.

Don't overdo it though. Don't pause between every sentence or talk like you are half-asleep.

Just slow it down a bit and feel how your body and mind becomes a little more relaxed and centred and how the person you are talking to pays more attention to what you are saying and what you are about to say next.

## The Action-Steps for This Week

Here's a quick summary of the action-steps to take this week:

1. Day 1-7: Treat yourself kindly and use the self-gratitude journal in your worksheet each evening to help you focus on what went well socially each day.
2. Day 1-7: During one conversation a day talk a little slower. Make a few pauses. Don't overdo it though, just make small adjustments and see how it affects your mental state and confidence levels.
3. This week: If you don't feel so confident before a conversation or a meeting then remind yourself of the practical tools you have in your social toolbox. You are prepared. And the more you practice, the better prepared you will be.