

## The Leadership Toolbox

Welcome to the Leadership Toolbox – tips and techniques focused on enhancing success. This will be an on-going bulletin designed to provide you with practical and helpful tools, techniques and tips that you can immediately implement to increase your effectiveness.

### Competency: Believe

**Definition:** A psychological state in which an individual holds a proposition or premise to be true; to accept as true, genuine or real; to be true or honest; to credit with veracity; to have a firm conviction as to the goodness, efficacy or ability of something; to hold an opinion.



**Background:** The skill of believing in something is similar to using a muscle in your body. Simply, if you don't use *it* – you lose *it*. Conversely, the more you use *it*, *it* can become strong and agile.

To believe in oneself is definitely a competency worth developing for personal and professional reasons. Demonstrating that you believe in yourself or what you are trying to accomplish helps you build confidence in your own abilities as well as project a positive impression that facilitates the trust others have in your abilities.

Believing in something can also be a self-fulfilling prophecy as if you believe in something, you will do all you can to prove it to be true or the desired outcome to be achieved. Those who don't believe in their abilities will likely fail because they lack the focus, motivation and drive to attain the successful outcome.

**Implementation & Demonstration:** Remember, just to know about a competency is not enough. One needs to know it and demonstrate it to others. So let's look at some methods to effectively demonstrate this skill.

#### Tip: Believe in Yourself

Believing in oneself requires you to go beyond confidence and have conviction in your abilities to reach desired outcomes. It is a state-of-mind in which you believe that you have the right training, experience and skills to handle the situation at hand. If you believe in yourself, then your mind and body will likely perform at the confidence level that your mind projects on it (Self-Fulfilling Prophecy). Talk yourself out of self-defeating beliefs. When you begin to tell yourself that you can't accomplish a certain task or goal, you are letting yourself fail before you even try. Believe in yourself and speak up for your opinions. When you build and demonstrate more confidence in yourself, others will perceive that strength and have more confidence in you.

#### Tip: Believe In Others

Believing in oneself is not the only secret to success. A second fundamental element is to believe in others, and to share your positive beliefs with them, especially when in a leadership role such as a parent, mentor or supervisor. As most people perform to the level of expectations placed on them, leaders who believe the best in their direct reports and who share these beliefs often get higher performance and successful outcomes. The *Pygmalion Effect* describes how higher expectations put on individuals yields to elevated outcomes. So clearly communicating *realistic* moderate to high expectations for others and believing that others can attain those expectations can go a long way towards actually attaining great results.

**Tip: Believe We Can Learn From Our Mistakes**

Yes, no one is perfect...we all make mistakes. Regardless of the degree of the error, it is important to believe that we are not our mistakes and if a mistake is made, it does not mean that we are worthless, stupid or inept. It means that a mistake was made and that a different course of action would likely have led to a more successful outcome. Good people make mistakes. Successful people believe they can learn from mistakes and ultimately they do, enhancing their skills and overall success. When a mistake is made, be honest and upfront with yourself and others about the mistake. Focus your energy and attention on finding successful outcomes and learning from the situation rather than placing blame. Believe an effective solution can be generated in a timely manner. If needed, put your head together with others to develop solutions.

**Tip: Written and Verbal Affirmations**

A common and effective method individuals use to implement this competency is to write down affirmations or positive beliefs that describe the desired outcome in a successful way. Perhaps one of the most famous affirmations of recent comes from Stuart Smalley on Saturday Night Live. His affirmation: *You're Good Enough, You're Smart Enough, and Doggone It, People Like You.* All you have to do to make this tip work for you is to write down your desired outcome. An affirmation should be written in a short, positive and present tense. Then, tape the affirmation somewhere you will look at it daily. Also, affirmations should focus on you and not others. Finally, an effective affirmation should stretch you a little and take you outside your comfort zone. Once you have the affirmation written down and taped in a visible place, repeat it to yourself five times/day, especially once in the morning and once before you go to bed, and you may be amazed at the results. This competency can be especially important when making tough decisions, dealing with change, driving for results, and working through conflict resolution.

**Tip: The Museum of Outdated Beliefs**

We tend to act as if all of our beliefs are true, and yet we know that people have different beliefs and many are contradictory. Perhaps all beliefs we have can't be true after all. An example of two beliefs perhaps not so good in the long run to hold on to...billboards in the 1930's advertised how doctor's believed in 'smoking Camels', and not so long ago, many believed that woman should not vote. The final tip...occasionally examine your beliefs to ensure they are still effective for you and for others you work, live and share life with. If not, pack them up and store them in the Museum of Outdated Beliefs and construct a more effective belief to live by.

---

**Benefits of Demonstrating this Competency Effectively:**

1. Believing in oneself promotes enhanced optimism, drive for results, self-confidence, and productive thinking skills.
2. Believing in others promotes enhanced relationships, improved communication, advanced performance and successful outcomes.
3. Demonstrating a healthy balance of believing in yourself as well as in others will increase your ability to influence others.
4. Conflict management skills will expand as you will not be a prisoner of your own fixed and perhaps outdated beliefs. There will be less *right* and *wrong* and more *perhaps* and *maybes* in your vocabulary. You will show maturity and adaptability in recognizing the beliefs of others as potentially positive and as effective as your own.
5. People who believe in themselves, in others and in positive outcomes tend to be more successful when taking on new challenges.

### Consequences of Not Demonstrating This Competency Effectively:

If you don't believe in yourself, in others, or in positive outcomes, the consequences can be detrimental both personally and professionally.

- Diminished Trust In Self / Others
- Increased Anxiety / Physical / Emotional Complaints
- Increased Isolation
- Diminished Ability To Influence / Lead Others
- Ineffective Relationships
- Poor Goal Achievement

---

### Quotes on Believing:

If you believe you can, or you believe you can't, you're right! *Henry Ford*

It's not who you are that holds you back, it's who you think you're not. *Author Unknown*

Nobody can make you feel inferior without your consent. *Eleanor Roosevelt*

Believe it can be done. When you believe something can be done, really believe, your mind will find the ways to do it. Believing a solution paves the way to solution. *David Joseph Schwartz*

---

### Attaining Past Bulletins:

If you are interested in reviewing past Toolbox Bulletins, visit:

<http://www.lynn-and-associates.com/Bulletins.html>

If you are interested in talking with Jim or Lisa on how to implement any of the tips, tools or skills within this or other bulletins, please feel free to contact us anytime!

**Jim Lynn:** jim@lynnconst@aol.com or 612-751-6000

**Lisa Lynn:** lisa@lynn-and-associates.com or 612-619-6315

### Thank You.

We hope the information presented in this bulletin has been practical and helpful. Please let us know what you think and how it could be improved or if there is a topic you would like us to talk about in an upcoming newsletter.

Believe it can be and make it a great day!

The Lynn & Associates Team