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Native American Casino Magazine • May 2007 • Vol 7 • No 5 • www.nacasino.com

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CONFIDENCE

DOESN'T COME IN A TITLE

by **Monica** Wofford

Brandon had been up all night. He had tossed and turned over today's decision about his promotion. Would he get the job? Would he again be passed over? If he got the job, was he good enough to DO a good job? Brandon has worked in the sales division for two years and this promotion is exactly what he's wanted and worked for over the last two years. Finally, he may be given the chance, and yet he is not sure he is ready to head up the entire department.

Getting promoted just means you get a bigger title. It does not mean those who bestow the new responsibilities also grant you a bigger set of, well, confidence. The reality is that confidence might lead to a promotion, but so do a lot of other things. Have you ever seen someone receive a title to the next level whose sole qualification was that they had been there the longest or that they were the only ones left who could possibly do the job? Or perhaps politics played a role. Confidence doesn't come with the job, but in order to do it well and lead others on a team you have just been promoted over, you will have to be confident in what you are doing.

Confidence is a key factor in leading those on a

team toward a purpose and with purpose. Those who are promoted because of something other than skills end up leading by accident rather than on purpose. In order to increase your confidence to facilitate a more intentional leadership style, try these exercises:

Sit in the Front Row

Sitting up front in a meeting, a class or, theoretically, in life builds confidence. Those who sit in the back to avoid being noticed, lack confidence. What would they do and how would they handle it if they did get noticed? People notice those who are successful and those who are successful leaders. If you sit in the front row, it will not only get noticed, but help you feel comfortable and more confident in the role.

Make More Eye Contact

"When you lock eyes with another, it not only builds confidence, but it will win you confidence," says David Schwartz, author of the *Magic of Thinking Big*. Often when you avoid eye contact, you send a message that you feel inferior to the person or are intimidated by the person. Conquer that fear and find their eyes.

Walk As If You Have Somewhere To Be

Psychologists connect sluggish and slow walking with a downward and depressed mood or unpleasant attitude toward oneself, but they also tell us you can change your mood by changing your physical body posture. Throw your shoulders back, lift your head high and move ahead a little faster. You will feel more confident and look more confident in your approach.

Speak Your Mind

Those who are unsure of themselves or their own opinions tend to freeze when faced with conversation in which they must state an opinion. If you are telling yourself that what you say probably won't matter anyway, you'll never get the chance to test that theory. Make an effort to speak up voluntarily at every meeting. Chances are you won't look foolish, but rather build your confidence. For each person who might disagree with your opinion, there will be others who agree and support you.

Say Cheese

Smile in a big way, as it is one of the best medicines for a confidence deficiency. It is really hard to feel bad or down when you have a big smile plastered across your face. Yet those who insist that this doesn't

work refuse to try just smiling to see the change in their mood. A real smile melts away opposition from others, helps build rapport and will boost your level of confidence in the situation, not to mention your mood.

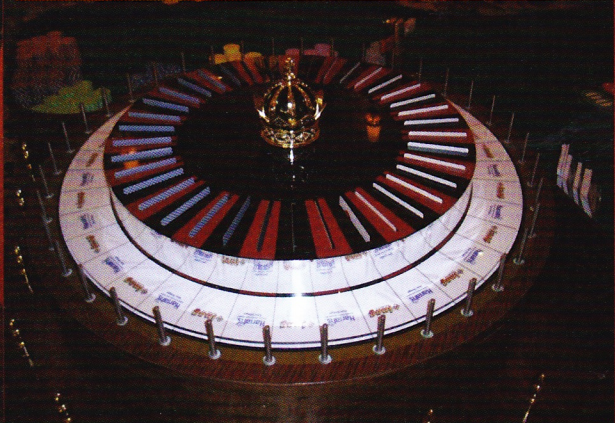
There is no need to walk fast, with a huge grin, a loud voice, with big eyes on the front row every minute of every day. That would be silly. Yet in moderation, each of the above exercises will help you boost your confidence level in the face of responsibilities you are not sure you can handle just yet. As a new leader, the amount of confidence others have in you can be just as important as your belief in yourself. Actively learn your role, while giving yourself and others a belief that you will get it all under control and handled, and they will follow you anywhere. **NAC**

Monica Wofford brings more than 17 years of experience as a business consultant, trainer and speaker to Monica Wofford International. A sought-after trainer, Wofford leverages scientific research and data to design curricula and presentations that positively impact both behavior and performance. She is the author of "Contagious Leadership," "Contagious Confidence" and "Contagious Customer Service." She can be reached at www.monicawofford.com or (866) 382-0121.

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