



**The 7 Biggest Blocks  
to having 100% Confidence  
100% of the Time**  
*(and the Secrets to Overcoming them!)*

**A part of the Healthy Habits Series**

**Written by**

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This e-Book is just one of the many Personal Leadership resources you will find at  
<http://www.sandigivens.com.au>

***"For Unbelievable Breakthroughs That Deliver Outstanding Results"***

# **The 7 Biggest Blocks to having 100% Confidence 100% of the Time (and the Secrets to Overcoming them!)**

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<http://www.sandigivens.com.au>

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## The Rest of your Life starts NOW!

Welcome to the start of YOU having 100% Confidence 100% of the Time!

In conducting the research for this eBook, I asked my clients “What’s the biggest block to you having 100% confidence 100% of the time?” Though there were many ways of expressing their opinions on this, there were 7 distinct categories of ‘blocks’:

1. Fear of not having enough of the correct information on a subject
2. Feeling unable to deal with conflict
3. Having negative thoughts and being filled with self-doubt
4. Being unclear about what they *really* want and being able to say ‘no’
5. Fear about how others may see them (especially if they *do* speak up about something)
6. Worry about the work / business consequences of speaking up about something
7. Striving for perfection and being concerned that they might ‘fail’

I also asked my clients what the consequences of this lack of confidence were for them. This question, too, caused little problem in them being able to answer. Clearly, confidence is an attribute that, when absent, has a significant negative impact on a person.

“I know I’m being overlooked for positions here at work for which I am totally qualified and at which I would excel.”

“I don’t speak up at meetings, even when I seriously disagree with how something is going. Then later, I beat up on myself for being so gutless.”

“I doubt myself most of the time – which keeps me from taking more responsibility and actually getting involved in projects I’d really enjoy.”

“I just can’t say ‘no’ – and that’s causing a lot of problems at home. My partner wants me to spend more time with the kids, but I just have to put in the hours at work to get through what I’ve committed to.”

“Being so ‘meek and mild’ actually makes me feel kind of worthless. Sounds dumb, but that’s how I feel a lot of the time.”

How much of that can you relate to?

Confidence really is a cornerstone to so many things –

- ✚ higher self esteem and self worth,
- ✚ a greater resilience to be able to 'take things on the chin' in life,
- ✚ a willingness to be proactive and go for what you really want,
- ✚ a feeling of being more in control of your life
- ✚ an ability to 'roll with the punches' and realise that sometimes when things don't go according to plan, it's not all your fault and certainly doesn't make you worthless.

If you feel your confidence could do with a boost, I can assure you, you are not alone. And if you'd like to experience some of the above benefits of greater confidence, then this eBook is for you.

You should know that I haven't written this eBook because I have my life all handled! Like most human beings, I have issues in my life that challenge me, stretching me to the point where I feel I might literally break. I have things that I dislike doing (but know I need to do them), areas in which I'd like to improve my skills and competence, people with whom I feel less comfortable than others.

And what I absolutely know to be true is that **I am much better able to deal with all of these things when my confidence is high**. This doesn't mean I always get exactly the results and outcomes I am striving for, but I do believe I get much closer to them than I would otherwise.

As you might guess, a lot of confidence comes from experience – from going through different types of situations and coming out at the other end, not only with additional information and abilities, but with the sense and *knowing that you did get through it*.

And yet there *are* things you can do, learn, practice and consciously think about that *will* help develop your confidence without having to live to 99 to acquire a multitude of experiences from which your confidence will grow.

This eBook will provide you with strategies and approaches that will get you well on your way – *I promise*.



Sandi Givens

If you would like to work with Sandi personally, we would love to hear from you.

Sandi is an award-winning International Speaker who will enthuse and entertain your next Conference group while impelling them to achieve greater business and personal success.

Her Learning Workshops are second to none in instilling new beliefs, attitudes and behaviours in people who come to see that positive change is not only attainable but can be easy and enjoyable.

Sandi also coaches Executives and Senior Managers (both in individual and group settings) who want to know, do, achieve – and BE – more.

Please call +61 3 9844 4612 (in Australia) or visit <http://www.sandigivens.com.au> for further information.

## Block #1 – “I’ve got to KNOW EVERYTHING!”

By far, my clients told me their Number One Block to having 100% confidence 100% of the time was their fear of ‘being wrong’.

“When I’m asked a question and I don’t know the answer, my knees crumble and my stomach literally churns. I can feel my confidence almost physically slipping out of the pores of my body.”

“The thought that I might not be 100% right is frightening to me.”

“I’m worried I might get caught out ... you know, not knowing something the other person thinks I should know.”

Being incorrect, not possessing the right skills and not having enough experience were also cited as facets of this block to confidence.

It is a shame to think that our business world (and perhaps society in general) has reached a point where we so ruthlessly block the path to the most impactful, memorable and useful learning we can access – **experience**. I have often said to people attending my workshops that experience is a better teacher than I’ll ever be.

It’s vital that we feel comfortable to ‘have a go’ at something. To be able to trial, experiment and express ideas and opinions without obsessively worrying that we will make a mistake restricts our creativity and the expression of our natural Leadership and our fullest selves.

This fear of ‘being found out’ or ‘shown up’ is more prevalent in organisations than we might like to admit. Sticking your neck out, rocking the boat or taking some well-calculated risks are not a part of most employees’ game plan anymore. They are fearful of having their errors being pointed out for all the world to see and feeling humiliated in the process.

In his book *The Fifth Discipline*, Peter Senge states that a learning organisation is an “organisation that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future” as it is through learning that we, as human beings, become able to do something we previously were unable to do.

So what can we take from this? How do we jump the hurdle of needing to know it all?

## Strategies for Individuals

1. Remember part of the natural human condition is being fallible. By this I mean that is not feasible or reasonable to expect yourself to know *everything* about *anything*. By all means, apply yourself, do your research, think deeply ... and then act.

**Show me a person that has never made a mistake, and I'll show you a person who has never done anything!**

Source Unknown

2. If you are fearful of being wrong, start taking steps to greater confidence by speaking up about 'smaller' things – things that do not carry great consequences should you, in fact, discover that you were incorrect in your thinking.
3. If you are worried that you may not be 100% right about something, frame your statement accordingly. "Though I'm not 100% certain of this, based on my experience ..." or "From my point of view – which I acknowledge may not be shared by everyone here – I believe we should ..." As a human being, you **do** have a right to your opinion and thoughts!
4. If there are specific people in front of whom you are especially worried about being wrong, practice what you want to say in a forthcoming situation with a colleague or friend. It is amazing how helpful it can be to have had a 'rehearsal' being 'going live'.
5. Develop your own yardstick by which you measure your 'wrongness'. If you know you sourced your facts thoroughly and thought fully and deeply about a statement you have made (that someone else has said is 'wrong'), reassure yourself that *in your book*, you believed you knew what you were talking about and you have done no wrong.

**It's often useful to go out on a limb ... that's usually where the fruit is.**

Source Unknown

## Strategies for Organisations and their Leaders

1. Read *The Learning Organisation* and *The Fifth Discipline*, by Peter Senge.

Consider what aspects of a Learning Culture you could start to build in your company.

2. Walk the Talk.

If you want your people to show more initiative (and thus risk being 'shown up' or making a mistake), then do the same yourself. What parts of the boat are *you* willing to rock a bit?

3. Hold regular meetings with your team to discuss what's been going well and what hasn't.

Then brainstorm what improvements can be made to those things in the second category and how they can be implemented.

It's issues and events in this latter category that will provide everyone with the chance to adjust the sails and steer a truer course in the future.

4. Regularly ask all staff in the organisation for their opinions and thoughts on things.

Listen with your ears, eyes, an open mind – and an open heart.

*Never* make what they have said 'wrong'. If you have asked for their opinion (and they have given it), then that's what it is – *an opinion*. It is not something that should be debated and categorised as either right or wrong.

## Block #2 – “I can’t deal with CONFLICT!”

I know of extremely few people who feel 100% comfortable 100% of the time when they find themselves in situations of conflict (and I’m certainly not one of them!).

Despite how fervently we may want to ‘stand our ground’, most of us are worried at the same time of damaging our ongoing relationship with the other party (as well as worrying about how they and others may view us in the future). Having our needs met without appearing aggressive, demanding or un-team-like can indeed be challenging – but it is *not* impossible.

I truly believe there are two very clear and distinct aspects to this – (1) your own degree of confidence and courage, and (2) the skills to resolve issues while allowing all parties to save face and feel respected.

### Your Confidence

Advising someone to be brave and confident while immersed in conflict is always easier said than done. Yet, just because something is challenging is no reason to resign ourselves to putting it at the back of our minds and dismiss its importance.

The degree to which you really, truly feel confident in expressing your point of view (especially when it is in disagreement with another party) is strongly related to your sense of self worth *in this situation and in relation to this person*.

Everyone can site instances where they are assertive and quite confident in expressing their point of view. Equally, for each of us, there are other situations in which (and people with whom) we go weak in the knees at the mere thought of speaking our minds about the issue at hand.

The difference between these two types of situations is usually connected with our feelings of worthiness and value in the eyes of the other party – as well as how much we value their opinion of us and/or how much power they have over us and our future.

**No one can make you feel inferior without your permission.**

Eleanor Roosevelt

You – and only you – can make the shift *internally* to value and esteem yourself in *all* situations. You are worthy and you do have value ... begin to believe that **now** with every fibre of your being.

## Your Skills

There are most definitely specific skills that anyone can learn to assist them in dealing with conflict more effectively. Like any skill in life, it will take time to hone and polish the new behaviours associated with these skills – but I'm sure you didn't expect to be able to drive a car perfectly after the very first lesson!

## Strategies for Individuals

1. Make a list of all the reasons that you are a worthwhile human being and why you have value. (Mind you, I believe you have value just because *you are*.)

Sound daunting? Then that's probably all the more reason you should do this.

Read the list regularly and add to it frequently.

2. Start a **Victory Journal**. Buy a blank notebook and record in it daily the 'victories' you had during the past 24 hours. The things you list need not be earth-shattering – after all, we all have days where just making it through to bedtime seems like a victory!

**You must first be a believer in order to be an achiever**

Source Unknown

Re-read your entries often, and particularly when you have 'one of those days' and before dealing with any situation of conflict.

3. In your mind, separate the other person involved from the problem or issue at hand. If you are thinking this way, your behaviours will subtly convey this mind set to them and they may feel less 'attacked' and needing to defend themselves and their position.
4. Breathe deeply, from your diaphragm. This will carry more oxygen to your brain and enable you to think more clearly, as well as simply slow your energy down a bit.
5. Remember it is OK to pause during the conversation. This gives you (and the other person) time to think and consider what has been said and what might need to happen next. You can even say "I'm not sure how I want to respond to that right now ... (pause) ..." and then respond.

6. Similarly, remember it can sometimes be beneficial to call 'Time Out' and negotiate reconvening at another time. This is especially important to do when emotions start to run high and there is little rational exchange occurring between the two of you.
7. Study alternative ways of dealing with conflict. There are many good books and audio programs available that will give you new ideas and approaches that may help you create a whole new way of dealing with conflict.

## Strategies for Organisations and their Leaders

1. Recognise that unresolved conflict in your team causes a significant disruption to everyone's effectiveness, efficiency and productivity.

Equip your people with tools to help them work *through* rather than rebel *against* the differences they have.

2. Find out what is being discussed on the company grapevine.

This behind-the-scenes communication channel is often used by people to vent their anger and frustration about issues and people within the organisation that they are not dealing with directly.

If you find this is the case, speak with the individuals privately and facilitate some open communication between those concerned.

3. Develop your own skills in dealing with conflict. Being able to Role Model what you want others to do is a powerful tool of influence.
4. Work towards creating a culture where there is less 'right and wrong' and more 'good and better'.

Conflict usually originates from a sense of needing to be 'right' – and therefore usually needing to ensure someone else is 'wrong'.

## Block #3 – Negative Thoughts and Doubts

“I just can’t do this!”

“Watch it ... you’ll look stupid if you say that.”

“Uh-oh ... I’m not really 1,000% certain of this. I better keep my mouth shut.”

“Here we go – another big failure coming up again!”

Recognise these messages? You possibly hear them far more from yourself than from other people.

The voice (or voices) in your head is known as *internal dialogue* or *self-talk*. I find it sad that the vast majority of my clients tell me they have far more negative than positive voices happening in their brains – and you can bet the negative ones are speaking more loudly and forcibly than the encouraging ones. One woman attending my workshop on Confidence and Assertiveness told me “I think my mind has a mind of its own!”.

Changing negative self-talk is challenging – *and possible!*

It will take time, dedication, repetition and determination. And you are worth the effort. Because until you deal with these voices of doom and gloom, they will continue to undermine and second-guess you, and work ceaselessly at blocking your path to whatever goals in life you truly desire.

### Strategies for Individuals

1. Become acutely aware of your negative Internal Dialogue. When you notice the voices in your head, record in a journal *when*, *what* and *how* the negative voices are speaking. Be diligent – act as if you are a detective in pursuit of solving a great mystery! Be curious about what you may discover.

**Think of doubt as an invitation to think.**

Source Unknown

2. Start to *reframe* the negative phrases you've been listening to. (This just means you'll be making some slight translations to what you've been listening to.)

If you notice instances of *always* or *never* – begin to add one of the following to the end of the sentence: *up until now / in the past/ so far / yet*.

Instances of *none, no one, everybody* or *everything* can be reframed with the phrases *some / a few / several / many, but not all*.

3. When you hear defeating language in your head, imagine a huge **STOP** sign suddenly appearing in front of you. Pause, take a breath and rephrase the negative statement to something much more empowering and supportive.
4. Enrol the help of a close and trusted friend. Perhaps you have become unaware that you sometimes say these things out loud to others in conversation. Ask them to make you aware of each time you give outward expression of your negative self talk.
5. Most importantly, do not beat yourself up when you notice the negative voices (the voices are already being hard enough on you!). Remind yourself you are human and you are developing new skills and habits – and you are well on the way to saying 'good riddance' to these voices!

## Strategies for Organisations and their Leaders

1. If any of your team seem to be suffering from self-defeating behaviours and attitudes, you might gently (and respectfully) suggest they could read Martin Selligman's book *Learned Optimism*. This is the best and most practical book I have ever read about how we can deal with our pessimistic attitudes and change to a far more useful and optimistic way of dealing with ourselves and others.
2. You might like to read Selligman's book yourself! I guarantee you will never think in quite the same ways again.
3. Develop a team culture that does not allow negative thoughts to be outwardly expressed (such as 'that will never work').

Every time someone says something of that nature, have them make a gold coin deposit in the team Penalty Jar and donate its contents to charity at the end of every month.

4. Put up positive, affirming posters and wall hangings around the office.

### Block #4 – “I don’t know what I want – and I can’t say ‘no’ to anything!”

As human beings, we’ve become very adept at identifying the myriad of things we *don’t want* in our lives. It never ceases to amaze me when I ask clients to identify at least 5 things they want to have, create or be in their lives and they struggle with this.

“I’m sick and tired of working so much overtime – I don’t want to do that any more.”

“I don’t want to be taken for granted so much.”

“I’m not sure what I want – I just know I’m not happy with the way things are.”

Being unclear of our real desires makes it even harder to say ‘no’ to things, as we operate from a position that believes the thing we are about to decline *may be* the thing we really want.

More and more in my work, I find that people are looking for the ‘magic formula’ that will make their lives complete and exactly as they wish for. Logically, they know this cannot exist ... but hey – wouldn’t it be wonderful if it did!

Advertising and marketing don’t help. Daily, we are bombarded with countless communications that can easily leave us feeling that there is, indeed, something missing in our lives. That we are somehow incomplete if we are starting to lose our hair, put on weight, aren’t wearing the latest fashion trend or drinking cheaper wines.

In Australia (as in many other western countries) we are blessed with a multitude of choice. Think of anything you might want to buy, and you can not only choose from a wide range of brands, but a variety of makes, models, styles, colours, ‘extras’ and locations at which you can make your purchase. This almost overwhelming number of alternatives can leave us paralysed, confused and uncertain as to what specifically we really *should* buy.

Conversely, when you are focussed and clear about what you want, it makes elimination of all the other things (that you don’t want) almost easy.

Are you ready to get that focus and clarity for yourself? Let’s go!

## Strategies for Individuals

1. Get a blank piece of paper and get ready to brainstorm. Write down all the things you would like to *attain* in your life (or even just within the next 6 to 12 months, if that's easier). This list will include things you want to own (house, car, pets, boat, renovated kitchen, and so on) and things you want to achieve (learn to snowboard, run a marathon, learn a foreign language, complete your family tree, start your own business).

Divide the list into these two categories if that helps.

Do this at a time when you will not be interrupted for at least 30 minutes and write until you can't think of a single other thing to add to your list.

2. Get another piece of paper and brainstorm all the *attributes* you believe are important for you to possess. This will include things such as honesty, reliability, being astute, being seen as competent and having a great sense of humour.

Again, ensure you will not be interrupted for at least 30 minutes and write until you can think of absolutely nothing to add to your list.

3. Your final piece of blank paper is to create your list of *adages* you believe are important to live by. This might include things such as –

'Treat other as you would like to be treated.'

'The end justifies the means.'

'Actions speak louder than words.'

4. As a result of these first three activities, you will now have quite a clear picture of what you stand for, what kind of person you want to be and the things you really yearn to achieve or acquire in your lifetime.

You now need to use these to guide your daily actions and decisions. See them as a beacon that directs you and keeps you on your truest path.

**Today's preparation  
determines tomorrow's  
achievement.**

Source Unknown

5. When you need to say 'no' and draw boundaries for yourself, remember you are *refusing the request*, not the person making it.

You might even say to them "You know I have helped you in the past and in this instance, I can't do what you're asking in this time frame."

6. Always offer what you *can* do to help. Even if it is not exactly and wholly what is being asked of you, this shows your willingness to contribute in some way (and may help you feel less guilty when you remember that you have done this).
7. Know your Bottom Line – and stick to it, politely and firmly. If you have thought deeply beforehand of what truly is your boundary, assertively saying 'no' can be almost (yes, *almost*) easy.

## Strategies for Organisations and their Leaders

1. Know your organisation's Vision, Mission and Goals. Work with your team to ensure everyone knows how they themselves truly fit into that bigger picture.
2. Think about your organisation's branding and reputation. What are you known for? What do you want to be known for? What things are you actually doing with your clients, prospects and suppliers to ensure these messages are being communicated consistently?
3. Recognise that having a workforce of 'Yes-people' is *not* the ideal. Conflict can generate creative thinking. When people say 'no', open your mind and enter respectful discussion about the issue.
4. Here's another opportunity to Walk the Talk.

Start to be seen as someone who speaks their mind respectfully about work issues and truly listens when others are expressing their opinions. State your boundaries and know the organisation's Bottom Line.

**Discussion is an exchange of knowledge. Argument is an exchange of ignorance.**

Source Unknown

### Block #5 – “What do they think of me?”

“I worry that the way in which I conduct myself may result in an adverse perception of me by others.”

“What if they don’t think I dress, sound or look appropriate?”

“I know it’s silly to worry so much about what other people are thinking – but I can’t help it. I get so caught up in trying to create a positive impression that I feel stressed and even less confident.”

Can you identify with what these people have said?

Many people care deeply about what other people think of them, and there’s nothing wrong with that. It becomes a barrier to our confidence, though, when we care more deeply about other people’s opinions than we do of our own.

Someone once said to me, “Sandi, what other people think of you is none of your business!” At first, this did nothing to help me shift my thinking and worrying. But with time, I came to view this statement in another light.

Rather than overly focus on other people’s opinions, it is more useful to strive to develop our own internal sets of measures and standards. In NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) terms, this is called developing an *internal frame of reference*.

All people tend to have a stronger orientation to either an *external* or *internal* frame of reference. How do you know something is right? How do you make a decision about something? If you have a strong *external* frame of reference, the thoughts and opinions of other people will tend to be more important to you – you will feel the need to ‘check things out’ with others to verify your own thinking.

People with a stronger *internal* frame of reference feel very certain of their own data and find little need to seek out other’s opinions.

As you can imagine, both of these have upsides and downsides. Those with external references can be quite collaborative in their approach, yet can spend inordinate amounts of time second-guessing themselves. Their decision-making can be slowed and their confidence may easily waver.

People with a strong internal frame may act more decisively and feel confident in a greater variety of situations. However, they can at times be seen as arrogant and uncaring about the thoughts and opinions of others.

Neither is right or wrong, better or worse than the other. The key is first of all to know your preference and more instinctive way of being. Secondly, aim to develop a 'check' in the opposite perspective. Those with an external preference could consciously stop to form their own opinion before seeking out the thoughts of others. Someone with an internal reference could choose to seek out others' opinions before making their final decision.

**Live so that you are neither  
afraid of tomorrow nor  
ashamed of yesterday.**

Source Unknown

More often, the worry of what other people think is more commonly linked to having a strong external frame of reference – hence these suggestions will help you in shifting the focus to one that is more about your own personal standards and measurements.

## Strategies for Individuals

1. Before an interaction with someone, ask yourself "What's my outcome?" Let your focus be primarily on that, and be clear on your true *intention* in the conversation.

When you focus more on your purpose and speaking your truth calmly and politely, you will come across more *authentically* to the other person – and no one (including you) can expect more than that from you.

2. Focus on what you *do* want, rather than on what you want to avoid or not have happen.

Your brain is amazing machine that wants to help you be right. The trouble is, it doesn't process negative instructions very well. If you say to yourself, 'I don't want to be nervous', your brain immediately figures out what 'being nervous' is, and in doing so triggers off the set of physical reactions which for you means 'nervous'.

Instead, tell yourself 'I will feel calm and in control'. This gives your brain the instruction to create those physical and mental conditions that enable you to feel this way.

Don't believe me? Try it – you'll be amazed with the results!

3. Continually work on developing your *internal frame of reference*. Think about your standards, your expectations of yourself when you interact with others – and then hold yourself to these. Measure your behaviours in light of these, not the standards of others.
4. Prepare yourself well for meetings. This includes considering the types of questions you might be asked and what your answers to these will be.

It also includes thinking about how you want to dress. Wear clothes in which you feel comfortable and at your best.

5. If, during an exchange with someone, you feel yourself starting to get anxious, take a slow deep breath in. Then slowly exhale, imagining you are physically releasing the tension as you do.

Repeat this, and as you inhale imagine breathing in confidence and calm.

6. Start a Victory Journal.

Read more about this in the section on **Block #2: I can't deal with conflict**".

## Strategies for Organisations and their Leaders

1. Develop *inclusive* behaviours and practices at work.

Many workplaces have a large number of ways of doing things that are divisive and exclude certain individuals. These barriers serve to lower morale, reduce cooperation and detract from individual contributions.

2. Value difference!

Recognise – and promote – that having different ways of seeing and doing things is an incredibly valuable asset in your organisation. Create a culture that draws on the strengths of all individuals and creates the best possible results by working *with* differences rather than *against* them.

**It is always easier to see both sides of a question if your prejudices are not involved.**

Source Unknown

3. Hone your listening skills. People feel both valued and respected when they are truly listened to.

Listen as many Asian cultures do – with their ears, their eyes, their undivided attention – and with their hearts.

4. Model *respect*.

Show people around the workplace that this is your new standard of behaviour for everyone.

## Block #6 – The need for Job Security

“If I speak up, I might lose my job.”

“You don’t rock the boat around here – that’s one sure way to be shown the exit.”

“Yes, I could speak up, but my job could be made so hard for me, it just wouldn’t be worth staying to try to make things right again.”

I am constantly saddened when I hear people express these types of thoughts and feelings.

Thankfully, the majority of workplaces have moved beyond the industrial age and the style of leadership we have come to call ‘command and control’. Many decades ago, employees were expected to simply do as they were told; to bring their bodies but not their minds to work.

Unfortunately, there are some organisations that still hold on to this type of culture. Not that terribly long ago, when working on contract to an organisation, I spoke with the Managing Director about an idea I had, and was met with the response of “Just do what I told you – I’m not paying you to think!” As you might imagine, I ceased working with that organisation not long after.

But not everyone has that luxury. I had my own business and the contract with that company was for a fixed term in relation to the completion of a specific project. When the project was finished, I could walk away and work with other clients.

So what if you feel ‘stuck’, and truly are concerned about your job security should you speak up about certain matters?

My belief is that you have three clear choices.

I have outlined these, along with a few other ideas, in the section that follows.

**Nothing great was ever achieved without an act of decision.**

Source Unknown

## Strategies for Individuals

1. You can choose to see if you might **Alter** the situation in some way.

Consider having a conversation with the person/people concerned in which you express your fears about the consequences of expressing your thoughts. You will need to do this in a way that is not blaming or attacking – that will only lead to conflict and argument. Express your point of view clearly and politely, and without implying or suggesting it is all the other person's 'fault'.

You could look at learning ways to express your thoughts differently – perhaps that is the source of contention from the other person's point of view. Are there other methods and contexts you could use to communicate your ideas and opinions about things?

Or are there other senior people within the organisation with whom you could share your thoughts and concerns about this?

2. Your second choice is to **Avoid** the situation.

Can you apply for a transfer within your organisation? Are there other projects to which you could be assigned that would reduce your interaction with the people who are contributing to you feeling your job might be threatened?

Of course, the ultimate avoidance of the issue could be to leave your job and join another organisation. (This is not something I'd necessarily recommend – at least not until you have explored all other avenues open to you. And please, do not take this course of action until you have given it long and serious thought.)

3. Your final choice is **Acceptance**.

To do this, you might need to do some letting go – releasing your past thoughts about the situation to free up your mind and energy to focus on the positive aspects of your job.

You might also consider *forgiving* the other party for their role in this. Years ago, I used to believe that when I forgave someone for something, it meant that I condoned their actions. Far from it. Thankfully, someone helped me realise that *we forgive other people for ourselves*. That by forgiving someone, we become more free, more independent and able to experience more energy for those things in life that we do want to focus on and enjoy. But it must be true forgiveness – not simply an offhand thought on your part.

4. Consider whether the barrier you perceive is 'real' – or does it exist primarily in your own mind. Please know, I am not discounting your fear of losing your job or suffering ramifications to speaking up about some things.

**Courage is not the absence of fear, but the conquering of it.**

Source Unknown

I do know, though, that our minds being what they are can slowly but surely exaggerate situations beyond their real proportions.

Maybe there are others at work with whom you could discuss this. Seek their opinions about how open the organisational culture is to people honestly expressing their thoughts.

## Strategies for Organisations and their Leaders

1. Look at your organisational culture. Dig deep, ask many opinions and openly and honestly hear what people have to say.

Is there a fear of speaking up?

And if so, do you really want to lead an organisation of 'yes' people?

2. Ensure those within the organisation who have responsibility for other staff have open minds and exceptional listening skills.
3. Develop the belief that conflict (when carried out in a respectful and polite manner) is good. Difference of opinion is how we arrive at better decisions. It allows for creative thought and building on each other's ideas.

**Nothing dies quicker than a new idea in a closed mind.**

Source Unknown

And it is a vital ingredient for organisations who want to continually improve and stay ahead of the competition in the marketplace.

4. Practice reserving judgement about things. Tell yourself you won't reach a final conclusion about something until you have heard at least 3 other points of view on the matter.

Walk the talk. Practice what you want to see others doing. Be credible.

## Block #7 – “What if I FAIL?”

“But I might not succeed.”

“I’ll look – and feel – silly if I fail.”

“I *hate* failing – it feels so irreversible!”

Second only to **Block #1: “I’ve got to know everything”**, my clients told me that fear of failure was a huge factor in eroding – and ultimately destroying - their confidence.

Where and when did we develop such a drive for *perfection*? Why do we hold such high expectations of ourselves?

You only need to look at a small baby learning how to stand and walk to realise the fallacy in this style of thinking. Imagine saying to that young person “Oops, you fallen over. Now that you’ve failed, you might as well give up – it’s obviously just too hard for you to do this.”

**Failure is not the worst thing in the world. The very worst is not to try.**

Source Unknown

Crazy, isn’t it?

So why do we as adults expect ourselves to get 100% of things 100% ‘correct’ 100% of the time?

As I often say to participants of my seminars (and referred to earlier in this eBook), “Experience is a better teacher than I’ll ever be.” And a part of gathering experience is the less than 100% ‘success’ we gather along the way.

Think of Thomas Edison. He had more than 10,000 attempts at inventing the light globe. During that time, a journalist asked him “How’s it feel to fail so many times, Tom?” Edison’s reply? “I don’t consider that I have failed. I *have* succeeded in identifying thousands of ways to *not* do it.”

Is this just what we have come to call ‘spin doctoring’? Perhaps so. But which belief system sets you up to be ready and willing to have another attempt at something?

Out of all the things we do in our lives, we will no doubt ultimately have more *learning experiences* than outright, first-time successes. And that's just a fact of life. The sooner we can truly see 'failure' in this light, the sooner we will realise the greatness within ourselves and experience a joyful, satisfying and fulfilling life.

## Strategies for Individuals

1. Start with some small things. Work on projects, tasks and issues that, even if you do not achieve 100% of your desired outcomes, you will know from the start that the consequences are relatively minor.
2. When working on a task about which you are concerned you might not succeed, consider (and even write down) the worst case scenario.

What are the consequences of 'failure' in terms of money, time, energy, reputation and other things that are important to you?

Often when examined in this way, we come to see that even the *worst* thing that can happen is not that drastic or long-lasting in its effects.

3. Reframe your whole concept of failure. Accept the logic in the perspective of seeing that without even attempting something, you cannot advance at all. See 'failure' as **feedback** for your future endeavours.

4. Start a Victory Journal. This is explained in the section on **Block #2: I can't deal with conflict**". Reading your Victory Journal regularly will train your mind to focus more and more on your successes and less and less on what doesn't always go as well as you planned or hoped.

**The last time you failed, did you stop trying because you failed – or did you fail because you stopped trying?**

Source Unknown

5. Test your ideas on trusted colleagues and friends. Sometimes getting your ideas out of your head can clarify them enormously. Also, you may receive some valuable insights and suggestions before proceeding further with your project.

6. Remember, it is a fact – we learn far more from those things we attempt in our life that don't result in 100% of what we wanted than we learn from those things that achieve 'success' straight away.

Learning comes from obtaining distinctions about things, making adjustments and being willing to incorporate new thoughts, ideas and perspectives in your subsequent attempts.

## Strategies for Organisations and their Leaders

1. Celebrate not only the really big 'wins' in your team, but the small ones as well.
2. Recognise and reward sincere attempts made by your staff. Acknowledge their contributions to the organisation's successes and objectives.

3. Debrief successes in your team *as well as* the non-successes. Make it a standard process that you follow on a regular basis. This enables *everyone* to learn from what has worked and what hasn't, and doesn't single out or focus on the individuals directly involved.

***Right is a bigger word than either success or failure.***

Source Unknown

4. Regularly hold team meetings where you explore the answers to these three questions:

What are we doing well?

What areas can we improve on?

How can we implement our learning from the past?

5. Be willing to admit your mistakes or errors in judgement.

Walk the talk. Model what you want to see in others.

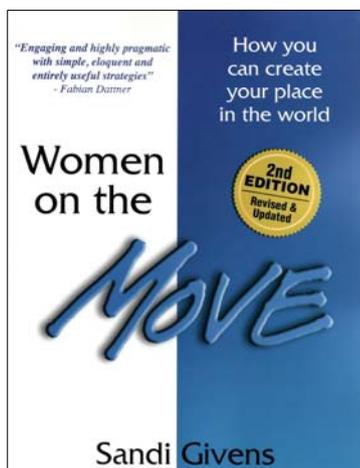
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All products available from our Web Site: [www.sandigivens.com.au](http://www.sandigivens.com.au)

Alternatively, you can phone or fax your order to +61 3 9844 4612,

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### Women on the Move: How you can Create your place in the World



*“Engaging and highly pragmatic ... clearly Sandi knows what she is talking about. Every bit as important, however, is that Sandi Givens genuinely cares about people, about women reaching the outcomes they aspire to. That makes this book one that might be kept on a desk, by the phone in the kitchen, beside a bed, or even (and we all know that sometimes it is the only quiet spot) in the lavatory! In these private spaces, it will be carefully gone through, note book in hand, to work out how specifically it helps each reader move through their dilemmas to reach a simple and eloquent plan for change.”*

From the Foreword written by Fabian Dattner

Including many examples and real-world stories, what sets this text apart is that it includes practical, relevant and specific tools that you can put to use immediately in your life.

*Women on the Move* is a refreshing and insightful affirmation for ambitious individuals who wish to succeed and be respected in today's world. Sandi confronts socially constructed views of women and femininity and challenges patriarchal notions of womanhood. With activities and exercises to tap into your strengths and desires, *Women on the Move* is an invaluable tool for women to realise their full potential and create the future that they truly desire. By building self esteem, boosting confidence and accentuating self expression, readers will feel more empowered to face new experiences, let go of the past and form new social habits. For women who feel bound by their roles as mother and wife, restricted by the 'glass ceiling', or on the path of self-questioning, Sandi can help individuals to be assertive and committed to fulfilling their own goals.

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Director, Network Central

*"Your keynote was inspiring! I am always moved by your words and it's always a disappointment when your presentations are over. I am always left wanting to hear more"*  
C Bloomfield, Site Management Services Manager, Quintiles Strategic Research Services

**RRP \$24.95**

## About Sandi Givens

As a Personal Leadership Specialist, Sandi Givens has extensive experience as –

- ✚ an Interactive Conference & Seminar **Keynote Presenter**
- ✚ a **Master of Ceremonies** for almost any type of event
- ✚ a **Workshop Facilitator** for small to large groups
- ✚ an **Executive and Lifestyle Coach**

Her Presentation and Training topics include –

- ✚ Emotional Intelligence – Developing Awareness of Self and Others
- ✚ Exceptional Communication and Interpersonal Skills
- ✚ Assertiveness – Speak your Mind, and Mind how you Speak!
- ✚ Powerful Presentation Skills – Be Seen, Heard & Remembered!
- ✚ Teams and Leadership – Getting More of the Results you Want
- ✚ Work and Personal Life Balance – The Myth of ‘Having it All’
- ✚ Work & Life Change Management – The Power of Proactive Behaviour

## What clients say about Sandi

“Your excellent work as an MC has again captured the spirit of our intent and provided a polished event in which we can take pride.”

*Elaine Dickson, President & Director, AIOP*

“ ... nothing but positive feedback ... Inspiring! We were amazed at how you were able to take our brief and translate that to an informative, interesting and amusing session. It’s always a disappointment when your sessions are over ... I’m always left wanting to hear more.”

*Carrie Bloomfield, Site Management Services Manager, Quintiles Strategic Research Services*

“You will be a tough act for others to follow. The response has been fantastic and 100% positive ... an overall rating of 4.8 out of 5 for both of your presentations!”

*Kate Wilkins, Relationship Development Executive, CPA Australia*

"Sandi relates well to her audience and, more importantly, her audience relates well to her. She has a friendly, confident style that enhances her thought-provoking message."

*Michael Grose, Victorian President 2003, National Speakers' Ass. of Australia*

"It is always a challenge to find a speaker who can not only speak well, but also appeal to a wide range of job titles, ages, industries and business attitudes. You not only did this, but you delivered your message with passion, expertise and humour and provided valuable information that guests could immediately apply to their lives and careers."

*Kim McGuinness, Managing Director, Network Central*

"Your courses consistently rate the highest of any we offer. Your facilitation is powerfully energetic and engaging. Your uniqueness is just how easy you make it look and feel for the participants –you hold out to them that learning new skills is not beyond their capability."

*Russell Fisher, L & D Consultant, Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Victoria*

"Thank you so much for your excellent contribution to the success of our Leadership Conference. Your session was rated very high by the participants for both the content and presentation. People obviously got the message and found lots of ways to use this immediately back in their workplaces."

*Elizabeth White, National Training & Development Manager, First National Real Estate*

"Sandi is without doubt one of the most skilled communicators and influencers of change that I have encountered in my professional career. Sandi's enormous creativity and ability to connect with people in a real sense set her apart in her field and creates the difference for anyone experiencing her learning environment."

*Denise Lavell, Training Services Director, Synergy Plus Training & Development*

For further information, and to experience learning that is uniquely empowering and long-lasting, contact:

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