



## Why We Sell Less: The Root of Confidence

### Three Month Vacation Podcast

Sean D'Souza:

There are lots of things that I like doing: dancing, painting, cartooning, but one of the things I like the most is cooking. Of course I invite people over to dinner. On this evening I'd invited one of my friends and I was making this very special dish. It's a multi-layered rice dish called a biryani. If you say the biryani to most people they get a little afraid because there's so much preparation involved, and you have to get so many things right.

Anyway, I got a few things wrong that day, but only I knew that I'd got those things wrong, and yet when I went to serve the dish I mentioned that it was not up to standard. Now this friend of mine, he had never had a biryani before. He didn't know what a biryani was supposed to taste like, but what I said, it really affected him. My lack of confidence spilled over and he didn't feel that the biryani was up to standard.

For ages after that, whenever we met he wanted all the other dishes except the biryani. What did I do wrong? The answer doesn't lie in the recipe for the biryani or the way the biryani was made that evening. What it lies is in a factor of confidence. Sales is the transfer of enthusiasm from one person to another, and that evening I wasn't transferring any enthusiasm, so I wasn't selling my dish. This is what we do a lot when we're at networking meetings, when we're at presentations, when we're selling a product or a product or a service to a client. We lack that enthusiasm. We don't appear confident, and then the client wants to think about it. They want to ask their mother, brother, sister about it before they decide.



In today's episode we're going to talk about three aspects of confidence. We'll start out with the root of confidence. Where does the confidence come from? Is it inbuilt or do we have something that we have to learn? The second is how to deal with this whole set of confidence issues when things don't seem to be going your way. The third and most importantly, to realize how confidence is like a rechargeable battery, how you need to charge it up all the time.

Let's start out with the first, which is the root of confidence. Your background, that's the deepest, strongest root that you can have in confidence with anything. As you're growing up you don't realize it, but as you're sitting around reading some comics or watching TV and the adults are going about doing their own things, you get an education. When I was growing up my father ran a secretarial college and he used to train people to be secretaries. I used to sit around; I used to eat; I used to read some story books, type on the typewriters because he had a lot of them. Essentially I wasn't doing anything, yet a lot was happening. A lot of the information was going into my head and I was getting confident about teaching, about speaking, about meeting people, about doing a lot of things that I didn't realize until it was much later.

Why am I telling you this? I'm telling you this because when you grow up in a different kind of family you have different experiences. If your family was largely job-oriented and it was about safety and not making mistakes and not taking too many risks, then it becomes quite hard for you to do that and you have to learn that confidence. If you grow up in a family where people are cooking, or they're painting, or they're doing some woodwork, what you're doing is you're getting the confidence just by sitting around. You're absorbing all that information but you also get information.

For instance, when I'm sitting with my nieces and there's my palette in front of me and I'm painting some cartoons, they're getting information about what yellow ochre looks like, how the sky is not really blue but it is blue at the top and then blue and yellow ochre in the middle and then yellow ochre towards the horizon. They get all this information so they get confident. When you don't have that confidence then you have to build up that confidence. Because sales is a transfer of enthusiasm for one person to another, all the things that you're selling depends on you being confident about it because you project that energy.

What I used to do is I used to go to networking meetings and I was quite terrified. I was in a new country when we moved to New Zealand. I would play "Simply The Best." I had a tape player in my car and I'd play that over and over again. That gave me confidence. That just boosted my energy to the point where I could last the meeting and then go back home.

There are certain areas where you have confidence because you've grown up around that environment, that family, that atmosphere. There are other areas where you don't have the confidence. One of the things that you have to do is artificially boost that confidence somehow. Listen to some music. Listen to someone who is talking about confidence making you more confident. Because the lack of that confidence often leads to people not buying from you.

How does this confidence play out in real life? We don't stand in front of an audience and say we're terrified, but we say little things like, "Oh, I'm sorry but we didn't have a good night last night," or I would say things like, "Oh, that biryani didn't turn out as well as it should. It's missing these spices." Or right after making a presentation and getting an applause we'll say, "Thank you. It was so good, but ... " But? You use the word but. It's these little clues that give away the fact that we are not as confident as we should.

The moment we are confident people get this surge of enthusiasm from us and they're more interested in buying. Now sales is a lot more than just enthusiasm, but we doubt the confidence, it's almost impossible to sell anything. While some of us have our deep roots in confidence because we've grown up with that atmosphere, the moment we're thrown into an unknown space we have to get that enthusiasm building within us and not apologizing. That's how you get to a level of confidence. The moment you apologize it kills everything. Everything you've done just before that, it's dead. It's like the song from The King and I: "Whenever I feel afraid I hold my head erect and whistle a happy tune so no one will suspect I'm afraid."

This takes us to the second part. What do you do when things really go wrong? For about 10 years the musicians and rock star Sting was in what he called a writer's block. He wasn't able to produce any music, write any songs, and then he wrote this album called The Last Ship. Then they went to Broadway and they spent four or five years putting together everything.

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The musical cost about 15 million dollars to just bring to the stage, and then about \$625,000 in running costs; that is per week. Yet, they were

losing. People weren't showing up for the play. You put in all of this effort, all of this time, and what happens? At this point in time it's very easy to say, "I'm a failure. I'm not supposed to do this." But it's not true. It's always a stepping stone for another learning.

We've had situations where our confidence has been badly beaten. I can remember the time very early in my career when I went to Australia. It was this kind of pitch fest and I was not used to pitching from the podium. Everyone around me were selling tens of thousands of dollars of product and when I stood there I couldn't manage anything. I think about 10 people bought the product. It completely shattered the confidence.

At that point in time you have to step back and reevaluate and say, "What did I do wrong?" Not "What is wrong with me," but "What did I do wrong?" Because more often than not it's got nothing to do with you. Back in the year 2000 if you published an article on someone else's site, on a big site, you'd probably get 200 subscribers. If you published it in 2010 you'd probably get 50 subscribers. Now you'd probably get 10 subscribers.

The point is that the distraction has increased tremendously. You look at some of the bigger sites and you find that the comments have gone down. You find that everyone is having to fight the same battle. Because you're just starting out, because you're struggling you think, "It's me. It's got something to do with me. I'm not writing well. I'm not doing stuff well." That's possible, but it's possible the technique, which is what I found out on stage in Australia. I found out that my technique was wrong, so I had to learn from that technique. I had to build up that confidence, and then when we went to Chicago a few years later I outsold everybody in the room.

Now admittedly I don't do this pitching from the podium anymore, but in the early years I did a lot of it. I had to get the confidence because it was very unusual for me. This is what you've got to understand. Most of the time there's nothing wrong with you. You probably don't have enough experience so you don't have enough confidence and you don't have enough technique. Of course if you're buy into hype from people who say that you're going to get hundreds of customers or thousands of customers, or Facebook fans, and you buy into the la dee da, that's your problem. At the very core of it it is about boosting yourself up, getting the technique, and that's how you get confident.



Because you will run into a whole bunch of potholes in your career, and every single time you have to pull yourself out. That's what Sting has done as well. He's gone on tour now with Paul Simon. You pick yourself up, you dust yourself, and you walk on. Because there is no option. When your confidence is battered it's no point staying in the mud. You just pick yourself up and walk on.

This brings us to the last part, which is the factor of how your confidence is like a rechargeable battery. Just yesterday I got an email from my friend Bryan Eisenberg. Bryan said he really liked the podcast. He mentioned how it was getting better and better with every episode. That's a charge. That would keep me going for at least two or three days, but just like there is a charge, there's also a discharge, and there are people around you all the time that don't exactly encourage you. They don't discourage but they don't encourage you. As soon as that happens your confidence starts to go down.

These might be people you love: your husband, your wife, your friend. These might be people that are almost always in your favor, but in this one aspect they don't exactly encourage you. Like yesterday I was helping my wife do a handstand and she's been struggling with the handstand for ages. I said to her, "I don't think you're going to get there." In that moment she was quite angry, she was quite upset. I realize today that I wasn't being helpful. If you look around you, in your house, in your friend circle, in your family, you will find people who are not discouraging you but they're not encouraging you, and you have to find people that will give you that charge. Because every single day that battery goes up and then it comes crashing down, and you have to have that charge.

We get confident because we recover from mistakes, we fix those mistakes. The icing on the cake is simply when someone says, "Wow, you made a great dish. That was a great painting. That was a superb podcast." If we're not getting this from our friends and our family, especially the family, then we have to find our source that will encourage us and get those batteries up and running.

When we do workshops, one of the questions that we ask is why are you attending this workshop. If you dig deep enough the answer is always confidence, always, always confidence.

If you dig deep enough you will find that everyone attending your workshop, everyone buying your product, everyone getting anything from you is because they want to gain confidence. They want to get that charge from you. You've got to send out that confidence and you have to be enthusiastic. For that you have to make sure that you're not being discharged.

That brings us to the end of this episode. Let's do a quick summary. We started out today with the root of confidence. When you grow up in a family or in an environment where things are happening, you don't have to be part of it. You just have to be there. Of course it helps if you're given responsibility and taught stuff as you go along, but just being around makes you more confident than the average person.

The second element that we covered was what happens when you make mistakes. All of us make these mistakes. All of us make terrible mistakes, and really the only way to get over the mistake is to get up and make another mistake until you stop making mistakes. There is a technique, and people learn how to speak better, how to present better, how to write better. There is a technique, and what you need to do is buy into a system that promises you a lot of hard work instead of get rich quick or do this really, really quick. Because the quick methods, they lead to destruction. They don't work, and so your confidence goes down even further.

Finally, we looked at confidence as a rechargeable battery. If you find someone like me who's a scrooge who's saying, "You're not going to do that headstand," you're never going to do the headstand at least with me around. You know this one driving. You know when couples go driving? This is what happens. You want to find a source of confidence of inspiration because our confidence is so fleeting.

What's the one thing you can do today? The core of confidence is the ability to do something very quickly, like speaking a language. You get confidence from someone who has a method, a method that is slow, steady, that has tiny increments. The one thing you can do today is avoid anything that is super fast. When you see that red flag, someone promising you super quick clients, super quick this, super quick that, step aside and find something else that will truly build your confidence, truly build your skill, that takes a lot of effort. That's how you move ahead and that's how you get more confident in life.



With that we come to the end of this podcast. If you haven't heard about me writing a book on pricing, it's because I haven't started, but I am going to start this week. The book on pricing is going to be out on April 1st. There you go. I said it. On April 1st you're going to get the book on pricing. However, we're going to run trust the chef offer, no sales page, just an email. If you buy the book based on the email you get it at a better price and you get some goodies.

What else? It's the workshop in Silver Spring: that's just outside Washington D.C. For that, go to [psychotactics.com/dc](http://psychotactics.com/dc). You want to get really confident in creating great products, great presentations, great webinars, great reports. A lot of stuff out there is very, very boring, and it's not because of the content. It's because of the way it's constructed. Learn how to construct. You're building something, the construction needs to be powerful. Then you can have the design.

Finally, if you want to be like Biryani and send me an email talking about the podcast, that would be great. That would get me a charge. Better still, if you could leave a review on iTunes, that really helps us. If you haven't done that, here's your nudge. If you want the recipe for the biryani, it tastes really, really good. If you want to a recipe, let me know. Send me an email to [sean@psychotactics.com](mailto:sean@psychotactics.com). Send me that email. Bye for now.

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