

Why Confidence is Important

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Confidence is the basis for everything in umpiring and it is our confidence, or lack of it that directly affects how we perform on the baseball field. When we know umpiring mechanics, rules and feel secure about handling situations, we feel good about ourselves and we will make better decisions. When we prepare ourselves properly to umpire a baseball game and to make the best decisions, we create a better atmosphere for both ourselves and coaches in our ability to umpire a baseball game and to be recognized.

Confidence, when directed and utilized properly can be a major asset in our umpiring career. It is easy to lose a little of it when we make mistakes, fail, feel accountable for not knowing a rule or not using the right mechanic or do things we are ashamed of. As an umpire, we can lose confidence for many reasons:

- Being criticized by others
- Not believing in yourself
- Negative hearsay
- Not being able to get the games you believe you should have
- Negative body language
- Not achieving the goals that we set for ourselves in a timely manner
- Going outside your comfort zone

Our confidence level has a big impact on how we both perform and enjoy umpiring a baseball game. Many umpires have self-limiting beliefs and bad habits that hold them back from achieving success. In my opinion, nothing is more powerful than confidence and being confident in all aspects of your preparation to be on the baseball field. Umpires who are confident radiate strength, passion and conviction. A confident umpire is not afraid to be themselves. A confident umpire knows their value and purpose. Building confidence must be something you want to do for yourself, not for anyone else. Many umpires will settle with their current status and will not experience how incredibly rewarding it is to umpire with confidence, passion, purpose and enthusiasm.

There is nothing wrong with wanting to feel better about you and to achieve more in umpiring. Sometimes getting there is not easy and there are factors along the way to make the path a lot longer and more difficult. However, your confidence is not controlled by anyone else but you. I have been told your confidence is like an unused muscle that needs to be developed. Like a muscle, it will either get stronger or weaker depending on how you use it. When you build your confidence it's like exercising a muscle. It relies on incremental improvement on a daily basis. Consistent confidence building is the only way to lasting confidence. This includes knowing and reading the rules and rule interpretations more than once a season. It means reviewing mechanics on a regular basis (game by game). It means always talking to peers and experienced umpires on how to handle different situations.

It's never too late to become confident. Self-confidence enables an umpire to challenge themselves and move on to new achievements. It provides the belief that if things go wrong they can be made right because you have the resources to deal with the aspects of any situation.