

What is Confidence: The 1% Strategy

As a student-athlete, you have many parts of your life that you are being asked to excel and succeed in and many voices you have to listen to.

- Classroom: Teachers
- Home: Parents/Guardians
- Field/Court: Coaches and Teammates
- Job: Bosses/Managers
- Mentally: Yourself

When it comes to competing on the field and even in the classroom, we as humans care more about our surroundings and who is in it, compared to what's in-between our ears. We care more about how we compare to the others around us that we forget that WE are the ones competing ourselves. In cross country, while you're competing against other runners, you're still competing against yourself – your pace vs your PR. In the classroom, we are trained to care about our grades and how we compare to our classmates and friends. Heck, in society we care about how we look and act around those who seem rich and successful, that we tend to buy things we can't afford, to impress the people we truly don't care about who judge!

In sports, we have to coach and compete with the highest confidence possible. But where does that come from? What does that mean?

Our minds play a HUGE role in how we act, learn, and compete! Having a positive mindset will allow you to trust in your abilities and trust the preparations you've made before your competition occurs. Positive mindsets, or even a champion mindset makes us BELIEVE we can compete, we can get the job done, and we can control the controllables.

When you have low or zero confidence, a lot of times it's due to having a weak or negative mindset that worries about what others think and we let those external factors dictate our play. If you remember from the last mental piece I sent out, I discussed the external factors we can't control compared to the things we can control (if you forget, go back and review it again!). So how do we develop confidence??

Confidence... is a CHOICE, and it's made from preparation and is visually seen in our body language and self talk.

Elite Athletes rely on routines to develop confidence through preparation. What does this mean?

Do you get a full night's sleep? Do you wake up and eat a good breakfast and 1-2 cups of water before leaving for school? Do you have a nutritious snack an hour or two before lunch? If you have a strength class, do you get a clean and maintaining workout to activate your muscles? These are things we can do on a game day, everyday! Having routines help us stay in the moment and help with attacking the obstacles that life and competition throw at us.

How do we compete with confidence as a team? It's about being "All In".

All In with the process, All In with the practices, All In with each other to battle, All In to trust each other. We have to get **1%** better, each day! When you get **1%** better in the classroom, whether it's learning a new formula that day, learning how beta helps with investment risk, learning a new term that adds to your vocab and writing, you become a stronger student. When you get **1%** better each day in the cage or on the field whether it's locating your off-speed better, sharpening your approach at the plate, or developing a new defensive skill, you become a better ball-player. When you become a better ball player, the program becomes better. When the program gets better, we give ourselves a chance to compete against the best in the SLIAC and the nation!

But most importantly, we care about the WIN. And Win isn't just the result, but it means:

What's Important Now

Having this mindset as a team allows us to utilize a checklist of goals that are in the moment and even allows us to make the larger goals in the future.

- WIN this Practice!
- WIN this Pitch!
- WIN this At-Bat!
- WIN this Inning!
- WIN this Game!
- WIN this Conference!
- WIN this Tournament!
- WIN this Regional!
- WIN this Super Regional!
- WIN this National Championship!

When we focus on the moment, whether it's the practice, the game, or the season, our preparation and mindsets will either allows us to reach our goals or keep us from the accomplishments that we deserve from the work we put in!