Learn more about overcoming impostor syndrome

Have you ever felt like you aren't quite good enough, even though you actually are? Feeling like you aren't good enough to do a certain job or mingle with certain people happens to more people than you might think. In fact, feeling this way is so common that it even has a name: impostor syndrome.

Impostor syndrome is the belief that you're unskilled, inferior to others, or bad at your job, despite your successes. We've all felt impostor syndrome at some point in our lives. If you're feeling impostor syndrome, you're certainly not alone!
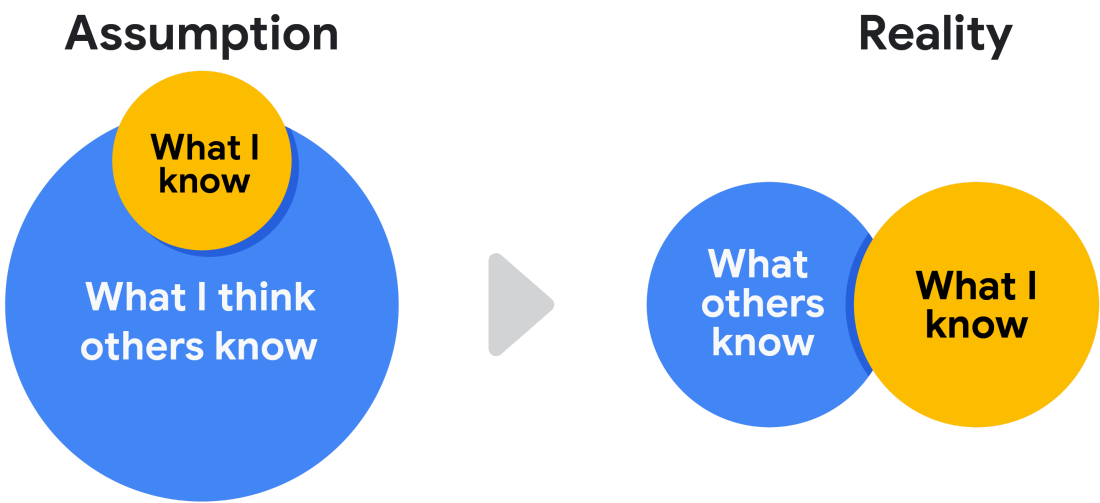
Effects of impostor syndrome

Impostor syndrome can cause anxiety and low confidence that can stop you from becoming the most successful version of yourself. Impostor syndrome can manifest in many ways, and each person's experience is unique. You might have seen or personally experienced impostor syndrome in situations like:

- Not applying to jobs unless you meet every requirement (even though you totally don't have to!).
- Taking on extra work to make sure you're "doing it all" and to look more capable in front of your peers.
- Not attending networking events or career fairs because you're nervous or anxious.
- Downplaying your abilities during conversations.
- Shrugging off compliments because you don't believe them.

Manage impostor syndrome

We want you to meet new people with confidence and without letting impostor syndrome get in the way. Here are a few pro tips to manage those anxious feelings:

- **Acknowledge your thoughts.** Recognize how you're feeling, and try to pinpoint why you're feeling that way. This will help you figure out what triggers your impostor syndrome, so that you can better manage it in the future.
- **Own your accomplishments.** You have your own unique perspectives and experiences. Think of all of the accomplishments and skills that make you different from the next person. Write them down in a list so that you can see just how much you have to talk about when you network. You have plenty to offer, so go into conversations with confidence!
- **Be honest with yourself.** Do a realistic evaluation of your strengths and weaknesses. Finding areas that create the feeling of not "being good enough" and working to improve them will help you feel more confident in yourself. *Everyone* has areas where they can improve, and there's always more to learn, so don't let your weaknesses hold you back.
- **Have a conversation.** Ask a trusted mentor, friend, or seasoned professional how they handle impostor syndrome.
- **Wear something that makes you feel confident.** Looking good helps you feel good. If you're going to an in-person networking event, put on your favorite professional attire so that you feel like the best version of yourself.
- **Help someone else.** Sharing the knowledge that you have with others helps you feel more valuable. This could be giving advice to someone less experienced than you or sharing a unique experience with one of your peers. If you think you don't have anything to offer anyone else, refer back to the list you made earlier.
- **Fake it till you make it.** Even if you don't feel confident in your abilities as a designer, if you *act* confident for long enough, eventually it will become second nature to you. People are naturally drawn to confident individuals, so acting confidently will likely help you make even more connections within your workplace and the UX community.
- **Go with a friend.** Attending networking events with someone you know can help you feel less overwhelmed and nervous.
- **Get to know people.** Becoming more familiar with other UX professionals will make you feel less out of place. You'll come to realize that experienced UX designers aren't as intimidating as they may initially seem! This will help you feel less nervous in the future when you meet other people.
- **Know that you're not alone.** If you're going to a networking event, or you're starting a group project with people you don't know, you won't be the only one who feels they don't belong. Being around experienced professionals can be intimidating, even if you're one yourself! Plus, even the most experienced UX designers were once in your shoes. We all started somewhere.

Networking and growing your career is all about learning, *not* about being perfect. Don't hold yourself to unreasonable standards. Instead, work to be the best designer you can be, be confident in who you are, and keep growing!

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