

# Professional Reading Program

Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program



## *The Confident Mind* by Nate Zinsser

**Best Wildland Fire Leadership Level to read this book:**

- Any level, but probably most valuable to individuals aspiring to Level Two, New Leader; or Level Three, Leader of People.

### Why Read *The Confident Mind*?

“... my operating definition of confidence (one that will actually help you perform well), is this: a sense of certainty about your ability, which allows you to bypass conscious thought and execute unconsciously.”

“Confidence is that feeling that you can do something (or that you know something) so well that you don’t have to think about how to do it when you’re doing it. That skill or knowledge is in you, it’s part of you, and it will come out when needed.”

Confidence is something that fire leaders at all levels need to be successful in the high-pressure, time-limited, and hazardous environments we work in. *The Confident Mind* is a fantastic book that offers a variety of practices, tools, and techniques for leaders to develop and maintain the confidence needed to perform at a high level. While some individuals may naturally have more confidence than others, it’s something that everyone can work on improving.

Fire crews routinely conduct physical training to strengthen the body, but mental training is every bit as important to strengthen the mind. The tools and techniques described in the book provide insight into how the brain and body operate, and if used, will directly improve your ability to perform under pressure. In situations where the safety of the team is tied directly to performance, taking the time to practice and develop true confidence will pay off.

There are a few good videos on this book that can be found on the internet. The video linked below is a short story based on the tools described in the book.

- ***The Confident Mind: Unlocking the Secret Psychology of Unshakable Self-Belief* | Book Summary (9 minutes):**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFJRSD3dK9M>

For more leadership ideas and to dig deeper, check out the Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program (WFLDP) blog, Facebook page, Professional Reading Program, and more at the links below:

**Blog:** <http://wildlandfireleadership.blogspot.com/>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/WFLDP>

**Professional Reading Program:** <https://www.nwccg.gov/wfldp/toolbox/prp>

## *The Confident Mind* Takeaways and Leadership Development Prompts

### **Key Takeaways**

Protect your confidence by reframing setbacks and silencing negative thoughts.

- Confidence isn't the absence of doubt. It's the way you respond to doubt.

Develop a pre-performance routine to enter your arena with certainty.

- Practice like you perform.

Reflect on performances to ensure continuous growth and confidence.

- AARs are an invaluable tool, if used as designed.

Envision success to create a powerful self-fulfilling prophecy

- Your mind is a garden and it doesn't care if you plant weeds or flowers. Both will grow.

### **Leadership Development Prompts**

*As you read the book, mark off the tasks when complete.*

- Commit to reading *The Confident Mind* (Planned completion date here)\_\_\_\_\_
- Create a first victory of the day. What is it?\_\_\_\_\_
- Create a tactic to create momentum in the morning. What is it?\_\_\_\_\_
- Develop a Top Ten List. Take your time and work on it a little each day.
- Post the Top Ten List in plain sight where you can reference it everyday.
- What is one habit that holds you back? (social media, television)

Write it here:\_\_\_\_\_

- What positive habit will you replace the bad habit with? (exercise, read)

Write it here:\_\_\_\_\_

- Create one positive affirmation that resonates with you.

Write it here:\_\_\_\_\_

- Give this book to someone else:

Write who here:\_\_\_\_\_

*Leaders create more leaders!*