

# Ask the Career Coach: How do I Stop Self Doubting?

How to gain more confidence on the job.

By [Lisa Chenofsky Singer](#)

*As appeared in MillburnPatch.com on December 15th, 2009 ([www.MillburnPatch.com](http://www.MillburnPatch.com))*

Dear Career Coach Lisa,

I have been working for 6 months as a RN (Registered Nurse). I am always asking questions when I am not sure how to do something. Why do so many more experienced RNs doubt me by telling me how to do something even if I know how to perform the procedure? What should I do?

Thanks,  
L.G., Millburn

You are in a field that has potentially life-threatening consequences if done wrong. The fact that you are aware enough to ask when unsure is a good thing. The biggest challenge for many new hires is knowing when to proceed and when to ask for help. In nursing school, there was probably a lot of instructional guidance given. It sounds like you are taking your work very seriously.

By asking repeatedly about a procedure, you may be undermining the staff's confidence in you. Are you truly unsure or just not feeling confident enough to proceed? If you have done a procedure before successfully, ask yourself "do I need to review the protocol?" If you are unsure, you may want to ask an experienced colleague to stand by if possible, while you perform the procedure. It will demonstrate your abilities and confirm your knowledge. If you are unable to complete the procedure, your experienced colleague will be there for assistance.

Respect your colleague's time. When working in a team, understand that your co-workers have other responsibilities they are juggling. If you are asking for help, figure out how to return the favor by helping them in an area you are strong in.

Another option may be to create a study group with other RNs to practice procedures, review protocols and share best practices. Consider asking some of the more experienced RNs to honor this group by offering their expertise and mentoring. You may consider creating a social club for RNs, such as a book or movie discussion group that can meet in person or over a social media site. You may consider joining some professional associations for gaining additional knowledge and best practices.

Connecting with colleagues is important when building trust within relationships. Creating genuine caring relationships with your team members while balancing the workload is important. Self-awareness of one's behavior is the key. The faster you can build the emotional intelligence through raising their self-awareness, the faster your team will integrate and the happier they will be to work together. A team consists of multiple styles and various experience levels. Respect for one another, understanding each other's

strengths and how to support one another is very important. New talent is important and necessary and the blend of wisdom gained from experience with new creative ideas usually yields the best and brightest options.

*"Ask the Career Coach" is a column dedicated to those who may be in transition or wrestling with a career dilemma by providing a forum for advice. We welcome your questions. Please send them to [CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com](mailto:CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com).*

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