HOW TO STOP FEELING JUDGED AND INSECURE IN YOUR NEW JOB

coaching guide



created by Erin Foley PhD
ErinMFoley.com



Welcome! I'm so glad you grabbed this guide to help you get past the insecurity and second-guessing that can take over in a new role. Too many smart professionals silently spin in doubt and end up holding themselves back from adjusting, performing, and actually enjoying their work.

You don't need generic pep talks—you need a clear way to understand what's happening in your mind and how to shift it.

This is exactly what I do in my 1:1 coaching program. I help professionals move through the real mental patterns that show up during transitions—patterns like perfectionism, fear of judgment, and chronic self-doubt. Together, we get to the root of what's fueling your doubt and shift the patterns that are keeping you stuck. If you'd like to learn more about working together, you can book a free consultation below.

Book your free 30-minute consultation →

The truth is, work life brings up all the stuff—our fears, our old stories, our desire to prove ourselves. And that's not a sign that something's wrong with you. It's a sign you're human. This guide will help you start seeing what's underneath your insecurity—and how to get free from it.
Let's get started. I promise it's 100% worth it.

– Erin

Before you dive in...

Understanding how your insecurities are influencing your work experience can be a little tricky for the mind. Your mind is GREAT at finding evidence to prove whatever it is that you fear. If you aren't aware--your mind will prove your deepest fears over and over again.

The KEY to getting some freedom from this insecurity is to **SLOW YOUR BRAIN DOWN.**

That means working through this guide slower than you likely want. I know we all desire a quick fix (I have the patience of a flea), but when you are dealing with deep insecurities, you need to give the mind enough space to REALLY see what's going on.

So again--work through each section slowly. Pause and allow your mind to consider what's being asked. Make space to consider what you are seeing so breakthroughs can occur.

Let's get started.



Answer the following questions

1. The thing I am MOST afraid people at work will think about me is_____ (pick 1 answer only)

EXAMPLE: The thing I am MOST afraid people at work will think about me is that I am not competent enough for this job.

2. Reflect on 3 other times in your life when you remember worrying that people would think this about you.

EXAMPLE:

- When I was in graduate school, I often worried that people didn't think I was competent enough to be there.
- When I was in math class as a child, I often felt like the teacher thought I was incompetent.
- When I was presenting at conferences, I felt like the audience thought my work wasn't competent.

3. Take a moment to zoom out on your life overall. Is this a fear that you would say has been familiar to you throughout your life? When did it start?

EXAMPLE: Yes. I have feared being seen as incompetent every time I started any new phase in school or work. I remember this starting when I was in 3rd grade when my teacher told me that I wasn't very good at math.

STEP 1

The first step to getting out of feeling this insecurity so deeply is to have TOTAL AWARENESS of what your actual insecurity is, and to take ownership of the fact that it's coming from you. Knowing this will help you to be on the alert for your tendency to see this happening when it's often not happening. Your mind is primed to create drama around ANYTHING that it can turn into your insecurity.

Below I want you to take ownership of this insecurity. It's not an objective reality. It's something your mind is scared of.

4. I worry that I am _____ (fill in the blank with the insecurity you listed above.)

EXAMPLE : I worry that I am not competent enough.

Reflection

Sit with this for a bit. Let your mind really see how much this insecurity has shown up in your life. Allow your mind the space to consider the possibility that you are moving through the world wearing a pair of glasses that hyper-focuses on any situation or evidence that your fear is real.

For example, If I worry that I am not competent enough, I am going to be unconsciously searching for examples in my daily life that people feel this way. Even worse, I will assume everyone is thinking this.

Reflection cont.

Let's break down a work situation with my example of fearing that I am not competent enough.

My boss calls me in to offer me some feedback on my work since joining the team. She says:

"You are doing a good job. I am happy you joined the team. One area I would like to see you develop more is your sales strategy."

Knowing that my top insecurity is that people will see me as not competent enough, what do you think I will make this feedback mean?

Not a trick question. I will think--MY BOSS DOESN'T THINK I AM COMPETENT ENOUGH.

If we look objectively, did my boss say that? If we were in a court of law and the prosecutor is arguing that this boss thinks Erin isn't competent enough to do this job, **does she have evidence to prove this beyond a reasonable doubt?**

NO.

In fact, someone else could argue that the feedback I was given shows that my boss thinks I am doing a good job (she actually said this) and sees me as totally competent. She wouldn't ask me to improve upon an area if she didn't see me as totally competent enough to learn more and improve

Reflection cont.

See how a different spin on the same feedback changes everything?

If I walk away deciding my boss thinks I am NOT competent, I am going to be suffering a major confidence crisis, my mind will spin for days, and I will take action from a place of total fear and desperation.

If I walk away and believe my boss thinks I am doing a good job and she is simply offering me helpful feedback to do even better-- I am going to walk away feeling fine and even motivated to learn more.

STEP 2

The second way that you stop letting your insecurities run this show is to suck the mind drama OUT of any situation where you're feeling this deep insecurity. Rather than spinning in the mind story, list the FACTS of what happened and allow yourself to really consider the possibility that YOUR MIND projected your fear onto this encounter.

Key: Always focus on a specific situation. If you try to simply "work on your feelings of incompetence at work" you will stay stuck. The mind needs you to look critically at a SPECIFIC MOMENT when you felt this insecurity come up.

Back to some new questions

1. Think of a recent work situation where you felt your above insecurity in full force. Be specific. An actual moment you felt it. What was going on? Who were you talking to when you felt the insecurity? Were you in a meeting? Getting feedback from your boss? Overhearing other co-workers? What are the FACTS of what was going on? Careful here. ONLY list the court of law facts on what was happening.

HINT: If you list anything that an outsider can't objectively observe and agree upon, you are listing assumptions or opinions. For example: My boss was rude. This is subjective. Everyone who observes this interaction might not agree. Be factual. My boss said "you suck at this job" would be the court of law fact. Again, facts only--My boss doesn't appreciate my hard work --isn't a fact. That's an opinion. My boss didn't say thank you to me when I sent out an email to the team, would be a fact (everyone who observes that situation could agree upon that).

Reflection

Take a moment to consider that your insecurity was running the show when you first interpreted this encounter. Your history of carrying around this insecurity was clouding your ability to see facts from fears. Your mind created WAY MORE DRAMA around it.

If you suck out the drama can you see things slightly different?

STEP 3

The final step to get freedom from this insecurity taking over is to look for evidence that is in direct contradiction to your insecurity. Hint: Keep your focus on the specific situation you looked at above.

CAUTION: The next section is often the most challenging one for the mind. If you feel resistance, that's normal. Take your time. Sit with each response that you give and ask yourself “does this response make me feel more free from the insecurity, or does it reinforce the insecurity?” You are looking for examples that FREE you from the insecurity.

1. If you had to search for some evidence that your fear was running the show what do you see? In other words, do you see any evidence that people aren’t actually judging you in this way? Take your time. Look for evidence that in this situation people/person did NOT believe you were_____.

EXAMPLE: Evidence that my boss did NOT believe that I am not competent enough. --My boss said I was doing a good job, My boss said she was happy I joined the team. My boss gave me a project to do that requires competence so she must think I am competent.

Debrief

You can work through these same steps with any insecurity that comes up for you at work. Slow down your mind and work yourself through the steps.

If your mind is feeling a bit skeptical that this process just isn't going to work for YOUR specific circumstance--that's fine. Nearly everyone I work with feels certain that they are dealing with a unique insecurity that is TRUE.

I want you to slowly allow yourself to consider the possibility that your fears are running the show and are priming you to frequently see things in an exaggerated way.

Once you gain awareness that your insecurity is spilling all over your interpretation of your work experience, you can begin the work of shifting your OWN perception on it.

Let's Review

- The first step to getting out of feeling this insecurity so deeply is to have TOTAL AWARENESS of what your actual insecurity is, and to take ownership of the fact that it's coming from you.

- The second way that you stop letting your insecurities run this show is to suck the mind drama OUT of any situation where you're feeling this deep insecurity. List the FACTS.

- The final step to get freedom from this insecurity taking over is to look for evidence that is in direct contradiction to your insecurity. Hint: Keep your focus on the specific situation you looked at above.

In their words



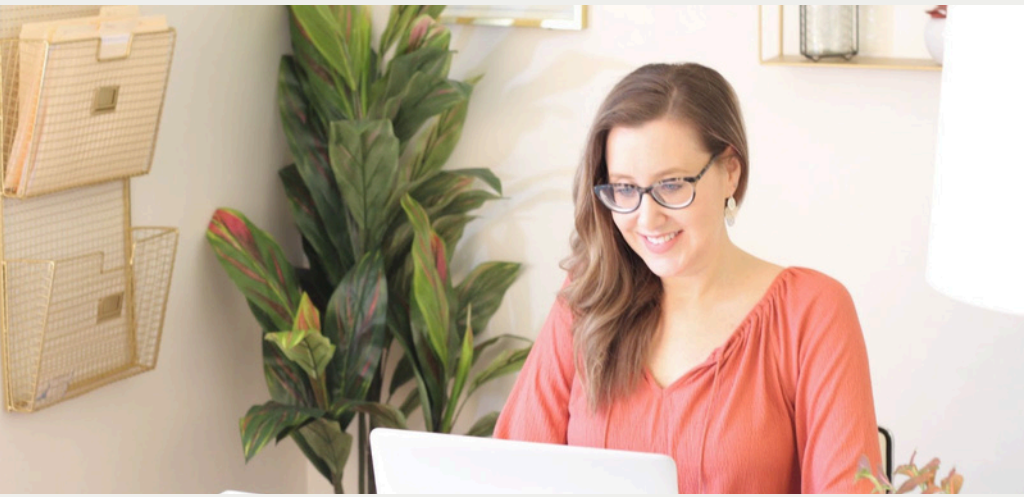
“Before working with Erin I was completely paralyzed with fear. I was comparing myself to others and always worried about what my coworkers thought of me. I feared I wasn’t qualified for my job... Since working with Erin, I am confident and decisive and so much more efficient navigating my day to day tasks.”
— Karyn T.



“I was skeptical at first and even said there’s no way she (Erin) can make me suddenly feel capable. As of our last session, I feel more ready than ever to tackle obstacles and reach my goals.”
— Tyisha W.



“Erin has been by far the most helpful in getting quick results and bringing almost instant relief to the stress I was experiencing.”
— Julie S.



Congratulations on taking responsibility for what your mind is doing. Left unattended the mind can take over and keep us trapped in a spiral of fears.

When we allow our insecurities and fears to run the show it has a direct impact on how we show up to work, the risks we will take, how often we speak up, and ultimately, how successful we allow ourselves to be.

Most of my clients find this fear shows up in many parts of their work. Working with a coach can make a significant difference. If you're in a new job or role and want support, let's talk. The free 30-minute consultation is a conversation to see if working together is a good fit.

Grab a free consultation

"I absolutely love my new job now and embrace the challenges that come up rather than being paralysed with fear at every new email and task."
— Elaine M.

Thanks for trusting me to help you navigate your insecurity.

More to come,
Erin