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# IDENTIFYING AND OVERCOMING IMPOSTER SYNDROME



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**What 3 words come to mind  
when you think about  
Imposter Syndrome?**



**Which of these three definitions of imposter syndrome do you think is correct?**



# How often do you experience this?

# **Identifying and overcoming imposter syndrome**

Petra Wilton - Director of Policy & External Affairs  
Chartered Management Institute

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# About CMI

- The only organisation that can award Chartered Manager (CMgr) status.
- A professional body with charitable status - 77 years of inspiring managers to become successful, confident leaders.
- Offering professional membership, qualifications, accreditations, events, thought leadership, research and online resources.
- Over 220,000 members globally, spanning over 170 countries.
- Over 900 University & Education Partners globally.



## OUR VISION

Better led and managed organisations

## OUR MISSION

Increase the number and standard of professionally qualified managers and leaders

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit our website at:  
<https://www.managers.org.uk/>

**OUR VALUES:** PROGRESSIVE • PRACTICAL • PROFESSIONAL • PASSIONATE



# Accidental Managers

**8.4m managers  
in the UK - 1 in 4  
of the workforce**

**82% of  
managers  
haven't had  
training – they  
are “accidental  
managers”**

**52% of  
managers do  
not hold any  
management  
and leadership  
qualifications**



# Why does management matter?

## Good Management:

- 23% boost to organisational performance
- 32% increase in employee engagement and productivity

## Bad Management:

- Biggest cause of insolvency in SMEs
- #1 cause of quitting
- Fosters 'imposter syndrome'



# What is imposter syndrome?

It is best described as strong feelings of self-doubt and low self-confidence that make you unable to own your own successes.

You may feel like a fraud or that your achievements are due to luck, not skill.

This can lead to anxiety, stress and harm your mental health.

Imposter syndrome can trigger your “fight or flight” response.

**70%**

Estimate of people that have experienced imposter syndrome at some point in their lives

**50%**

Of people experienced it “regularly” or “daily” in the past year

**25%**

Of people who experience imposter syndrome are aware of what it is

# Workplace Culture

Workplace culture can also play a big part in feelings of self-doubt and imposter syndrome.

These groups are particularly vulnerable to feeling like they don't belong, as this is reflected back to them in their experience of the world:

- Ethnic Minority
- Socio-Economic
- Women
- LGBTQ+

The cause of imposter syndrome is unique to each person.



# The impact of training cannot be underestimated

## Key Insights from CMI's *Walking the Walk* Report:

- **Management training boosts inclusivity:** Employees with trained managers feel more supported (87% vs 38%), fairly treated (90% vs 47%), and able to be themselves (91% vs 55%).
- **Senior leadership matters most:** Leadership diversity and behaviors drive inclusion more than data collection or action planning alone.
- **Inclusive cultures improve wellbeing:** Job satisfaction is higher where inclusion is a deemed business-critical (79% vs 52%).
- **Supportive managers are key:** The biggest factor in feeling included at work (60%).



# Why this matters?

MANAGER + FORMAL TRAINING =  
BETTER MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES

Managers with formal management and leadership training are significantly more likely to have confidence in their own management abilities



# CHARTERED MANAGER

Turning accidental managers into conscious, inclusive leaders

## MOTIVATED TEAM

Reduce recruitment costs and boost performance with a satisfied, loyal team.



**95%**

of managers agree that Chartered Manager status demonstrates the ability to use managerial skills to achieve organisational results.



**86%**

agree becoming Chartered made them a more inclusive manager.



**69%**

of managers agree that becoming Chartered has increased their productivity at work.

## PROVEN CREDIBILITY

Assure stakeholders of your team's professional integrity and competence.



**95%**

say Chartered Manager status demonstrates integrity and ethical conduct.



**96%**

of managers agree that Chartered Manager status shows they have the skills to be a highly effective leader.

## It is just the beginning.

As an alumni of the **HELP TO GROW:** Management Course, you benefit from 6 months of free CMI membership and discounted Chartered Manager assessment.



Gain further recognition for your management skills.



Access resources and tools to help grow your business.



Increase your network.

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HM Government

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Chartered  
Management  
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Claim your free  
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**CMI**

# Speakers



**Michaela  
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Imposter Syndrome and  
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[www.managers.org.uk](http://www.managers.org.uk)  
#BetterManagers

# Understanding Imposter Syndrome

Michaela Smith

27<sup>th</sup> March 2025

# What is IMPOSTER SYNDROME?



A secret belief of  
not being good enough  
and being discovered as fraud  
*DESPITE*  
the evidence of our success.

## Conscious mind 10%

- Will Power
- Short Term Memory
- Logical Thinking
- Critical Thinking

## Subconscious mind 90%

- Beliefs
- Emotions
- Habits
- Values
- Protective reactions
- Long term memory
- Imagination
- Intuition



# NERVOUS SYSTEM - SEVEN TEAM MEMBERS

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**NEUROCEPTION**  
(a threat detector)

**3 STATES**  
of Regulated  
nervous system

**3 STATES**  
of Dysregulated  
nervous system

# STATES OF A REGULATED NS - VENTRAL

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## Social Engagement

- Foundation of Regulation
- Calm, grounded, safe
- Open to connection
- Problem solving
- Experiencing joy

## Play

- Safety with Energy
- Curiosity
- Playfulness
- Creativity
- Engaging with the world in a light-hearted way

## Stillness or Rest

- Calm with Relaxation
- Being present in a peaceful moment
- True rest
- Nourishment

# STATES OF A DYSREGULATED NERVOUS SYSTEM

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## Fight or Flight

- Activation
- Mobilisation
- Ready to defend ourselves
- Or Run away
- Anxious, panicked, angry
- Heart racing

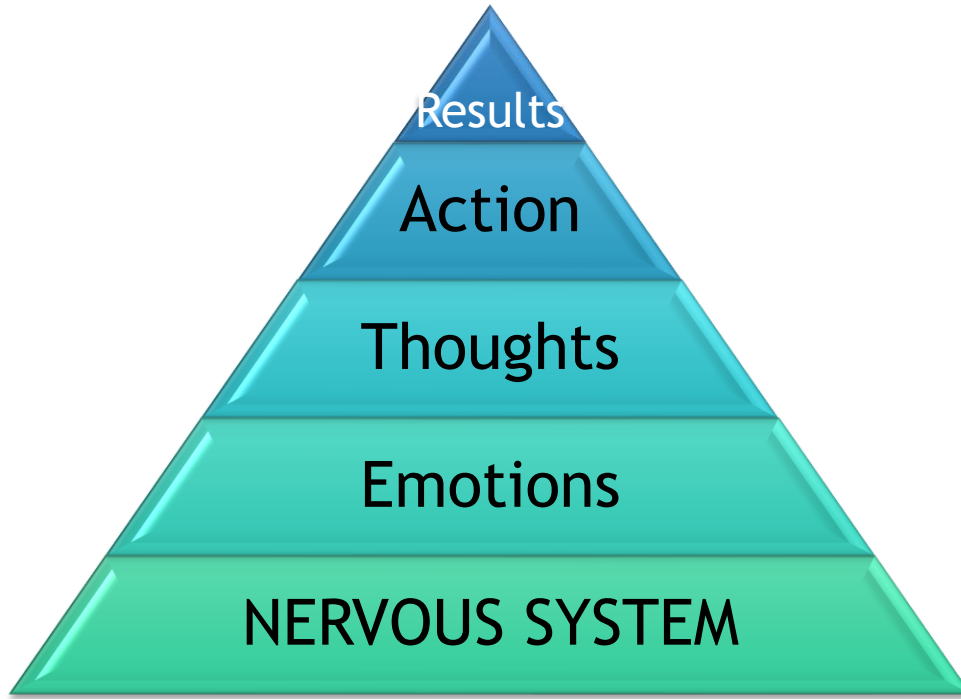
## Shutdown

- Withdraw
- Disconnect
- Response to feeling overwhelmed
- Numbness
- Exhaustion
- No engagement

## Freeze

- Blend of 1 and 2
- Stuck
- Awareness is heightened
- Fearful
- Unable to move and act

# Results Pyramid





# Hello...



Slovakia



UAE



Vietnam



Japan



UK&I



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**Skate  
Sanctuary**

**RGA**  
**STUDIO & SHOP**  
**HOME OF ROLLER GIRL GANG**



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# IMPOSTER SYNDROME is....

Imposter Syndrome  
is trying to

**PROTECT YOU!!!!**

People Pleasing

Procrastinating

Over-Compensating

Perfectionism

Over-Explaining

Differentiate.....

**REGULATE** and take action

**VS**

**COPE** and procrastinate or/and stay small



# A tool for overwhelm and procrastination

1. Regulate - come to a present moment / to your body
2. Break the task to smaller steps (10 more steps than what you thought)
3. Orient (system is ready for what's going to go wrong)
4. Take action - 1 step
5. Regulate again - come to a present moment

# Immunity to change framework

**S - M - A - R - T**

**S & M - Safe & Modest**

**A - Actionable**

**R - Research New Data**

**T - Timely**

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Imposter Syndrome  
1-2-1 Programme

FREE SESSION

Newsletter



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**LEAVE YOUR FEEDBACK** FOR THE  
HELP TO GROW: MANAGEMENT  
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