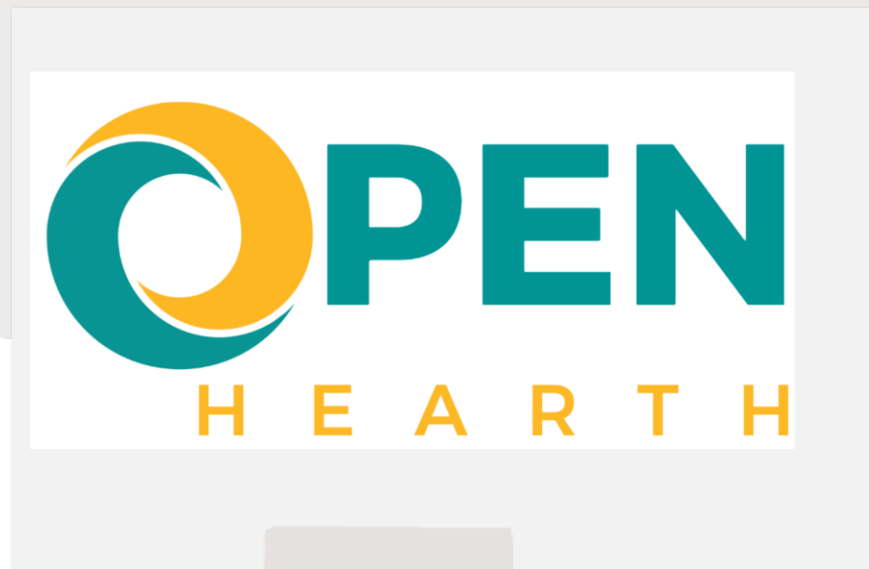


Open Hearth Mentorship Network Retreat June 9 - 10

A partnership initiative with Capacity Canada
Community Sector Council, CSCNL, June, 2026



Retreat Agenda June 9-10, 2026



June 9, 2026

1:30 pm – 2pm

Registration

2 pm – 3 pm

Welcome

- Land Acknowledgement
- Expectations/progress to date
- Feedback and Suggestions
- Housekeeping
- Resources

Connection Activities

3 pm – 4:30 pm

Putting an End to Imposter Syndrome
- Sonia Byrne

6pm

Barbecue/Networking

June 10, 2026

8 am – 9 am

Breakfast

9 am – 10:15 am

Leadership Development and Career Growth:
Connecting Through a Networked Learning Approach
- Capacity Canada

10:15 am – 10:45 am

Networking Break

10:45 am – noon

Assertive Communications tips
- Christine Snow/Lindsey Hynes

Feedback forms

Land Acknowledgement

[Land acknowledgement](#)



Session Objectives



- **By the end of this session, you will:**
 - ✓ Reflect on your mentorship journey so far
 - ✓ Celebrate growth, learning, and accomplishments
 - ✓ Connect with mentors, mentees, and peers
 - ✓ Explore supports and opportunities for continued success
 - ✓ Set intentions for the remainder of the program

Housekeeping



- Check-in at 4, check-out at 11
- Rooms have been assigned and paid for, all rooms individual occupancy;
- Meals and breaks have been paid for, bar service provided for dinner
- After hours refreshments and miscellaneous expenses are your own responsibility
- Travel claims provided
- Bathrooms
- Fire Exits

Expectations and Progress to Date



1. Looking Back

- What has been the most meaningful part of your mentorship experience so far?

2. Growth and Impact

- How has this mentorship experience influenced your confidence, leadership, career, or personal growth?

3. Support and Community

- What has helped you feel supported, connected, or empowered through this program?

4. Looking Ahead

- What would make the remainder of this mentorship journey meaningful and successful for you?

Resources



<https://cscnl.ca/ourworks/open-hearth/>

- Participant Directory (password protected)
- Community Guidelines
- Sample Mentor-Mentee Agreement
- Workbook: Thoughts and Suggestions for both Mentee and Mentor
- Retreat Presentation

Connection Activities



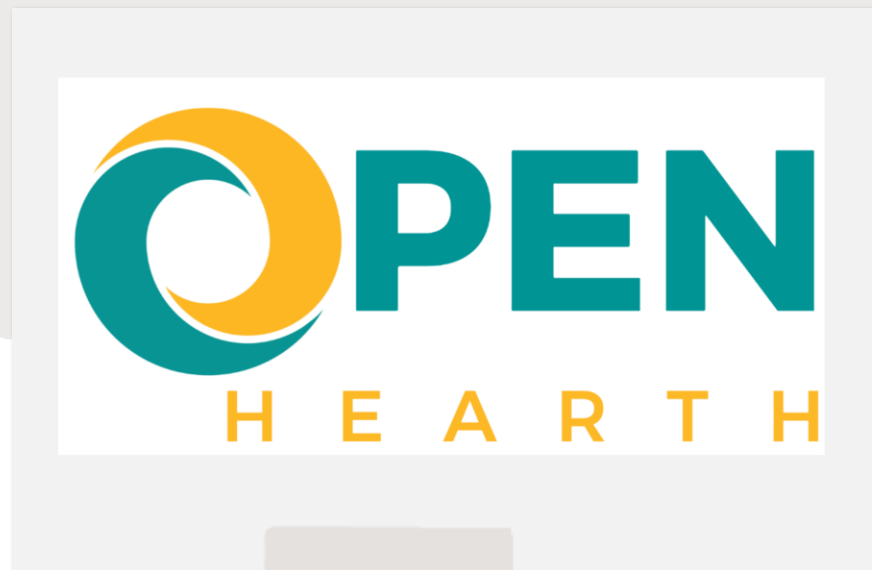
Sonia Byrne



Putting an End to Imposter Syndrome:

An overview of thought-changing tips,
tools and skills for women and gender
diverse individuals in business”

Barbecue/ Networking



6:00 pm



CAPACITYCANADA

Leadership Development and Career Growth: Connecting Through a Networked Learning Approach

Newfoundland & Labrador Retreat

10 June 2026



Funded by



Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada

What we'll be doing this session

- Engage in **rotating small-group conversations** on leadership development and career growth.
- **Share experiences, insights, and ideas** while building connections with others.
- **Learn from each other** to surface practical strategies and support collective growth.



The World Café Format

1

Conversations (10 min)

- **Individual reflection (2 min):** participants will write their responses on sticky notes for the two questions at their table.
- Discuss the questions, share your experiences, listen deeply when others share.
- While each question is framed for mentors or mentees, everyone is encouraged to contribute their perspectives, experiences, and insights to either question.
- Your table facilitator will gather sticky notes and group similar ideas.

2

Rotation (2 min/ table)

- Participants move to the table on their left.
- Place a dot for ideas that personally resonate with you.
- Add on previous insights and add your own thoughts with sticky notes.
- Move to the next table when time is up.

3

Group Debrief (2 min/ table)

- Each table will share key insights: themes across tables, common threads, unique perspectives.



Table Prompts

Table	For Mentors	For Mentees
1	What guidance would you offer someone navigating the transition into leadership?	What kind of guidance or insight do you feel you need most right now?
2	What strategies have helped you grow your confidence and voice as a leader?	What would help you feel more confident stepping into leadership opportunities?
3	How have you navigated barriers or setbacks in your career?	What barriers are you currently facing, and what support would help you move through them?
4	What do you wish you had known or access to earlier in your career?	What resources or opportunities do you feel are missing in your leadership journey?
5	What approaches to networking have been most effective in your career, and what hasn't worked as well?	What feels unclear or difficult about networking for you, and what would make it feel more accessible or authentic?



Table Prompts

Table	For Mentors	For Mentees
1	What helpful insight could you offer to others navigating their leadership journey?	What guidance are you looking for as you navigate your leadership journey?
2	What strategies have helped you grow your confidence and voice as a leader?	What would help you feel more confident stepping into leadership opportunities?
3	What do you wish you had known or access to earlier in your career?	What resources or opportunities do you feel are missing in your leadership journey?
4	What approaches to networking have been most effective in your career, and what hasn't worked as well?	What feels unclear or difficult about networking for you, and what would make it feel more accessible or authentic?





CAPACITYCANADA

Thank You

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Assertive Communication: From Hesitancy to Certainty



To support participants in building practical assertive communication skills that increase confidence, strengthen boundaries and enhance their ability to advocate for themselves in workplace and leadership settings.

Assertive Communication: Learning Objectives









- Understand assertive communication
- Strengthen boundaries
- Practice difficult conversations
- Build confidence through intentional communication

Communication Styles



COMMUNICATION STYLES: KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

How we communicate impacts our relationships, our work, and our well-being.

	PASSIVE I don't matter.	ASSERTIVE I matter. You matter.	AGGRESSIVE I matter more.
 MINDSET	I don't want to bother others or cause conflict.	I have the right to express my needs and opinions respectfully.	My needs and opinions are most important.
 HOW IT SOUNDS	"It's fine." "I don't mind." "Whatever you think."	"Here's what I think..." "I'd like..." "I need..." "Can we..."	"You always..." "You never..." "Do it my way." "That's not my problem."
 BODY LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoids eye contact Slouched posture Small voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open posture Steady eye contact Calm, confident tone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaning in Pointing, invading space Loud or demanding tone
 IMPACT ON YOURSELF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel ignored Resentment builds Needs don't get met Low self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel respected Needs are met Stronger relationships High self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stress and frustration Damaged relationships Others feel hurt or defensive Conflict increases
 IMPACT ON OTHERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May feel burdened May take advantage May not hear how you really feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel respected Clear understanding More open communication Stronger collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel intimidated May become defensive Trust breaks down Conflict increases
 GOAL	Avoid conflict Keep the peace	Find solutions Build understanding Create win-win outcomes	Win at all costs Get your way



KEY TAKEAWAY

Assertive communication is about balance—expressing yourself with clarity and confidence while respecting others. It reduces conflict and builds stronger, healthier relationships.



- What style do you tend to default to when under pressure, stressed or facing conflict?
- How do workplace expectations, power dynamics or social message influence the way you communicate?

Understanding Assertive Communication



- Assertive communication is the ability to express your thoughts, needs, concerns, and boundaries clearly, respectfully, and confidently.
- Common myths:
 - Assertive people are aggressive.
 - Assertiveness comes naturally.
 - Being assertive creates conflict.
- Reality:
 - Assertiveness is a learned skill that helps create clarity, trust, and healthier relationships.

Why Speaking Up Can be Difficult



- Internal barriers include fear of conflict, perfectionism, imposter syndrome, and fear of rejection.
- External barriers include power dynamics, workplace culture, bias, discrimination, and lack of psychological safety.
- Women and gender diverse folks often receive conflicting messages about leadership and communication.

What gets in the way of you speaking up when something matters to you?

- i.e. Confidence, fear of conflict, being judge, power dynamics
- When do you feel most empowered to use your voice, and what conditions make that possible?

Assertiveness Exists on a Continuum

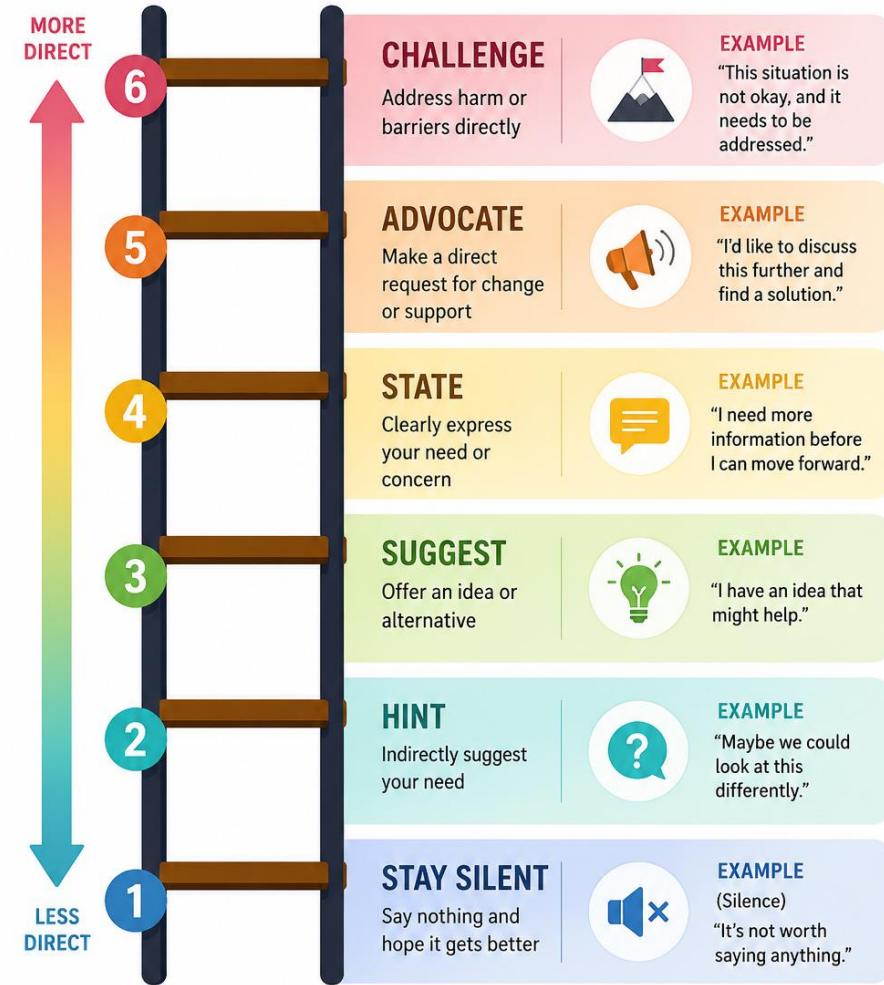


- Where do you find yourself on the ladder?
- Are there situations where moving up the ladder feels easier or harder because of your identity, role or workplace culture?
- Why? What support would help?

THE ASSERTIVENESS LADDER

Small steps. Stronger voice. Greater impact.

Assertiveness is a skill you can build. You don't have to jump from silence to confrontation. Move one step up the ladder.



Goal is not about perfection but moving one step higher



REMEMBER:

Every step counts. Your voice matters. You get to choose the step that feels right for you, in this moment.

REFLECTION:

Where do you usually find yourself on the ladder? Where would you like to be?



Assertiveness Ladder: What it Sounds Like?



Stay Silent: "I'll just let it go."

- Possible impact: Frustration, Resentment, Unmet needs

Hint: "Maybe we could look at this differently."

- Possible impact: May not be understood

Suggest: "I have an idea I'd like to share."

- Possible impact: Greater visibility

State: "I need more information before moving forward."

- Possible impact: Increased clarity

Advocate: "I'd like to discuss expectations."

- Possible impact: Promotes accountability

Challenge: "This situation needs to be addressed."

- Possible impact: Addresses systemic issues

Looking at the Assertiveness Ladder and the examples of what each level sounds like, which statement sounds most like you—and which statement would you like to sound more like?

Identity, Power and Communication



Have you ever found yourself carefully considering how your message would be received before deciding whether to speak up? What factors influenced that decision?

What can leaders do to reduce unhealthy power dynamics and create environments where people feel safe to speak up?

Understanding Power

Power can influence:

- Who feels comfortable speaking
- Whose ideas are heard
- Who receives credit
- Who experiences pushback

Questions for Reflection

- Consider:
- When do I feel most confident speaking up?
- When do I feel least confident?
- How do power dynamics impact my communication?

Strategic Assertiveness

- Being assertive does not mean speaking up in every situation.
- Effective communicators consider:
- Safety
- Context
- Relationships
- Goals

CLEAR Communication Model

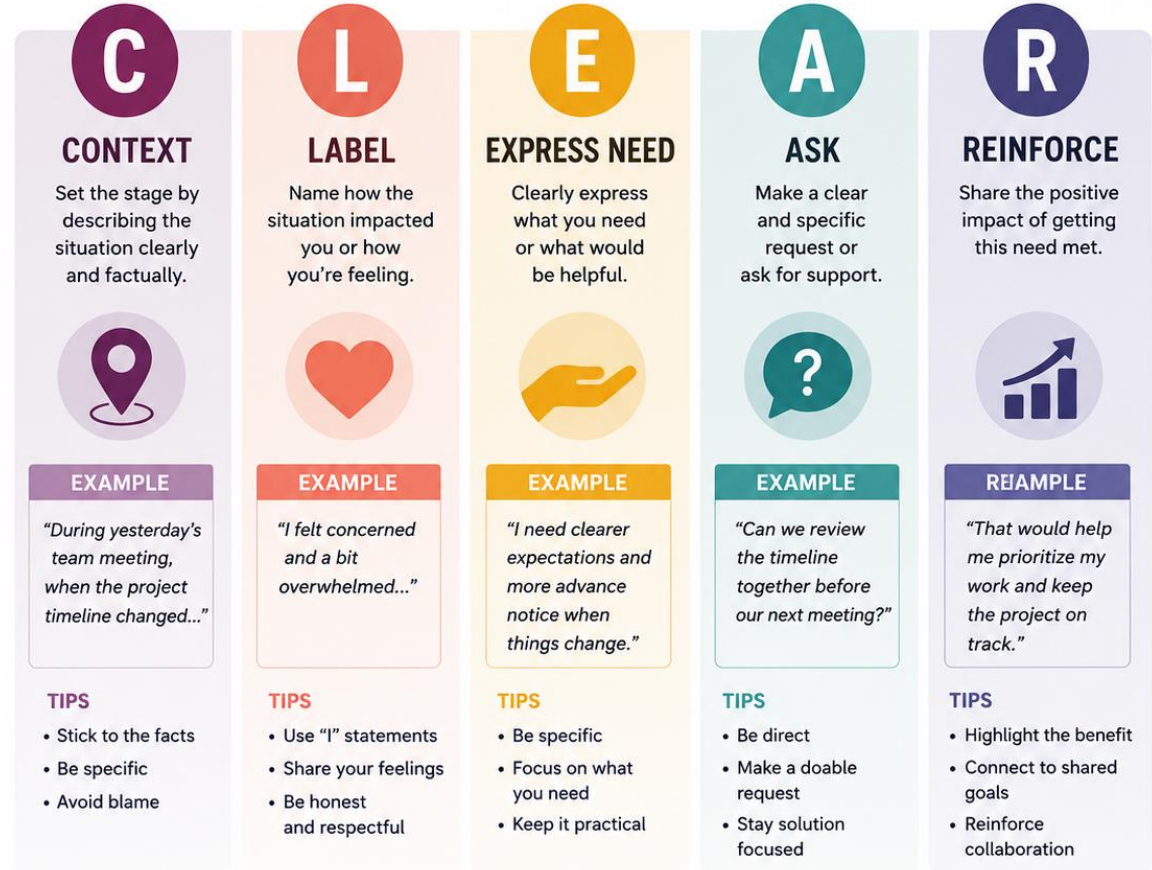


Think about a conversation you've been avoiding, how could CLEAR model help you approach the conversation with confidence and clarity.

THE CLEAR COMMUNICATION MODEL

Communicate with Clarity. Lead with Confidence.

The CLEAR model helps you express your needs, set boundaries, and have confident conversations that build understanding and respect.



WHY IT WORKS

CLEAR helps you communicate with confidence while honoring the other person. It reduces misunderstandings, builds trust, and leads to better outcomes for everyone.

REMEMBER

- ✓ Be respectful, not apologetic.
- ✓ Stay calm and grounded.
- ✓ You have a right to your needs.
- ✓ Practice makes progress!

Your voice matters. Use it with clarity and confidence.



Boundary Setting ToolKit



What is a Boundary?

- A boundary is a limit that protects your time, energy, wellbeing, and priorities.

Signs You May Need Better Boundaries

- Frequently overwhelmed
- Difficulty saying no
- Resentment toward colleagues
- Constantly working beyond capacity
- Feeling responsible for everyone's needs

• **Boundary Formula**

- "I'm not able to X, but I can Y."
- Examples:
 - "I'm not available this afternoon, but I can review it tomorrow morning."
 - "I'm unable to lead this project, but I can provide feedback."

What boundary do you need to set but have been more hesitant to communicate? What's making it difficult?
What would become possible if respected.

Power Phrase Library



Speaking Up

- "I'd like to add another perspective."
- "I'd like to revisit that point."

Meetings

- "I wasn't finished yet."
- "Can we return to that idea?"

Boundaries

- "That isn't something I can commit to right now."
- "I don't have capacity for that."
-

Advocacy













- "Can we discuss expectations?"
- "I'd like clarification regarding my role."

Which phrase feels most useful to you right now and in what situation can you see yourself using it?

WORKPLACE SCENARIOS

Speak Up. Set Boundaries. Lead with Confidence.

Real situations. Practical responses. Healthier workplaces for everyone.

SCENARIO	WHAT'S HAPPENING?	WHY IT MATTERS	EXAMPLE RESPONSE (ASSERTIVE)
 1. INTERRUPTED IN MEETINGS	You are repeatedly interrupted or talked over when you speak.	Your ideas may not be heard, your confidence can be undermined, and it sets a pattern that others follow.	<p>"I'd like to finish my thought. Thank you. As I was saying..."</p> 
 2. UNREALISTIC DEADLINES	You're given a tight deadline without enough time or resources.	Leads to stress, burnout, and may impact the quality of your work.	<p>I want to make sure I deliver quality work. Can we discuss adjusting the timeline or prioritizing tasks?"</p> 
 3. UNCLEAR EXPECTATIONS	You are unsure about priorities, roles, or what success looks like.	Creates confusion, missed expectations, and extra work.	<p>I want to ensure I'm on the right track. Could you clarify your expectations for this?"</p> 
 4. DOING UNSEEN LABOR	You are asked to take on extra tasks that are not part of your role (often unacknowledged).	Can lead to burnout and reinforces inequitable distribution of work.	<p>I care about supporting the team. I want to make sure our work is distributed equitably."</p> 
 5. INAPPROPRIATE COMMENTS	A colleague makes a comment that is sexist, racist, ableist, or otherwise inappropriate.	Creates an unwelcoming environment and can be harmful to individuals and team culture.	<p>That comment isn't appropriate. Let's keep our discussions respectful and inclusive."</p> 
 6. MISGENDERING	A colleague uses the wrong name or pronouns for you, intentionally or repeatedly.	Can be hurtful and invalidating. It impacts your sense of safety, respect, and belonging.	<p>I use they/them pronouns. I'd appreciate your support in using those consistently."</p> 
 7. NO TIME FOR YOU	You are overwhelmed and have no time for focus or self-care.	Impacts your well-being, productivity, and long-term sustainability.	<p>I want to show up fully for our work. I need to protect time to focus and recharge."</p> 

What workplace scenario feels most familiar to you and what would an assertive response look like?

REMEMBER:
You have a right to clear communication, respect, and a healthy work environment.

YOU MATTER. YOUR VOICE MATTERS.
Practicing assertive communication helps you advocate for yourself and contributes to a stronger, more equitable workplace for all.

Small conversations create big change. 

Difficult Conversations



Think about a difficult conversation you are currently avoiding, what is one step that you could take to move the conversation forward.



Difficult Conversations

Courage • Clarity • Respect • Connection

“It's not about being right. It's about being respectfully honest.”

BEFORE the Conversation

- What outcome do I want?
- What is within my control?
- What assumptions am I making?
- What do I need to stay centered and grounded?
- Is this the right time, place and person?

DURING the Conversation



AFTER the Conversation

- Reflect: What went well? What could I do differently?
- Follow up if needed.
- Agree on clear next steps.
- Acknowledge your courage. You showed up for yourself and others.

USEFUL PHRASES

"I want to talk about something important."

"Here's what I observed..."

"Here's how I feel about that..."

"Here's what I need..."

"What ideas do you have?"



Remember: You have the right to...

- Speak your truth
- Be treated with respect
- Set boundaries
- Ask for what you need

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

- Increased clarity & understanding
- Stronger relationships
- Better solutions & collaboration
- Greater trust & psychological safety
- Growth for you and your team

Thank-you



STRONG LEADERS. CLEAR COMMUNICATION.

Stronger Workplaces. Greater Impact.

Leadership is not about having all the answers—it's about creating the space for people to be heard, valued, and empowered to do their best work.

STRONG LEADERS...



LEAD WITH EMPATHY

They listen deeply, seek to understand, and value diverse perspectives.



COMMUNICATE WITH INTENTION

They express themselves clearly, respectfully, and with purpose.



SPEAK UP FOR WHAT MATTERS

They have the courage to advocate, set boundaries, and address challenges.



EMPOWER OTHERS

They create space for others to lead, contribute, and grow.



NAVIGATE CHALLENGES

They approach difficult conversations with respect, curiosity, and a solutions focus.



DRIVE MEANINGFUL RESULTS

They build trust, foster collaboration, and create positive, lasting impact.



YOUR VOICE IS YOUR POWER.

Use it to lead with courage, connect with respect, and create change that lasts.

REMEMBER:

- ✓ You don't need to be perfect. You just need to be present.
- ✓ Every conversation is an opportunity to build trust and understanding.
- ✓ When we communicate well, we lead well—together.



LET'S CONTINUE TO LEAD WITH OPEN HEARTS, CLEAR VOICES, AND BOLD ACTION.

Together, we build stronger teams, healthier workplaces, and a better world.





PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

Small Steps. Stronger Impact.

I commit to showing up with confidence, communicating with clarity, and leading with authenticity—every day.



MY COMMITMENT

Why is improving my communication and leadership important to me?

MY FOCUS AREAS

Choose 1–3 areas where you want to grow.



SPEAK WITH CONFIDENCE

Share my ideas, ask questions, and express my needs clearly.



BUILD STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

Listen actively, show empathy, and foster trust with others.



SET & RESPECT BOUNDARIES

Communicate my boundaries and respect others' boundaries.



NAVIGATE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Address challenges with courage, respect, and curiosity.



LEAD WITH IMPACT

Use my voice to inspire, advocate, and create positive change.

MY ACTION STEPS

Be specific. Start small. Take consistent action.

ACTION STEP What will I do?	WHY IT MATTERS How will this help me grow?	WHEN & HOW When will I do it?	ACCOUNTABILITY Who will support me?
1 _____	_____	By: _____ How: _____	Who: _____ Check-in: _____
2 _____	_____	By: _____ How: _____	Who: _____ Check-in: _____
3 _____	_____	By: _____ How: _____	Who: _____ Check-in: _____

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

What might get in the way?





MY STRATEGIES

How will I overcome them?





I WILL CELEBRATE MY PROGRESS BY... _____



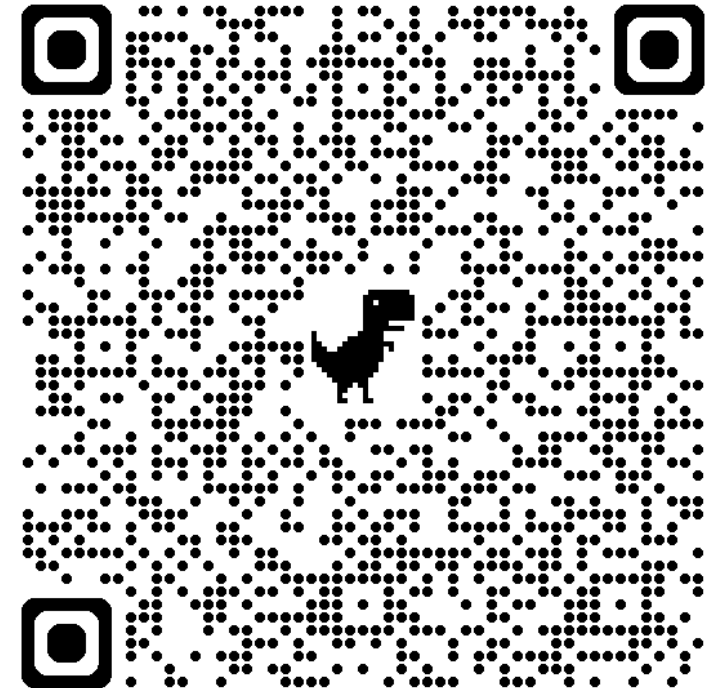
YOU HAVE THE POWER.

Your voice. Your leadership. Your impact.



Progress over perfection.
Keep showing up for yourself and others.

You are making a difference.



Thank-you



Questions

Feedback

Enjoy the rest of you day

Contact information

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