

Summary Session 4:

The meeting focused on LinkedIn profile optimization strategies for board directors, with emphasis on professional presentation and thought leadership content. Participants discussed balancing professional visibility with personal comfort, particularly for women, while exploring various approaches to maintain consistent branding and engage with potential opportunities. The session concluded with guidance on building personal brands through authentic content and consistent posting, along with recommendations for board director training and upcoming interview preparation.

Key Takeaways:

1. Socialize your work early and often

- Don't keep resumes, bios, or career stories "in a vacuum."
- Share drafts with people who **know how you operate professionally** (trustees, mentors, colleagues).
- The goal is to confirm: "*Does this sound like me?*" — not just "*Does this sound good on paper?*"

2. Feedback from trusted insiders matters most

- People who know you well can spot misalignment between your written story and your real-world presence.
- External polish is less valuable than **authentic alignment**.
- Use feedback as a calibration tool, not a judgment.

3. Career storytelling is a skill you build, not a one-time exercise

- Resumes, bios, and narratives evolve as you refine how you explain your experience and impact.
- Repetition and iteration are expected — feeling "off" at first is normal.
- The work improves as you say it out loud and hear it reflected back to you.

4. Executive presence starts with clarity

- Be clear about:
 - What you do best
 - How you create value
 - How you show up in business settings
- Strong executive presence comes from **self-awareness**, not performance.

5. Networking is about familiarity, not self-promotion

- Relationships work best when people understand how you think and operate.
- The more others can easily explain *you* to someone else, the stronger your professional brand becomes.
- This requires consistent messaging across conversations, bios, and introductions.

6. Trustees and mentors are strategic resources

- If you haven't connected with your trustee, do it.
- Use them as sounding boards for:
 - Career direction
 - Messaging
 - Decision-making, not just logistics

7. Progress is already happening — notice it

- Suzanne explicitly noted visible growth in participants' resumes, bios, and stories.
- The work you're doing *is landing*, even if it still feels unfinished.

Action Items:

1. Update your LinkedIn profile sections (headline, banner, photo, About, Experience, etc.) based on guidance provided, draft updates in a Word document, then update LinkedIn with notifications off
2. Draft 5 topics for future thought leadership posts and begin developing a library of potential LinkedIn content
3. Develop target list of influencers and key network contacts to engage when starting to post thought leadership
4. Determine which board director organizations to join/leverage (NACD, PDA, DDI, etc.)
5. Prepare one-minute career story for next session's board interview practice
8. Review board resource links from session materials for future reading/learning
9. Sign up for DDI programs (if interested) for additional board training
10. Prepare for next session's board interview practice by reviewing common questions and how to answer them (note: this is partially an action for Suzanne to provide the questions, but participants need to prepare)