

SESSION THREE

*Step Into Your Power:
Confidence, Presence, and Your Personal Brand*

How you show up online and in the room shapes how others experience your leadership.

Seasoned professionals share how early-career leaders can build confidence, develop a strong personal brand, and communicate their strengths with clarity. Participants will gain practical insights on establishing credibility, showing up authentically, and making a lasting impression in the first years of their careers.

MODERATOR



**Christine
Kimmel-Hurt**

Christine Kimmel-Hurt, PHR, is a Human Resources Business Partner at Moog Inc., where she supports both the Construction & Industrial Group and Aircraft Group operations in East Aurora. Since joining Moog in 2010, she has led initiatives in talent management, succession planning, organizational design, and change leadership to strengthen business performance. She has also managed the company's Global Mobility Program and supported college recruitment efforts.

Christine holds a bachelor's degree from SUNY Geneseo.

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PANELIST



LaTanya Walton

LaTanya Walton is a dynamic human resources leader, culture strategist, and advocate for equitable workforce practices, serving as Manager of Talent Acquisition & Engagement at Say Yes Buffalo. With over 20 years of experience across social services, healthcare, and workforce development, she brings a people-first approach to inclusive hiring, employee engagement, and thriving workplace cultures. She created “The Say Yes Way,” a framework centered on clarity, care, access, equity, and consistency. LaTanya also serves as Diversity Director for the Buffalo Niagara Human Resources Association, advancing DEIA initiatives. A proud University at Buffalo alumna and former EOP student, she champions mentorship and pathways for emerging leaders.

PANELIST



Lauren Lewis

Lauren Lewis is a Partner at StaffBuffalo and HRBuffalo, where she leverages her background in sales and recruiting to help WNY companies build stronger teams and professionals step into meaningful, impactful careers. With more than a decade of experience, she is known for her direct, relationship-driven approach to leadership, communication, and growth. Lauren is passionate about empowering the next generation—especially early-career women—to build confidence, own their voice, and advocate for their value. She actively mentors students and young professionals across the Buffalo region and serves on the board for several nonprofits, championing opportunities for future leaders throughout WNY.

SESSION FOUR

*Lean In or Listen?
Building Visibility Early in Your Career*

In the early years of your career, knowing when to listen, learn, and step forward can shape your leadership path.

In this interactive session, aspiring leaders will explore how to build visibility with intention; sharing ideas, contributing with confidence, and recognizing the moments that matter. Participants will gain practical insights to help them find their voice, stand out professionally, and grow their influence early in their careers.

MODERATOR



Erin Johnson

Erin Johnson is a global business executive with more than 25 years of experience leading strategy, business transformation, and human resources across diverse industries, from Fortune 100 companies to private equity-owned organizations. She currently serves as Vice President of Human Resources for Moog's Space and Defense operating group, supporting rapid growth to equip those who defend freedom and explore the universe. Erin holds an MBA from Canisius University, a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Economics, and a certification in Strategy from the University of Oxford. She serves on the boards of the WNY Women's Foundation and Mount St. Mary Academy and has been recognized as a Top 40 Under 40 business leader and one of Buffalo Business First's Most Powerful Women.

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**Kathleen
Achibar-Boyd**

Kathleen Achibar-Boyd began her career interning in the city courts under the first Latina appointed to the Buffalo City Court bench. That early exposure to public service led her to transition into electoral politics, where she worked on numerous federal, state, and local campaigns across Western New York. She went on to serve as a senior government staffer for New York State Assembly Majority Leader Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes and U.S. Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer.

Today, Kathleen is a partner at Bolton St. Johns, one of New York State's top lobbying firms, leveraging her government experience to advance strategic policy outcomes statewide.

PANELIST



Carolyn Altomare

Carolyn Altomare is Senior Vice President of Digital Media Sales at RRD, leading a national organization focused on digital media, data, and marketing technology solutions. With more than two decades in digital advertising, she has played a key role in building and scaling RRD's digital business and advancing its evolution into an integrated marketing solutions platform.

A transformational sales leader, Carolyn is known for building high-performing teams, launching new capabilities, and driving growth through innovation and cross-functional collaboration. She began her career at AOL and holds a BBA in Marketing from Fordham University. She lives in Hamburg with her husband and three daughters.

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Dr. Joyce Ohm

Dr. Joyce Ohm is an internationally recognized leader in cancer research, education, and mentorship. She earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Grand Valley State University, a PhD in cancer biology from Vanderbilt University, and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in tumor biology at Johns Hopkins University. From 2009–2018, she served as professor of biology, chemistry, and oncology at the University of North Dakota. She later joined Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, where she is professor of oncology and chair of the Department of Cancer Genetics and Genomics. Dr. Ohm actively mentors emerging scientists, participates in Empire State Ride, and contributes to several leading cancer research organizations.

PANELIST



Tayrin Tapia

Tayrin Tapia is a community leader, founder, and corporate sustainability professional. She is the Founder of Latinas Evolving, a platform and media brand, including its magazine, dedicated to elevating Latina entrepreneurs through storytelling, professional development, and community-driven experiences, and the visionary behind the Tapia Legacy Foundation, which expands access to mentorship, education, and resources for underrepresented communities, with a focus on Hispanic and Latine entrepreneurs. By day, she serves as the Business Support Manager for Corporate Sustainability at HSBC, supporting initiatives focused on social impact, community investment, and corporate responsibility.