

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, (She/Her/Hers) has over more than 15 years at Moog, she has built a diverse HR career spanning HR Business Partner roles, talent acquisition, global mobility, and change leadership across the business. These experiences shape how she partners with teams to work through tough business challenges using an HR lens and collaborate closely with people across the organization, near and far.

Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her husband and son (10), friends and family. She also enjoys cooking and being outdoors, especially in the Adirondacks.

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PANELIST



Lauren Lewis

Lauren Lewis (She/Her/Hers) 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.

PANELIST



LaTanya Walton

LaTanya Walton (She/Her/Hers) 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.

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.



WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

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PANELIST



**Kathleen
Achibar-Boyd**

Kathleen Achibar-Boyd (She/Her/Hers) 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 (She/Her/Hers) 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

Joyce Ohm (She/Her/Hers) earned a Ph.D. in Cancer Biology from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in Oncology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. She is a nationally recognized expert in cancer epigenetics and currently serves as Professor and Chair of the Department of Cancer Genetics and Genomics at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center. Her research focuses on understanding the molecular drivers of rare cancers called sarcomas and developing novel therapeutic strategies. Her work is supported by the National Institutes of Health and other foundations. An avid cyclist, she has completed the 500-mile Empire State Ride five times, raising funds for cancer research.

PANELIST



Tayrin Tapia

Tayrin Tapia (She/Her/Hers) 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.